

## **Institutional regulation regarding hazing**

Southwest Mississippi Community College prohibits any form of hazing in its programs, activities, and by student organizations. This policy sets forth the college's procedures handling reports of hazing, the potential consequences for engaging in hazing, information on SMCC's hazing prevention and awareness programs, and the college's reporting and publication requirements.

### **Definitions**

**Hazing** means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act by a person, or in concert with others, against another regardless of their willingness to participate that:

- is committed in the course of initiation into, affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
- causes or creates an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological injury, including any activity which places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct and any activity that includes or requires another person to perform a criminal violation of state or federal law.

This includes whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, or placing a harmful substance on someone's body. It includes causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing: sleep deprivation; exposure to the elements; confinement in a small space; extreme exercise; consuming food, liquid (including alcohol), drugs, or other substances; or the performance of sexual acts.

**Student organization** means any organization at SMCC in which two or more of the members are enrolled students, whether or not the student organization is established or recognized by SMCC. This includes clubs, societies, associations, athletics teams, bands, or student government.

Mississippi also has a criminal law on "hazing," MS Code 1972 Chapter 3 Section 97-3-105. This law says that 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

which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury.

### **Reporting Hazing and Investigations**

All forms of hazing must be reported to the vice president of student services or the Title IX coordinator. If any campus official or employee such as a coach, sponsor, adviser, or residence life staff member receives a report or becomes aware of an alleged hazing incident, they should report it to one of the aforementioned college administrators.

All allegations of hazing will be taken seriously and investigated. Allegations against students and/or student organizations will be handled under the student conduct policies and procedures. Any allegations against faculty or staff will be investigated and handled under applicable employee policies, procedures, and law.

Consequences for founded incidents of hazing can include discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion for students, serious sanctions for student organizations, and termination of employees.

Allegations of hazing may also be reported to campus police for criminal investigation.

### **Clery Act Statistical Reporting and Transparency Report**

In accordance with the Clery Act, statistical information on hazing incidents within the college's Clery geography are included in the Annual Security Report which is distributed to the campus community each year on or before October 1.

Consistent with applicable law, SMCC will also collect information on hazing incidents involving student organizations and publish a Campus Hazing Transparency Report on its website, if there are violations to report. If there are violations, the college will update the Transparency Report at least twice a year with the following information.

- A statement notifying the public of the annual availability of the college's hazing statistics in the Annual Security Report;

- Information about this policy and Mississippi's hazing law; and
- For each period of time since the last update, the following information about each finding of responsibility for a hazing violation against a student organization: the name of the student organization; A general description of the hazing 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 hazing was alleged to have occurred, when the investigation was initiated and ended, and when the student organization was noticed of the violation.

Neither the statistical information in the Annual Security Report nor the Campus Hazing Transparency Report will include any student's personally identifiable information, as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Past transparency reports will be maintained by SMCC for at least five calendar years from the date of publication.

### **Prevention and Awareness Programs**

It is the policy of SMCC to develop and offer prevention and awareness programs related to hazing. These programs will be research-informed and campus-wide, and designed to reach students, faculty, and staff with information about:

- this policy, including how to report incidents of hazing and SMCC's processes used to investigate incidents of hazing;
- Mississippi's hazing law; and
- primary prevention strategies intended to stop hazing before hazing occurs, which may include skill building for bystander intervention, information about ethical leadership, and the promotion of strategies for building group cohesion without hazing.