

# Wittenberg University Anti-Hazing Policy

## Purpose

Wittenberg University has zero tolerance for any form of hazing as defined in this policy. Wittenberg seeks to promote a safe environment in which members of our living, learning community may participate in experiences and activities without compromising their health, wellbeing, dignity, and/or rights. Hazing can cause irreparable harm to victims, victims' families, and the University community. From a legal perspective, hazing is a crime. From Wittenberg's perspective, hazing is a violation of policy and antithetical to the mission and values of our community. Wittenberg University affirms the dignity of all persons by fostering a community of respect and integrity. Preventing hazing is the responsibility of every member of the Wittenberg University community, including students, student organizations, student groups/teams, employees, volunteers, contractors, and alumni.

## Scope of Policy

This policy applies to Wittenberg University students, student organizations, student groups/teams, employees, volunteers, contractors, and alumni. This policy also applies to volunteers acting in an official capacity that advise or coach student organizations and/or student groups/teams and who have direct contact with students.

Wittenberg University has jurisdiction under this policy whether the conduct occurs on or off-campus. The University will investigate and respond to all reports of hazing as outlined in this policy.

The following factors do not prevent conduct from being considered a violation of this policy:

- a. Expressed or implied consent; or
- b. The conduct is not part of an official event or otherwise sanctioned or approved by a student organization or student group/team.

In addition to this policy, NCAA student athletes shall follow the policies and guidelines set forth by the NCAA, NCAC, and Wittenberg Athletics.

## Policy

All acts of hazing, both on- and off-campus by any organization recognized by or operating under the sanction of Wittenberg University, or group of any of its members, are forbidden. A violation of this policy may exist irrespective of any alleged voluntary or consensual participation in the activity by the person(s) being abused. The policy will apply only if the hazing takes place between two or more people who are affiliated with Wittenberg University.

## What is Hazing?

1. Hazing includes doing any of the following, or pressuring, causing, forcing, soliciting, or coercing any person to do any of the following, for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating an individual into or with a student group or student organization; continuing or enhancing an individual's membership or status in a student group or student organization; or perpetuating or furthering a tradition or ritual of a student group or student organization:
  - a. Engage in any conduct prohibited by federal and/or state and/or municipal criminal law, regardless of whether an arrest is made, or criminal charges are brought
  - b. Take into their body any food, liquid (including alcohol), drug, or other substance that subjects the person to substantial risk of mental or physical harm; and/or
  - c. Cause or create a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to another/or engage in any act or omission that contributes to the death of another.
2. Hazing also includes, but is not limited to, the following actions, if they happen for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating an individual into or with a student group or student organization; continuing or enhancing an individual's membership or status in a student group or student organization; or perpetuating or furthering a tradition or ritual of a student group or student organization:
  - a. Acts of a physical nature such as: beating, bondage, branding, calisthenics (e.g., wall-sits, sit-ups, push-ups), exposure to the elements, kicking, paddling, pushing, shoving, striking, tackling, throwing items at or on individuals, and/or whipping.
  - b. Acts that may adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual such as: exclusion from social contact, kidnapping or abandonment, line-ups, or berating; and/or sleep or food deprivation.
  - c. Activities that a reasonable person would view to be frightening, humiliating, intimidating, or deceptive (including deception intended to convince the individual of impending pain, injury, or non-initiation) such as: blindfolding; having individuals yell when entering or departing a physical structure or in the presence of designated individuals; having individuals use designated entrances or exits and/or not permitting them to enter general use facilities or spaces; intentionally creating labor or clean-up work; not allowing individuals to wear certain garments or accessories; promoting servitude; requiring individuals to complete personal errands; requiring individuals to wear apparel that is conspicuous or uncomfortable and/or requiring individuals to wear scant clothing or to be nude.
  - d. Participation in any act of a sexual or lewd nature.
  - e. Activities that endanger or have the potential to endanger the academic performance or personal life of an individual (e.g., not allowing adequate time for or interfering with academic commitments, employment, or family obligations).
  - f. Any destruction or removal of public or private property.
  - g. Activities that violate University policies.
3. Any activity or action that causes mental, emotional, or physical distress, which ridicules, degrades, embarrasses, leads to confusion or frustration, causes discomfort, or jeopardizes the health, welfare, and safety of an individual or a group is prohibited.

Students may not imply that a person would be shunned, removed, or not initiated for failing to participate in any form of hazing.

