

HAZING POLICY

Purpose: Sam Houston State University aims to provide a safe educational environment and does not tolerate hazing by any group or individual associated with the university. Hazing is against the university's values. All students, student organizations, and affiliated groups must adhere to state and federal laws, as well as university policies prohibiting hazing.

The university will take disciplinary action for hazing incidents that occur: (1) during official university functions; (2) in connection with the activities of registered or sponsored student organizations; or (3) in any situation where a hazing incident has a significant connection to the university's programs, operations, or interests, regardless of its location. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, which can include expulsion or the termination of organizational recognition, as well as potential criminal prosecution under applicable laws.

Policy Scope: This policy applies to conduct occurring on University property or off-campus, including activities sponsored by student organizations, when such conduct:

- (a) adversely affects the university's educational mission or reputation,
- (b) poses a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of members of the University community; or
- (c) occurs in connection with University-sponsored or University-affiliated activities or programs.

This policy applies to conduct in virtual or online environments, including social media, online classrooms, or other digital platforms, when such conduct adversely affects the University's educational mission, reputation, or community safety. Violations by student organizations may result in sanctions against the organization and/or disciplinary action against individual members under this policy.

The University may pursue disciplinary action for violations of this policy independently of any civil or criminal proceedings.

For compliance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act, the University will report hazing incidents involving any student organization (recognized or unrecognized) in its Annual Security Report and hazing violations by recognized student organizations in its Campus Hazing Transparency Report as required by federal law.

State & Federal Regulations:

- [Texas Education Code Chapter 51 \(51.936\)](#) – provides penal sanctions in the event of a conviction of hazing and sets requirements for institutions of higher education to publish a summary of these provisions to students.

- [Stop Campus Hazing Act \(SCHA\)](#) – enacted on December 23, 2024, amends the Clery Act reporting requirements and sets minimum standards for higher education institutions to prevent, monitor, and report hazing incidents. The act establishes three primary requirements designed to enhance transparency, hold institutions more accountable, and reduce the risk of harm to students.

Hazing Definition: Any act defined in Texas Education Code, Sections 37.151–37.153, or in the Federal Stop Campus Hazing Act. Hazing includes any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with others) against another person or persons, regardless of the willingness of such other person or person to participate, that:

- a) is committed during an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization;
- b) and causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered during participation in the University or the organization, of physical or psychological injury.

Prohibited Conduct:

Individual: Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed against a student in connection with pledging, initiating, affiliating with, or maintaining membership in a university-affiliated organization. Hazing includes physical brutality, forced consumption of substances, or tasks risking mental or physical harm as outlined in state and federal law.

Organization: Organizational conduct that condones or encourages hazing, as defined by law. Organizational hazing occurs when an organization condones, encourages, or involves its officers, members, pledges, or alumni to commit or assist in hazing. Hazing is any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, on or off university property, by an individual or group, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiating, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization. Acts include but are not limited to physical brutality, activities causing unreasonable risk of harm or adversely affecting the mental or physical health or safety of a student, forced consumption of substances, or tasks involving certain illegal acts.

Disciplinary Sanctions: Sanctions aim to provide a safe learning and living environment, educate students, promote responsible, safe, and legal behavior, and restore relationships. Mitigating or aggravating factors (e.g., motive, disciplinary history, impact on the University or University community, and the likelihood of recurrence) may influence sanctions. Sanctions may be imposed individually or in combination with other sanctions. Examples of sanctions include:

- a) Warning: Written notice that a violation has occurred, with further violations risking additional disciplinary action.
- b) Restricted Privileges: Denial of specified privileges including but not limited to parking, dining, living, or extracurricular participation for a designated period.
- c) Special Project: Completion of an educational essay, community service, or workshop, the purpose of which is to address the violation and prevent recurrence.

- d) Restitution: Compensation for damage caused to the University or any person's property, via payment or community service.
- e) Disciplinary Probation: Indicates a student is not in good standing for a designated period, restricting leadership roles or representation of the University.
- f) Deferred Suspension: Probation for a designated period with the understanding that a further violation results in suspension.
- g) Disciplinary Suspension: Temporary separation from the University, prohibiting enrollment or campus presence for a designated period.
- h) Disciplinary Expulsion: Permanent separation from the University and TSUS components.
- i) Transcript Notation: Notation of disciplinary action on the student's transcript, removable after seven years (except for expulsion).

Amnesty for Reporting or Seeking Help: Because the University prioritizes the health and safety of its students, students who seek medical assistance for themselves or others due to alcohol or drug intoxication, or who report incidents of hazing, sexual misconduct, or other serious violations, will not be subject to disciplinary action under this Code for their own minor policy violations (e.g., underage drinking) at the time of seeking help or reporting, provided they cooperate with University officials and engage in recommended educational interventions. This policy is intended to remove barriers to seeking help and to encourage health and safety-related reporting.

Report Hazing: To report hazing allegations, complete an [incident report form](#), contact the Dean of Students' Office at doso@shsu.edu or 936-294-1785, or contact the University Police Department at 911 or 936-294-1800.

Resources:

- [Stop Campus Hazing Act](#)
- [Stop Campus Hazing Act Quick Guide](#)
- [SHSU Stop Campus Hazing Investigation Process](#)
- [Texas Education Code, Hazing \(Section 51.936\)](#)
- [Texas Education Code, Chapter 37](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)