

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY ANTI-HAZING AND INITIATION POLICY

Each year universities experience hazing incidents that result in serious physical and/or emotional injury. As members in university student organizations, students may become victims in what are believed to be acceptable initiation traditions and rituals. Humboldt State University is committed to maintaining an environment that is safe, healthy and conducive to learning. We support the educational and character development of students as they transition into university life and continue toward graduation and becoming life-long learners.

DEFINITION OF “HAZING”:

Hazing is a violation of California State University and Humboldt State University policy, as well as State law.

Humboldt State University interprets the term “hazing” broadly, to include not just conduct likely to cause physical harm but also conduct likely to cause personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical **or mental harm**. Hazing can occur even when the victim voluntarily submits to being hazed. The full definition of hazing is:

[A]ny method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or student body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community college, college, university or other educational institution in this state (Penal Code 245.6), and in addition, any act likely to cause physical harm, personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community college, college, university or other educational institution. The term “hazing” does not include customary athletic events or school sanctioned events.

Neither the express or implied consent of a victim of hazing, nor the lack of active participation in a particular hazing incident is a defense. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of hazing is not a neutral act, and is also a violation of this section.

(Title 5, *California Code of Regulations*, section 41301(b)(8), emphasis added.)

Participation in hazing, actively or passively, will result in both individual and organizational disciplinary action, including possible expulsion from Humboldt State University and the California State University system. Disciplinary action will also be initiated against organizational officers who permit hazing to occur within their own organization.

Examples of prohibited hazing activities include but are not limited to:

- Paddling, shoving, or otherwise striking individuals
- Requiring individuals to consume alcohol or drugs
- Requiring individuals to eat or drink foreign or unusual substances, or requiring the consumption of undue amounts of food
- Having substances thrown at, poured on or otherwise applied to the bodies of individuals
- Morally degrading or humiliating games, or any other activities that make the individual the object of ridicule, including postings on facebook, twitter, other forms of electronic media and social network sites
- Transporting individuals against their will, abandoning individuals at distant locations, conducting a kidnap or engaging in any “road trip” or “ditch” that might in any way endanger or compromise the health, safety, or comfort of any individual
- Activities that require a person to remain in a fixed position for a long period of time
- “Line-ups” involving intense demeaning intimidation or interrogation, such as shouting obscenities or insults
- Assigning activities such as pranks or scavenger hunts that compel a person to deface property, engage in theft, or harass other individuals or organizations
- Requiring individuals to wear or carry unusual, uncomfortable, degrading, or physically burdensome articles or apparel

Any activity or similar activity as described above upon which the initiation or admission into, or affiliation with the organization is directly or indirectly conditioned, or which occurs during a pre-initiation or initiation activity shall be presumed to be “compelled” activity, regardless of the willingness of an individual to participate in such an activity.

Engaging in hazing that is likely to cause serious bodily injury is also a crime, punishable by up to one year in jail and up to a \$5,000 fine. (Penal Code 245.6.) If Humboldt State University determines that hazing has occurred and appears to meet the criminal definition, it may refer the matter to the District Attorney’s office for prosecution, regardless of any disciplinary action that is taken.

PERMISSIBLE INITIATION ACTIVITIES:

Joining an on-campus organization should be a positive experience. Initiation rituals should therefore focus upon the positive aspects of both the organization and the individual. Examples of permissible team and community building include:

- Hosting a dinner for new members
- Completing a community service project
- Sponsoring activities such as hiking, camping, or bowling
- Hosting a fundraiser for a local charity such as a movie night
- Holding a new member recognition night

REPORTING PROCEDURES:

If you wish to report an act of hazing, you should contact University Police, at 707/826-5555, or the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, at 707/826-3504 or online at https://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?HumboldtStateUniv&layout_id=1

PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION:

“Retaliation” means adverse action taken against a student because he/she has or is believed to have 1) reported or opposed conduct which the student reasonably and in good faith believes is hazing or 2) participated in a hazing investigation/disciplinary proceeding. **Organizations and individuals who retaliate against such student(s) shall be subject to university disciplinary action which may include suspension or permanent expulsion from the Humboldt State University and the California State University system.**