Scavenger hunts are not against policy, but they must align with the values and goals of the organization. Scavenger hunts that require the participation of a single group, with tasks that are made to embarrass, degrade, hurt, or humiliate a person are against policy, regardless of perceived consent.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

1. Purposefully, knowingly, recklessly, or negligently participating in the hazing of another.
2. Purposefully, knowingly, recklessly, or negligently participating in the hazing of another when the hazing includes coerced consumption of alcohol or drugs of abuse resulting in serious physical harm to the other person.
3. Involvement in the planning of hazing and/or being present during hazing.
4. Failing to intervene to prevent or stop hazing if the individual has prior knowledge of a planned hazing activity.
5. Failing to assist or seek assistance if the individual knows or reasonably should know that another is in danger from the effects of hazing.
6. Knowingly making a false accusation of hazing.
7. Failing to report information about suspected Prohibited Conduct if required to do so is a mandatory reporter of the institution.
8. Failing to cooperate in an investigation of hazing, as defined as noncompliance with the student conduct process as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
9. Retaliating against or taking adverse action toward any reporting party and/or person.
10. All conditions described by the State of Ohio's Hazing laws as set forth in [Section 2307.44 - Ohio Revised Code | Ohio Laws](#) and [Section 2903.31 - Ohio Revised Code | Ohio Laws](#) also constitute violations of the Universities hazing policy.

### **Definitions/Terms**

- **Student:** All persons taking courses at Wittenberg University either full-time or part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies. Persons who withdraw after allegedly violating the Student Code of Conduct, who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with Wittenberg University or who have been notified of their acceptance for admission are considered "students" as are persons who are living in Wittenberg University's residence halls, although not enrolled in this institution.
- **Student organization:** Any number of persons who have complied with the formal requirements for Wittenberg University's recognition or registration. This includes all registered student organizations.
- **Student group/team:** Any number of persons who are associated with the University and each other, but who have not registered, or are not required to register as a student organization (e.g., athletic teams, honor societies, musical or theatrical ensembles, bands, or clubs).

- **Serious physical harm:** Includes, but is not limited to, any harm that involves disfigurement, protracted loss of use of or impairment of the function of a bodily part, organ, or mental faculty; substantial risk of death or emergency hospitalization; and or unconsciousness.

## Reporting

Wittenberg University encourages anyone who experiences, or has information about, hazing to immediately make a report. Campus safety is our top priority, and the University takes all reports of misconduct seriously to protect everyone's health and well-being. Prompt reporting enables law enforcement to collect and preserve evidence and campus officials to gather timely and relevant information to aid in investigations.

A report can be made in person, by telephone, by email, online using the [Hazing Incident Reporting Form](#) or by any other means that results in one of the offices listed below receiving the report. Such reports may be made at any time, including during non-business hours. A report can also be made anonymously, although reporting anonymously may limit the University's ability to investigate or obtain additional information.

To report hazing, any person may contact the following offices or individuals:

### **Campus Safety & Wittenberg Police Division**

*Emergency: 911 or 937-327-6363*

*Non-Emergency: 937-327-6231*

*Submit Confidential Tips: <https://www.wittenberg.edu/administration/campuspolice/campus-police-division-confidential-tips>*

### **Student Conduct**

Kristina Bryant Reed

Director of Student Conduct and Deputy Title IX Coordinator

Shouplin Center 101

937-327-7804

[bryantk1@wittenberg.edu](mailto:bryantk1@wittenberg.edu)

### **Student Involvement**

Katie Stotsky

Director of Student Involvement

Benham Pence Student Center

937-327-7818

[stotskyk@wittenberg.edu](mailto:stotskyk@wittenberg.edu)

## **Human Resources**

Carol Nickoson

Director of Human Resources and Deputy Title IX Coordinator

Recitation Hall Lower Level

937-327-7517

[nickosonc@wittenberg.edu](mailto:nickosonc@wittenberg.edu)

Mary Beth Walter

Associate Vice President for Administration, Chief Human Resources Officer & Deputy Title IX Coordinator

Recitation Hall Lower Level

937-327-7517

[walterm@wittenberg.edu](mailto:walterm@wittenberg.edu)

## **Mandatory Reporting Responsibilities for Employees and Volunteers**

A “mandatory reporter” must immediately report knowledge of hazing as defined in this policy to the University through the reporting options outlined in this policy. A mandatory reporter who fails to make a timely report will be subject to appropriate discipline. Each of the following is considered a “mandatory reporter:”

1. Any full or part-time employees of the University and graduate assistants.
2. Any volunteer acting in an official capacity who advises or coaches student organizations and/or student groups/team and who has direct contact with students.
3. Employees who are required by law to protect confidentiality are exempt from this requirement.

Note: Reports made pursuant to this policy do not supersede or replace other reporting obligations.

Under the law, no administrator, staff member, faculty member, consultant, alum, or volunteer of any organization affiliated with Wittenberg, who is acting in an official and professional capacity shall recklessly fail to immediately report the knowledge of hazing to a law enforcement agency in the county in which the victim of hazing resides or in which the hazing is occurring or has occurred.

