

## **New Member Hazing Prohibition Notice Southwestern University - Student Organizations**

This *New Member Hazing Prohibition Notice* outlines activities that fraternity, sorority, or any other student organization members **cannot** require of you. **If they do so, the organization and the individual member(s) in question may be subject to severe penalties up to and including permanent removal of Southwestern University recognition for the organization, suspension/removal from Southwestern for the individuals involved, and possibly removal of the chapter's national charter** (where applicable). New members participating in hazing activities may also be subject to judicial sanctions. Please study your rights and be certain to make a report immediately if they are violated. Initial each section to acknowledge that you are aware of your rights.

Southwestern University defines hazing as any activity expected of or done to someone affiliating with, joining, or participating as a regular member of a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers regardless of the person's willingness to participate. It is important to note that hazing can be committed by one person alone or by a group and that a formal organization need not exist for hazing to take place.

Hazing is a criminal offense in the state of Texas. In fact, one does not have to engage directly in hazing to be found guilty of hazing by the state. **Anyone who has first-hand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student(s) in an educational institution, or first-hand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report it in writing to the university is in violation of state law.** In addition, anyone who solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing is in violation of both University policy and state law. It is not a defense to a charge of hazing that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

Texas law requires that the campus community be informed should any student or group of students be found in violation of the prohibition against hazing. Hazing violations should be reported to one or more of the following individuals: the Director of Student Activities, the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Student Life, or University Police.

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### **Causes Physical Harm:**

Existing members may not ask new members, with or without the threat of consequence, to complete any act that places them in physical harm or allows for the potential of harm. These acts may include, but are not limited to:

- Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, paddling, beating, branding, electronic shocking, striking or allowing others to strike one another, placement of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.
- Any activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, drug, or other substance that subjects the student(s) to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s). This includes excessive consumption of water.

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### **Causes Emotional Distress:**

Under no circumstances will an individual be subjected to severe emotional distress. Severe emotional distress can be caused by behaviors such as, but not limited to, the following:

- The abandonment (with or without blindfolding) of a new member or organization of members, thereby requiring them to find their own way back to campus.
- Kidnapping. Kidnapping is a criminal offense consisting of the unlawful taking and carrying away of a person by force or the unlawful seizure and detention of a person against their will. Similarly, any mandatory trip (or requirement to remain in a given location) that is required of new members will be considered kidnapping.
- Having substances/objects such as, but not limited to, eggs, mud, paint, honey, and feces thrown at, poured on, or otherwise applied to the body. This includes having to walk or crawl through these and other substances.
- Requiring or encouraging a student to expose his or her private parts.
- Compelling a student(s) to participate in any activity that is perverse, publicly indecent, or contrary to their genuine morals and/or beliefs (e.g. public profanity, indecent or lewd conduct, or sexual gestures).

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**Interfering with Daily and Academic Life:**

Any activity that interferes with the academic process (e.g. causing a new member to be sick, miss class, or be ill prepared for class, study sessions, labs, or tests) is strictly prohibited. Any activity that causes a new member to violate the Southwestern Honor Code or other University policies is strictly prohibited. Activities between the hours of midnight and 6am are not allowed, unless the organization has obtained permission from the Director of Student Activities. Similarly, activities absorbing more than fifteen hours of New Member time a week are not permitted, unless the organization has obtained written permission from the Director of Student Activities. Other activities that interfere with daily and academic activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Pressures or demands, with or without the threat of consequences, that a new member perform personal chores not required for current members (including, but not limited to, running errands, doing laundry, cleaning personal spaces, and being "on-call" for personal chores).
- Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or other activity that subjects student(s) to risk of harm or adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s). This includes binding and blindfolding. Unless under the direction of a professional (e.g. coach, trainer), calisthenics or other forms of physical exercise may fall under the definition of hazing.
- Prescribing the wearing of anything that identifies new member status.
- Fining or enacting other consequences for a new member who does not attend a meeting that a current member would not be fined for having missed.
- Preventing a new member from speaking for any period of time.
- Requiring, pressuring, or demanding a new member to sleep anywhere other than their place of residence.

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**Causes Intimidation or Embarrassment:**

New members should be treated with respect and dignity. There should be no activity that intimidates or threatens the student(s) with ostracism; that subjects the student(s) to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation; that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student(s); that discourages the student(s) from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution; or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student(s) to leave the organization or institution. Prohibited requirements may include, but are not limited to pressuring or demanding:

- With or without the threat of consequences, a new member to carry items that they would not normally bear (including paddles, bricks, signature books, etc.).
- A new member to stand when a collegiate or alumna/us member enters a room.
- With or without the threat of consequences, a new member to enter the house/suite/building only via a specific door or preventing new members from entering a house/suite/building through a specific door.
- With or without the threat of consequences, a new member to address or refer to members and/or new members in a manner different from how they are addressed (e.g. *Mr./Ms. Smith* for members, *Pledge Jean* for new members).

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**Committing Illegal Acts:**

New members cannot be asked to perform acts that are against local, state, or federal law. Also, new members cannot be asked to perform acts that are against inter/national organization policy and/or University policy. This includes consumption of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, theft, kidnapping, vandalism, and arson, as well as pressuring or demanding:

- a new member to intentionally deface a house/chapter room/suite/apt., etc.
- new members to participate in scavenger hunts or similar activities (by any name) that involve taking of items, time deadlines, etc.

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the above and understand my rights as a new member of a Southwestern University student organization. By signing below, I indicate that I have received information about the Southwestern University Hazing Policy and the Texas State law related to hazing, and I agree to abide by both documents.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_