

Chatham University

Anti-Hazing Policy

Originating Department: Student Affairs

Updated: 7/1/2025

The Chatham University community, guided by the Chatham University Student Honor Code, promotes inclusiveness and respect among its members. Chatham strives to create a community where people are treated with dignity and an environment free from acts of hazing. Acts or instances of hazing are considered a violation not only of the University's Student Honor Code but also of state and federal law.

Definition of Hazing

Under the Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA), hazing is defined as: any intentional, know, 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, 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."

In addition, under the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, hazing is defined as: A person commits the offense of hazing if the person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a minor or student into or with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing a minor or student's membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a minor or student to do any of the following:

Violate Federal or State criminal law.

- Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the minor or student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.

- Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements.
- Endure brutality of a mental nature, including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
- Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
- Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the minor or student.

In addition to the actions defined above, Chatham University considers hazing as: Any subtle, covert or overt action, occurring on or off campus, by an individual or group of students in connection to recruitment, initiation, rite of passage, or membership in a Chatham club, group, organization or athletic team that subjects any other member of the university community, voluntarily or involuntarily to activity which creates an atmosphere for potential or actual embarrassment, humiliation, degradation, verbal, emotional or physical distress, abuse or injury; or compromises the academic mission and/or reputation of Chatham University. Per Act 80 and the Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA), the Chatham University hazing policy applies to acts conducted on or off campus [P.L. 353, No. 80] and to both recognized and unaffiliated student organizations and groups.

Reporting & Disciplinary Procedures:

A person who commits or participates in an act or acts of hazing may be subject to university disciplinary action under the Student Honor Code. Chatham community members should report hazing incidents promptly. If someone is in immediate danger, please call Chatham Public Safety at 412-365-1111 or 911.

Chatham community members can report allegations that a student, students, student organization or athletic team engaged in Prohibited Conduct in one of two ways:

1. Any Chatham student, faculty, or staff member may report the alleged Prohibited Conduct to the Office of Student Affairs (in person, by phone, or in writing, including email). Written Complaints should be emailed to HonorCode@chatham.edu and include: the name of the Complainant; the specific provision(s) of the Honor Code allegedly violated; the names of all known witnesses who may have information concerning the allegation(s); and all known facts about the alleged violation(s).
2. By submitting a written Complaint through the [ONLINE FORM](#) to the Office of Student Affairs. Community members may submit the form anonymously. Generally, the more information a report includes, the more helpful the report will be to the Office of Student Affairs in moving forward.

The Office of Student Affairs also have access to other Chatham reports and internal communications (e.g., Incident Reports, Campus Security Authority (CSA) reports, reports from the Office of Campus Police) which, if they refer to conduct or action that constitute Prohibited Conduct under the Honor Code, will be considered a report or reporting for purposes of the Honor Code. Additionally, the Office of Student Affairs may be notified of incidents by off-campus agencies (e.g., police reports, reports from local universities) and can use these reports to pursue action if the conduct described constitutes Prohibited Conduct.

Once a report is received, the Dean of Students (or designee) will provide supportive measures to the reporting individual(s), collect information, investigate the incident(s) of hazing, and determine whether a policy violation has occurred. In this process, the Dean of Students may call for a meeting with members of an ad hoc committee whose experience and professional background are relevant to the investigation. When the reported instance of hazing involves a violation of additional policy (i.e., Title IX), the student

or group of students may be subject to further investigation and disciplinary actions. Penalties for engaging in hazing activities will be determined in accordance with the Student Honor Code.

Public Reporting and Records Retention:

Per the Pennsylvania anti-hazing law and the Stop Campus Hazing Act, Chatham University maintains records of all hazing allegations. Hazing reports are updated biannually and will be available on Chatham's website. Reports of campus hazing-related offenses are noted in the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Report, which is published annually. The published Campus Hazing Transparency Report will also include; The description of the violation, the date the incident was alleged to have occurred, 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, the date of the initiation of investigation and ended with finding of hazing violations, and the date the institution provided notice to the organization of outcome. These reports are publicly published twice a year. The Office of Student Affairs shall maintain records of hazing-related offenses and disciplinary actions for five years.

Prevention and Awareness Programs:

Chatham University recognizes that prevention and awareness programs related to hazing (as defined above) are primary, research-based strategies aimed at preventing hazing before it occurs. While our specific programming and prevention efforts change from year to year, these programs and strategies may include skill-building for bystander intervention, information about ethical leadership, and the promotion of techniques for building group cohesion without resorting to hazing.

Chatham will provide education on definitions and the prevention of hazing each year to new student organization leaders, student leaders such as resident assistants and orientation leaders, athletic coaches, and student leaders in athletics, among other constituencies, as well as campus-wide education strategies.

To request a program or training for your team or organization, please reach out to: osa@chatham.edu