## **Safety Concerns for Students who Report Hazing (Amnesty):**

Wittenberg recognizes that individuals may be reluctant to report hazing activity due to a fear of potential consequences for their own conduct. The University provides amnesty to students who report possible hazing incidents and will not be subject to individual charges of policy violation by the University if those violations were a direct result/cause/effect of the hazing.

For example, students required to consume alcohol as part of a hazing incident will not be charged with violations of university alcohol policies. The University may follow up with those students related to those issues as appropriate in a non-disciplinary manner.

Therefore, the University will work to make reasonable accommodations so that the reporting party can continue their academic pursuits. These accommodations include but are not limited to, alternative housing, no contact orders, and academic accommodations. Any student who is concerned for their safety either due to ongoing hazing or fear of retribution/retaliation should consider speaking with a university staff member to gain an understanding of the services that can be made available in their situation.

Wittenberg University considers the safety, health, and well-being of students' paramount to documenting students for minor violations of the code of student conduct. For currently enrolled students who, in good faith, seek or obtain medical assistance (calling Witt PD and/or by calling 9-1-1) for themselves or others, Wittenberg University will consider Medical Assistance Amnesty for both the students in need of medical assistance and the students seeking help on behalf of that student. Please find our entire Medical Amnesty Policy in the Student Handbook.

## **Enforcement and Institutional Response**

The Office of Student Conduct in collaboration with the Office of Student Involvement will launch an immediate investigation into all reports of hazing involving students, student groups/teams, and student organizations. When appropriate, other offices may handle certain aspects of the college response including the Department of Human Resources and/or the Wittenberg University Police Division.

The University will determine whether interim and/or support measures are needed to protect the safety and/or well-being of others.

The University will follow Sections 5 and 6 of the Wittenberg University [Student Code of Conduct](#) to investigate any hazing allegation. These sections outline the student conduct and investigatory procedures the institution follows when a student or student organization, group or team is reported to have violated University policy. Every effort will be made to complete investigations in a timely manner.

Students, members of student organizations, groups and/or teams are required to participate in all aspects of the student conduct hearing and investigation procedures.

Wittenberg University may charge an individual student, student organization, group, or team with a violation of this policy in accordance with the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Sanctions applied to organizations and/or individuals will be imposed in accordance with the severity of the violation.

Wittenberg University will always notify the appropriate law enforcement agency or agencies when a report of hazing is received. Criminal investigations resulting from a report to law enforcement will be handled by the appropriate law enforcement agency.

## **Sanctions**

Hazing is a serious offense of the Wittenberg University [Student Code of Conduct](#), and therefore, is subject to the full range of sanctions (including warning, loss of privileges, disciplinary probation, suspension, dismissal). Violations of this policy by students, student organizations,

student groups/teams will be sanctioned in accordance with Section 11 of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

As outlined in Section 11 of the [Student Code of Conduct](#), Wittenberg University reserves the right to determine the appropriate sanctions to be imposed upon a student, student organization and/ or student group for any violations of Wittenberg policies. The sanctions may be cumulative, and no sanction need be exhausted before if it is determined that additional sanctions should be imposed. Based on past disciplinary records, the severity of the offense, or the impact of the behavior upon the community, the sanctions may be more severe.

Disciplinary Dismissal or Degree Revocation may be the minimum conduct sanction assigned to any student or student organization, group, or team that causes death, serious physical harm, or substantial risk of serious physical harm. This includes coerced consumption of alcohol or drugs of abuse that causes death or serious physical harm

Violations of this policy are subject to referral to appropriate law enforcement or University services, as well as to regional and international affiliated officers of student organizations, for action and prosecution.

Violations of this policy by employees may result in corrective action or discipline (including termination) in accordance with applicable University policy and procedures as outlined in the staff and faculty manuals.

Students who do not complete anti-hazing education training cannot participate in student organizations, student groups/clubs or athletic teams. This includes meetings and practices, as well as games or events.

## **Hazing Law**

Ohio is one of 44 states that have an anti-hazing law. Individuals may be held criminally or civilly liable. Information pertaining to hazing laws in the state of Ohio can be found in the Ohio Revised Code sections 2903.31, Ohio Senate Bill 126 (Collins Law) and 2307.44. You can find more detailed information regarding these laws at the following links:

Ohio Revised Code 2903.31

<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-2903.31>

Collins Law (revisions to 2903.31)

[https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/solarapi/v1/general\\_assembly\\_134/bills/sb126/EN/05/sb126\\_05\\_EN?format=pdf](https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/solarapi/v1/general_assembly_134/bills/sb126/EN/05/sb126_05_EN?format=pdf)

Ohio Revised Code 2307.44

<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-2307.44>



## Education and Training – Awareness, Prevention, and Intervention

At the start of every academic year Student Involvement will provide hazing prevention education to all incoming students and student group/organization leadership (presidents, captains, advisors/coaches). Hazing prevention education will include information regarding hazing awareness, prevention, intervention, and the Wittenberg University anti-hazing policy. The Office of Student Involvement will record attendance for these educational opportunities.

