

Hazing Policy

Anti-Hazing Policy Statement:

St. Bonaventure University supports the emotional, psychological, and physical health and well-being of its students. Any form of hazing is strictly prohibited and is in direct conflict with our Franciscan heritage, University Mission, which honors the dignity of all people. All students have the right to belong to groups without risk of danger or humiliation. Consent to hazing is never a defense to a violation of this policy. It is not a defense for violation of this policy that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

New members of clubs, organizations and teams can expect to participate in educational and fun activities that build teamwork and camaraderie among all members of the group. Such activities are intended to create a sense of identity and commitment within a group and are generally acceptable and encouraged. Students should check with the Center for Activities, Recreation and Leadership staff, athletics staff, club or organization advisors, etc. if there is any question about an activity constituting hazing.

St. Bonaventure University is committed to fostering a safe and respectful campus environment. Hazing undermines student safety and violates our institutional values. In alignment with the federal **Stop Campus Hazing Act**, this policy establishes comprehensive procedures for education, prevention, reporting, and transparency regarding hazing activities.

Student Code of Conduct Definition:

Hazing is any reckless or intentional act, occurring on or off campus, that produces physical, mental, or emotional pain, discomfort, humiliation, embarrassment, or ridicule directed toward other students or groups (regardless of their willingness to participate), that is required or expected of new members and which is not related to the mission of the team, group, or organization. This includes any activity, whether it is presented as optional or required, that places a new member in a position of servitude as a condition of membership. In addition to the activities listed below, prohibited acts of hazing include those covered under Federal and New York state law (see below).

Though it would be impossible to list all behavior that could be deemed to be hazing, the following are some typical examples of hazing and are prohibited:

1. any physical act of violence expected of, or inflicted upon, another person. Examples include but are not limited to: whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body
2. any physical activity expected of, or inflicted upon, another, including but not limited to excessive calisthenics, sleep deprivation, exposure to extreme elements, confinement in a small space, or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk or harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student
3. any activity that pressures or coerces another person to consume a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other lawful or unlawful substance which subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm, or which adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student
4. kidnapping, forced road trips, and/or abandonment
5. required carrying of or possessing of a specific item or items
6. servitude (expecting a new member to do the tasks of an experienced member)
7. costuming, tattooing, piercing, and alteration of appearance
8. line-ups and berating
9. coerced lewd conduct
10. degrading games, activities or public stunts
11. interference with academic pursuits

12. any activity which violates University policy
13. assignment of illegal and unlawful activities
14. any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, or that adversely effects the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the University rather than submit to the act.

Alleged violations of this policy will result in campus judicial action and may be subject to criminal prosecution. Any retaliation against any person who reports, is a witness to, is involved with or cooperates with the adjudication of hazing is strictly prohibited and would likely result in judicial action.

A St. Bonaventure University student commits an offense if they:

1. engage in hazing as defined above;
2. solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing as defined above;
3. intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permits hazing to occur; or
4. in any way participates in the planning or organization, or has firsthand knowledge of the planning or organization, of a specific hazing incident involving another St. Bonaventure student, and fails to discontinue his or her involvement in said planning or organization and report the full extent of his or her knowledge of the planned hazing incident to an appropriate Campus Security Authority (CSA), prior to the occurrence of said hazing incident and with adequate time for said CSA to prevent the incident.

An organization commits an offense if the organization condones or encourages hazing or if an officer or any combination of members, pledges, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing.

How to Report an Incident of Hazing

Hazing can and should be reported by any student, faculty, staff or member of the community. If you believe that you or someone you know has been a victim of hazing, reporting options include:

- Online “Report A Crime Form”: [Crime/Campus Security Authority \(CSA\) Report Form](#)
- Campus Safety & Security: 716-375-2525; Doyle Hall, first floor
- Online “Silent Witness Reporting Form”: [Silent Witness Reporting Form | St. Bonaventure University](#)

Note on anonymity and confidentiality: While anonymous reports will be accepted and reviewed, it may be difficult to follow up on anonymous reports. Every consideration will be provided to a reporter to keep their identity confidential during an investigation, however it may become necessary at some point during the process to identify the reporter.

