



Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation Hazing Policy

Background

In an extensive study performed by Alfred University in 1999, it was determined that 80% of college athletes are subjected to hazing. The study took into consideration 10,000 student-athletes, 3,000 coaches and 1,000 other athletic officials from NCAA colleges and universities. Led by the then president of that university, Dr. Edward Coll, the study found hazing to be widespread from Division I to Division III in a wide variety of sports. The hazing activities ranged from the less serious to those that are highly serious and place the well being of those being hazed at peril.

Dr. Coll commented: "I find the results of our study on hazing to be horrifying." It's pervasive. It's dangerous...."

Hazing defined:

Hazing, as defined by RIT is as follows (from the RIT Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook Section III.B.10) is:

(A)ny intentional or reckless act; occurring on or off the campus of RIT; by one person alone or acting with others; directed against an RIT student; that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that RIT student; and is reasonably believed by that RIT student as being for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include students at RIT or other universities. For the purposes of this section, the term "organization" includes, but is not limited to, any Greek organization, athletic team or other RIT-recognized student organization.

- * The term "hazing" as defined here includes, but is not limited to:
- * Physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, or placement of a harmful substance on the body;
- * Other physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, physical bondage, calisthenics, "road trips" or taking a student to an outlying area and dropping him/her off, compulsory servitude or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that may adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- * Consumption of food, water, other liquid, alcoholic beverage, drug, or other substance which subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which otherwise may adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- * Activity that creates an unreasonable risk of causing severe psychological shock or public humiliation to the student;
- * Activity that induces, causes or requires the student to perform a duty or task which involves a violation of local, state or federal laws, or the RIT Code of Conduct; and
- * Any misuse of authority by virtue of one's class rank, organizational position, longevity in the organization and/or leadership role.

Failure to report such activities to an appropriate university official (such as RIT Campus Safety, Greek Affairs, Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation, Vice President for Student Affairs, Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Management Services) is additional, independent grounds for violation under this section. Students who report hazing activities to an appropriate university official on a timely basis will not be subject to penalty for this failure to report through the RIT Student Conduct process. Such immunity shall only pertain to the charge of failure to report, and not an independent allegation of hazing.

Any organization that violates this section may also be subject to discipline under the RIT Code of Conduct separate from those involving individual students.

Hazing and the Law

- * Chapter 676, Section 6450 of the New York State Education Law prohibits hazing activity.
- * Acts of hazing are subject to prosecution under New York State Penal Law.

The Center for Intercollegiate Athletic and Recreation expressly forbids any and all acts of hazing regardless of the severity.

Sanctions

Our approach to misconduct is based upon the premise that student-athletes are expected to role model exemplary behavior on and off campus as well as on the playfield. At RIT we hold our student-athletes to higher standards. They are representatives of the university and leaders within our community. All allegations of hazing will be subject to student disciplinary action and referred to the RIT Center for Student Conduct for adjudication.

The Center for Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation will take independent action on violations of the hazing laws. Once an issue has been identified, individuals and teams will be interviewed and provided an opportunity to respond. Incident reports from local and campus authorities will be utilized in the review. Once the review is completed, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation, in consultation with the coaching staff and other administrators will render a decision on the incident(s). They are as follows:

No Action: No violations were identified.

Level I: Actions such as relegating tasks and jobs to freshmen/first year players (e.g. picking up equipment, assuming undesirable seats on the bus, serving veteran players).

Sanction: A minimum one game suspension and undergoing a hazing education program

Level II: Organizing and/or participating in events such as “Rookie Parties” where first year players are invited or required to attend. Students are asked to perform skits, dances, sing, etc.

Sanction: A minimum three game suspension, hazing education, community service.

Level III: Any of the above and any of the following type acts: forced to drink alcohol/beverages, alcohol service to underage students, hitting/beating, binding up or forced confinement, public humiliation, sexual harassment, racist behavior/comments

Sanction: Removal for season or permanent removal from program.

The student-athletes may also be required to have their cases reviewed by the Student Conduct Office which will render its own decisions/sanctions.

Note: It should be understood that our center regards hazing or ritualistic behavior amongst teams or individuals to be in direct violation of the values and the premises of our intercollegiate athletics program. It is a basis for destructive behavior and contrary to sound educational goals.

Through this policy and through educational programs aimed at preventing hazing it is our goal to redirect energies towards positive and productive behavior and attitudes.