The Office of Human Resources will provide hazing prevention education to all new hires upon employment to the institution. Hazing prevention education will include information regarding hazing awareness, prevention, intervention, and the Wittenberg University anti-hazing policy. The Office of Human Resources will record attendance for these educational opportunities.

## Resources

As individuals, groups, and organizations work to prevent situations that encourage or engender hazing behaviors, we must all come together and share positive resources that help this cause. Many local and national organizations, as well as campus contacts, are identified as positive sources of information and outreach.

## Campus

- Office of Student Development/Office of Student Conduct\*, 937-327-7800
- Student Involvement\*, 937-327-7818
  - In-Person Team-Building Activities
    - [75 team-building Activities for Teens to Build Trust and Cooperation](#)
    - [30 activities to foster team spirit and trust](#)
    - [Teampedia, a wiki made just for team building](#)
  - Virtual Team-Building Activities
    - [16 Virtual Team Building Activities Your Remote Team Will Love](#)
    - [57 Virtual Team Building Activities To Boost Remote Morale In 2020](#)
    - [37 Virtual Team Building Activities ranked by Fun, Impact, and Effort](#)
  - Fraternity & Sorority Life
    - Staff members are trained in hazing prevention measures, inclusive of those who are specifically trained to work with values-based Greek organizations including Interfraternity Council (IFC) and women's College Panhellenic Council (Panhellenic). Contact Fraternity & Sorority Life at 937-327-7820 to request to speak with someone who may schedule a presentation for a group/organization meeting on the topic of hazing prevention.
  - Group/organization adviser
    - Recall that as groups and organizations have advisers who are trained to assist in education, prevention, and response, your adviser can be called upon to help interpret appropriate practices for all individual and group/organization behavior.
- Wittenberg Health Center- 937-523-9635



\*Staff members from Student Development and Student Involvement are trained in hazing prevention measures. Contact either office to request to speak with someone who may schedule a presentation for a group/organization meeting on the topic of hazing prevention.

## Off-Campus

- TimelyCare 833-4-TIMELY (846359)
  - a free, confidential, app/phone counseling service that provides immediate support to students wanting to speak with a counselor right away. Students can connect with someone if they are in crisis and speak with a mental health professional who will assess the situation and help connect the student with support as needed. Students do not need to be in crisis to utilize this service. People who are feeling overwhelmed and in need of “in the moment” support can talk with a counselor.

Online:

- National Hazing Prevention: <http://www.hazingprevention.org/>
  - A national organization dedicated to its mission to empower people to prevent hazing in college and university student groups.
- StopHazing.org: <http://www.stophazing.org/>
  - A comprehensive site for current literature and media available to students, as well as updates on state laws that are applicable for individuals and groups.
- Piazza Center: [Piazza Center | Penn State Student Affairs \(psu.edu\)](#)
  - The Piazza Center for Fraternity and Sorority Research and Reform. The center develops and manages a national scorecard on fraternities and sororities, facilitates national conversations on hazing prevention while also collecting, researching, and distributing best practices for hazing prevention.
- Limberlost Consulting: [HOME | Limberlost Consult \(limberlostconsulting.com\)](#)
  - This external consulting firm works with campuses, chapters, groups, corporations, and boards providing strategic planning, consulting, and presentation advising, for many topical areas in higher education, inclusive of current practices in hazing prevention.

## Policy Review

This policy is maintained and administered by the Office of the Vice President & Dean of Student Life (Student Development). The Policy will be reviewed each year by the Anti-Hazing Task Force and updated as needed. The annual policy review will include an evaluation of any changes in legal requirements, existing University resources, and the cases reported and resolved during the preceding year.

## Reporting and Transparency

The Director of Student Conduct in collaboration with the Director of Student Involvement will create and maintain a website that provides a report of all violations of the institution’s anti-

hazing policy by student organizations, groups, and teams for the current academic year as well as for the previous five (5) academic years. The website will include a brief description of the alleged misconduct, the outcome/finding concerning the alleged misconduct, and any corrective action or discipline taken.

The reports will be updated and published by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January and 1<sup>st</sup> day of August of each year. Reports shall be retained for five consecutive years.

## **Policy Distribution**

This policy will be distributed to the entire campus community on an annual basis, at minimum, and shared on the Wittenberg University website at <https://www.wittenberg.edu/student-life/student-development/anti-hazing-policy>.

Effective: October 7, 2021

Previously Revised: October 12, 2022, September 13, 2023

Revised: September 12, 2025