What Happens When a Hazing Report is Received

Upon receiving a report of hazing, the University will:

- Conduct a prompt, impartial, and thorough investigation of all reported hazing incidents through the Office of Safety and Security.
- Involve appropriate campus departments (i.e., Dean of Students, Title IX, Athletics).
- Collaborate with local law enforcement if criminal behavior is suspected.
- Respect the privacy of reporters.
- Provide written notice to the accused and reporting party, as appropriate.
- Provide support and protection to those harmed by hazing.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct based on findings.

Sanctions for individuals and/or organizations found responsible may include, but not limited to:

- Educational Sanctions
- Probation, suspension, or expulsion (students)

- Loss of recognition, funding, or privileges (organizations)
- Referral for criminal prosecution (if applicable)

Reporting Protection

The University will take all appropriate measures to accommodate students reporting incidents of hazing, or are witnesses in investigations or judicial hearings, and are at risk of retaliation. Students who, in good faith, make reports and/or provide witness testimony in judicial hearings should do so without fear of retaliation or judicial action for unrelated violations of University Policy. Thus, the University reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to provide said students with immunity with regard to such violations or infractions of University policy, as it deems appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Resources and Support

- Counseling Services: 716-375-2310, option 1 or bonnieswellbeing@sbu.edu
- BetterMynd Mental Health Crisis Line: 844-287-6963
- Title IX Coordinator: 716-375-2109
- Center for Student Advocacy and Community Coordinator: 716-375-4011

Hazing Prevention Strategies and Awareness Programs

The St. Bonaventure University campus wide hazing awareness and prevention training programs include both research-informed primary prevention strategies intended to stop hazing before it occurs, which includes skill-building for bystander intervention, information about ethical leadership, and promoting strategies for building group cohesion without hazing, as well as ongoing education and social norming campaigns outlined below. These programs include the definition of hazing, how to report incidents of hazing, the process used to investigate incidents of hazing and information on applicable local, NYS State, Federal, and Tribal laws on hazing.

Vector Solutions Higher Education Hazing Prevention Programs

St. Bonaventure University utilizes Vector on-line training modules to empower students, faculty, and staff to recognize hazing, understand its dangers, and take steps to prevent it. These courses equip the campus with comprehensive research-informed hazing prevention programs.

- Students: Mandatory annual training is required for all undergraduate and ground-graduate students prior to receiving a residence hall key and/or attending class. ***Hazing Awareness and Prevention for Students*** gives students a better understanding of hazing, allowing them to identify hazing on college campuses and when it's happening and possibly prevent incidents in the future. Learning objectives include: analyze the key components in the definition of hazing; understand who is involved in hazing and why they exhibit certain behavior; spot signs and examples of hazing; and determine what you can and should do to protect yourselves and your peers from dangerous hazing behaviors.
- Division I and Club Sports Staff: ***RespectEdu for Athletics Staff*** is a required annual training module that empowers athletic/club sports staff to take a proactive approach to preventing the insidious dangers of both sexual assault and hazing.
- Any Faculty and Staff: ***Hazing Awareness and Prevention for Faculty and Staff*** is an optional training module designed to help faculty and staff understand what hazing is, explore why it occurs, and learn how to identify and address hazing incidents effectively. Preventing hazing is crucial not only for protecting individuals but also for enhancing the overall student experience. By recognizing and addressing hazing, the campus community can foster a culture of respect, inclusion, and safety, creating a healthier and more supportive environment for everyone.

“We Don’t Haze” Workshops

We Don’t Haze workshops are conducted throughout the academic year and are designed for all students, with an emphasis on student athletes, Resident Assistants and club/organization members. The workshop includes a 16-minute film and follow-up facilitated discussion intended to help viewers gain a better understanding of hazing, its harmful consequences, bystander intervention techniques, and how groups, teams, and organizations can build bonds and traditions without hazing.

