

Hazing Policy

Office/Contact: Dean of Student

Sources/Links:

SDBOR 3.4.1 Student Code of Conduct

<https://public.powerdms.com/SDRegents/tree/documents/1680638>

SDBOR 1.4.2 Prevention of Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking, and Hazing

<https://public.powerdms.com/SDRegents/tree/documents/1729423>

NORTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Policies and Guidelines

SUBJECT: Hazing Policy

NUMBER: 3:4

1. Purpose

- A. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit hazing in all forms at Northern State University (Northern). Hazing undermines the values of respect, integrity, and community that Northern upholds. This policy ensures a safe and inclusive environment for all students, employees, and guests by clearly defining hazing and establishing expectations for student conduct in alignment with South Dakota Board of Regents (SDBOR) policies.
- B. This policy and its procedures set forth the provisions applicable to the institution's compliance with the [Stop Campus Hazing Act](#) and the institution's procedures in addressing acts of hazing.

2. Definitions

- A. Hazing: Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with others) against another student or students, regardless of the willingness of the student(s) to participate, that is an explicit or implicit condition for initiation into, admission to, affiliation with, or continued membership in a group or organization, and:
 - a. Is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in a student organization; and
 - b. Causes or creates a risk, beyond what is reasonable in the context of institutional or organizational participation (e.g., athletic training), of physical or psychological harm, including but not limited to:
 - i. Whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing harmful substances on the body, or similar acts;
 - ii. Inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement, extreme physical activity, or similar acts;
 - iii. Coercing or inducing the consumption of food, liquids, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;



- iv. Coercing or inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
 - v. Engaging in conduct that causes reasonable fear of bodily harm;
 - vi. Violating Board or Institutional policy or committing a criminal offense under local, State, Tribal, or Federal law;
 - vii. Requiring another person to perform tasks that involve policy violations or criminal acts; and
 - viii. The express or implied permission of the individual being hazed does not make the behavior acceptable
- B. Campus Security Authorities: Any Northern employee who has significant responsibility for student and campus activities. This includes, but is not limited to:
- a. Campus police or security staff
 - b. Athletic Coaches and Trainers
 - c. Residence Life, Community Assistants, and Student Conduct
 - d. Student organization Advisors
 - e. Student Activities
- C. Student Organization: Such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, 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.

3. Policy

- A. Northern State University strictly prohibits hazing in any form. No person, group, or organization (recognized or unrecognized) may engage in hazing activities, regardless of the consent of those subjected to such acts. Hazing is inconsistent with the mission and values of Northern and is a violation of both university and SDBOR policies.
- B. Northern requires the reporting of hazing incidents and will take appropriate action to investigate and address all credible reports.
- C. Retaliation against individuals who report hazing in good faith is strictly prohibited.
- D. Any individual or Student Organization(s) found responsible for participating in, facilitating, coordinating, or soliciting hazing may subject to disciplinary action under this policy, Student Code of Conduct, employee/faculty handbook, and/or other applicable policies.
- D. Northern will maintain and report findings of hazing violations by any student organization within the Hazing Transparency Report.

4. Procedures

A. Reporting:

- a. Incidents of hazing must be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities via the Incident Reporting Form, available on the NSU [website](#). Hazing incidents may also be reported to a Campus Security Authority (CSA) in accordance with the Clery Act.

B. Annual Notices:

- a. All Campus Security Authorities will receive annual notice of their roles and responsibilities during annual training, which is required.

C. Prevention and Awareness Programs:



- a. Northern will provide researched-informed, University-wide prevention programming which addresses this policy, how to report incidents, and prevention strategies.

D. Transparency:

- a. The Hazing report is updated biannually and is publicly accessible to inform students, families, and the broader community in order to promote the awareness, accountability, and prevention of hazing on campus. Incident reports will be maintained for 5 years following the finding and resolution. The Hazing Transparency Report will include:
 - i. The name of the student organization or group involved;
 - ii. The date the incident was reported;
 - iii. The date the investigation was initiated;
 - iv. A general description of the incident(s) and violation;
 - v. Whether the violation involved the abuse or illegal use of alcohol and/or drugs;
 - vi. The outcomes of any disciplinary processes, including findings and sanctions.
- b. The University shall include reported hazing incidents in the institution's Annual Security Report as appropriate.

E. Investigation Oversight:

- a. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities is responsible for supervising investigations into reported hazing incidents.
- b. The Campus Police Officer, or their designee, shall lead the investigation.
- c. The assigned investigator must not have any actual or reasonably perceived conflicts of interest or bias toward any party involved. If a conflict is identified, a different investigator will be appointed.
- d. Investigators must be trained to:
 - i. Analyze and document evidence to support reliable decisions;
 - ii. Objectively evaluate the credibility of parties and witnesses;
 - iii. Synthesize all available evidence, including exculpatory and inculpatory information;
 - iv. Consider the unique and complex circumstances of each case.
- e. The investigator will meet with the student organization's president or designated executive member(s). The organization's advisor may also be invited. Written notice will be provided in advance of any interviews or hearings to allow for meaningful participation.
- f. If the investigation determines that hazing occurred:
 - i. The organization's leadership and advisor will be given time to develop a written action plan addressing the incident. This plan should include educational outcomes such as training, awareness efforts, policy or procedural changes, and other appropriate interventions.
 - ii. The investigator will review the action plan and may accept it or request revisions to ensure it adequately addresses the incident.

- iii. The organization may accept responsibility and the terms of the final action plan or request a formal resolution process.
- g. If a formal resolution is requested:
 - i. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities will coordinate a formal hearing in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct (SDBOR 3.4.1).
 - ii. Appeal rights will be communicated to all parties involved. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Senior Student Affairs Officer within five (5) business days of receiving the hearing outcome.
- h. Upon conclusion of the investigation:
 - i. A written report will be created summarizing findings, evidence, and the final action plan.
 - ii. Investigations involving student organizations may occur in parallel with investigations into individual student conduct.
 - iii. Non-student individuals involved in hazing will be referred to the appropriate university official.
 - iv. A Summary of Findings will be completed and retained for no less than five (5) years.
- i. Confidentiality and Retaliation Protections
 - i. Reasonable efforts will be made to maintain the confidentiality of reporting parties, unless disclosure is necessary to address the allegation.
 - ii. Individuals involved in the investigation will be protected from harassment, interference, intimidation, or retaliation.

5. Responsible Administrator

- A. The Dean of Students is responsible for the annual review of this policy and its procedures.

6. Source History:

Proposed by Student Affairs 08/15/2025;
 Approved by Dean of Students 10/01/2025;
 Submitted to Student Government Association 10/01/2025;
 Submitted to Faculty Senate XX/XX/2025;
 Submitted to Staff Council XX/XX/2025;
 Approved by President Nichols XX/XX/2025.