Athletic Department Policy Against Hazing

Policy

The Midland University Athletic Department condemns hazing practices as requirements for membership, advancement, or continued good standing in our athletic teams.

What is Hazing?

Please report any inappropriate behavior or concerns about activities.

Definition

Hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a student.

This includes, but is not limited to any situation which:

- Creates a risk of injury to any individual or group
- Causes discomfort to any individual or group
- Causes embarrassment to any individual or group
- Involves harassment of any individual or group
- Involves degradation of any individual or group
- Involves humiliation of an individual or group
- Involves ridicule of an individual or group
- Involves or includes the willful destruction or removal of public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in an organization

It includes physical injury, assault or battery, kidnapping or imprisonment, intentionally placing at risk of mental or emotional harm (putting “over the edge”), degradation, humiliation, the compromising of moral or religious values, forced consumption of any liquid or solid, placing an individual in physical danger (at risk) which includes abandonment, and impairment of physical liberties which include curfews or other interference with academic endeavors.

Signs that hazing may be occurring:

- Cutting, branding, labeling, or shaving of parts of the body
- Required “greeting” of members in a specific manner when seen on campus
- Required walking in groups to class, the cafeteria, etc.
- Required carrying of certain items
- Loss of voice due to having to yell
• Performing of special tasks for the members or others
• Required attendance at late night work sessions, resulting in sleep deprivation
• Not coming home for days or weeks at a time
• Not being able to sit down or soreness from paddling
• Physical exhaustion from multiple sit ups, running, or other calisthenics
• Appearance of mental exhaustion or withdrawal from normal lifestyle; change in personality
• Appearance of sadness or expressions of inferiority
• Withdrawal from normal activities or friends
• Being dropped off and made to find the way back

Things to know about hazing:

• 82% of deaths from hazing involve alcohol, according to noted hazing expert Hank Nuwer
• Hazing is often about power and control. Hazers have a need to feel powerful and in control
• Individuals cannot consent to being hazed
• Hazing motivates no one. It hinders academic achievement, destroys self-esteem and causes emotional strain and physical harm
• Hazing builds animosity between people and does nothing to foster trust, unity or respect. It simply makes better hazers
• You can never be sure you know the physical or mental background of an individual and what the effects of hazing for that person might be
• Just because a majority of the members of an organization are not involved in a hazing incident does not mean the organization is not responsible
• Hazing is not just associated with athletes and Greek–letter organizations. It occurs across a wide spectrum of organizations
• One class can break the "tradition" of hazing- it just takes some courage and integrity to do what is right

How to report it?

If you have been hazed, have witnessed hazing, or suspect that someone you know has been hazed, you can report your observations confidentially to university officials.

Who should I report it to?

- Your coach
- Your advisor
- Merritt Nelson-Dean of Students-402-941-6400
- Dave Gillespie-Director of Athletics-402-941-6545
Consequences of Hazing

There are consequences for individuals and organizations involved in hazing activities. It is important to understand how actions impact the individuals being hazed, those conducting the activities, and the organization they belong to.

For the person being hazed

The media is full of stories reporting one of the worst possible consequences of hazing: death. While death is a horrendous possible outcome, there are far more examples of less severe but still life altering consequences. One study has shown that 71% of those who are hazed suffer from negative consequences. These consequences may include:

- Physical, emotional, and/or mental instability
- Sleep deprivation
- Loss of sense of control and empowerment
- Decline in grades and coursework
- Relationships with friends, significant others, and family suffer
- Post-traumatic stress syndrome
- Loss of respect for and interest in being part of the organization
- Erosion of trust within the group members
- Illness or hospitalization with additional effects on family and friends

Those who are leading or participating in the hazing may unintentionally trigger the memory of a traumatic event in the victim’s past that could result in devastating consequences.

Someone who has been hazed is more likely to haze others in the future.

For the person doing the hazing

Those who are accused of engaging in the hazing behaviors may face:

- Legal actions up to and including jail time and fines
- Sport team discipline (could include suspension or expulsion)
- University discipline (could include suspension or expulsion)