Social Norming Campaigns

Utilizing materials from StopHazing, St. Bonaventure supports ongoing social media campaigns as part of a broader social norming strategy. Social norming campaigns are designed to correct misperceptions about the behaviors and attitudes of peers, particularly when it comes to risky or harmful actions like hazing. These campaigns use data and positive messaging to highlight the fact that the majority of students do not support or participate in hazing, thereby reinforcing healthy and inclusive community standards. Through consistent messaging, education, and outreach on platforms students frequently engage with, these initiatives aim to shift campus culture and reduce the acceptance of harmful group behaviors.

Campus Hazing Transparency Report

The Stop Campus Hazing Act requires St. Bonaventure University to release a report at least twice a year summarizing findings concerning any established or recognized student organization found to be in violation of University standards of conduct related to hazing.

The Campus Hazing Transparency Report includes each incident involving a student organization for which a finding of responsibility is issued relating to a hazing violation, including:

- The name of such student organization;
- A general description of the violation that resulted in a finding of responsibility, including:
 - whether the violation involved the abuse or illegal use of alcohol or drugs,
 - the findings of the institution, and
 - any sanctions placed on the student organization by the institution, as applicable; and
- The dates on which:
 - the incident was alleged to have occurred
 - the investigation into the incident was initiated
 - the investigation ended with a finding that a hazing violation occurred, and
 - the institution provided notice to the student organization that the incident resulted in a hazing violation.
- The Campus Hazing Transparency Report will not include personally identifiable information.

The first Campus Hazing Transparency Report must be released by December 23, 2025, and will include data from July 1, 2025, through its date of release. After that, the Campus Hazing Transparency Report is updated biannually (at least 2 times a year), from the date on which the report was last published and ending on the date on which such update is submitted. St. Bonaventure University will publish Campus Hazing Transparency Reports on May 1st and December 1st, each year. Campus Hazing Transparency Report will be maintained for a period of no less than five (5) calendar years from the date of publication of each update.

Other Applicable Laws

Federal Law Definition

For reporting statistics under the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act incidents of hazing, the Stop Campus Hazing Act establishes the following definitions:

‘Hazing’ means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that—

- is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
- causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury including—
 - whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone’s body, or similar activity;
 - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
 - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
 - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
 - any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
 - any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, NYS State, Tribal, or Federal law; and
 - any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law

A “student organization” is defined as an organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, ministry group, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

New York Hazing Law

Penal Law § 120.16 Hazing in the first degree.

A person is guilty of hazing in the first degree when, in the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct, including, but not limited to, making physical contact with or requiring physical activity of such other person, which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury. Hazing in the first degree is a class A misdemeanor.

Penal Law § 120.17 Hazing in the second degree.

A person is guilty of hazing in the second degree when, in the course of another person's initiation or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct including, but not limited to, making physical contact with or requiring physical activity of such other person, which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person. Hazing in the second degree is a violation.

Examples of Conditions That Create a Hazing Dynamic

1. New members often wish to be accepted, either formally or informally, into any group, and will submit to hazing in order to be included. Because of this, **consent to be hazed does not excuse hazing**. Students have died or been seriously injured as a result of participating in activities to which they have “consented.” The psychological pull to be accepted is so strong that hazing victims cannot be expected to resist hazing, even if the hazing is presented as optional. That this pull can be so coercive should make this need to prohibit this conduct, to any degree, undeniably clear.
2. Any activity that places new members in a subservient position to experienced members creates an unhealthy and unsafe power dynamic in which control has been yielded to the experienced member.

New members in any organization may expect to be trained, oriented, or indoctrinated, but membership in any group that puts a new member in a lesser role, unrelated to the original conditions for membership or mission of the group, is inappropriate and unfair to the new members. Any activities of membership should be equally shared among experienced and new members.