



<b>Policy Name:</b>	Policy on Hazing and Reckless Endangerment		
<b>Associated Form(s):</b>	N/A	<b>Policy Number:</b>	2023-18
<b>Reviewed:</b>	Non-Academic Policy Committee	<b>Approved:</b>	August 17, 2023
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	President <i>Ausan L Parish</i>	<b>Adopted:</b>	August 28, 2023
<b>Responsible Executive(s):</b>	Vice President for Student Affairs	<b>Revised:</b>	N/A
<b>Responsible Office(s):</b>	Office of Student Affairs	<b>Contact(s):</b>	Associate Dean of Student Affairs

## **I. Policy Statement**

Mercy University, in accordance with New York State law, is committed to eliminating and preventing hazing behavior and/or inappropriate team, group, club or student organization bonding or initiation activities which humiliate, demean or devalue the worth of another individual. The University supports only those activities which are constructive, educational, and inspirational and that contribute to the intellectual and personal development and well-being of students. Therefore, any hazing, initiation or team, group, club or organization bonding activities that subject student-athletes or others to mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule or other conduct which recklessly endangers or threatens the health, safety, or welfare of any person on University-owned or operated property or at University-sponsored activities.

The University defines hazing and inappropriate team, group, club or organization initiation or bonding activities as any action, whether physical, mental, emotional or psychological, which subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that has the intended or unintended effect of abusing, mistreating, degrading, humiliating, harassing or intimidating the person, or which may in any fashion compromise the inherent dignity of the person, for the purpose of association with or induction to a particular team, group, club or organization. In addition, any requirements by any member of a team, group, club or organization which compels another member or prospective member to participate in any activity which is against University policy or state/federal law will be defined as hazing. All campus clubs and organizations shall incorporate this policy into their club constitutions or bylaws.

## **II. Prohibited Activities**

Specific actions and activities which are prohibited, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any type of initiation or other activity where there is an expectation of individuals joining a particular team, group, club or organization to participate in behavior designed to humiliate, degrade or abuse them regardless of the person's willingness to participate.
- Forcing, requiring or pressuring an individual to consume alcohol or any other substance.
- Forcing, requiring or pressuring an individual to shave any part of the body, including hair on the head.
- Any requirement or pressure put on an individual to participate in any activity which is illegal, perverse, publicly indecent, contrary to genuine morals and/or beliefs, e.g., public profanity, indecent or lewd conduct or sexual gestures in public.
- Forcing, requiring or pressuring an individual to perform tasks of servitude including errands and cleaning.
- Forcing, requiring or pressuring an individual to be exposed to the elements.

- Required eating of anything an individual would refuse to eat otherwise.
- Any activity or action that creates a risk to the health, safety or property of the University or any member of its community.
- Forcing or requiring calisthenics, such as push-ups, sit-ups and running, when these activities are not part of the normal and standard conditioning requirements for a particular athletic or physical training activity, taking place within the appropriate practice, training or competition venues and supervised by qualified professionals.
- Assigning or endorsing pranks such as stealing or harassment of another group or individual.
- Awakening or disturbing individuals during normal sleeping hours.
- Expecting or pressuring individuals to participate in an activity in which the full membership is not willing to participate.
- Physical abuse of any kind.
- Forcing, encouraging or pressuring someone to wear in public apparel which is conspicuous and not what the student feels comfortable wearing in public.
- Engaging in public stunts and acts that cause embarrassment, annoyance, alarm or pose a danger to the individual or anyone else.
- Forcing, requiring or pressuring an individual to be excluded from social contact.
- Nudity at any time in a public space and/or in front of others or forced reading or viewing of pornographic material.
- Paddling, beating or otherwise permitting a member to hit other members.
- Having substances, including but not limited to, oil, eggs, mud, paint, cream and honey thrown at, poured on or otherwise applied to the body of a member of the team.
- Harassment or morally degrading/humiliating games or other activity that makes a member the object of amusement, ridicule or intimidation.
- Subjecting a member to cruel and unusual psychological conditions.

### **III. Applicability**

This University policy is applicable to and governs the conduct of students, faculty, staff, visitors and other licensees on Mercy University campuses and property. Administrators, coaches, team captains, student-athletes, student leaders, club/organization officers and all students shall be expected to accept responsibility and act with integrity and civility regarding this issue. This

includes not only refraining from engaging in activities such as those described above, but also reporting any questionable activities to advisors, coaches or administrators.

Failure to comply with both the letter and the spirit of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the procedures set forth below and may subject students to sanctions up to and including expulsion from the University, as well as criminal or civil prosecution.