

## **TRUETT McCONNELL UNIVERSITY**

### **Stop Campus Hazing Policy**

#### **What is Hazing?**

Hazing refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status or leadership position in a group) that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Hazing activities are typically defined as actions taken, or situations created intentionally or unintentionally by an individual or group, whether on or off-campus, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule in another person or group, regardless of the consent of the participants. Any act that interferes with regularly scheduled classes or academic pursuits of a student may also be defined as hazing.

#### **Hazing is Prohibited at Truett McConnell University**

Truett McConnell University (TMU) adheres to state, local and federal guidelines in all hazing matters. TMU's position on hazing is consistent with state and federal law prohibition on hazing activities. TMU does not permit the hazing of a student as a requirement for membership, participation or obtaining a leadership position in any student organization, athletic team, Greek chapter, club or group. Hazing is not consistent with the mission of TMU and is in opposition to the founding principles of any organization. **TMU will not tolerate hazing in any form.** All acts of hazing by any organization, member, and/or alumni are specifically forbidden.

#### **Federal Law on Hazing – Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA)**

The Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA) introduces the first federal definitions of hazing and student organizations, ensuring that higher education institutions report hazing incidents in their Clery Reports. These federal definitions take precedence over state laws, requiring institutions to comply with the broader federal standards.

#### **Georgia Anti-Hazing Law – Max Gruver Act**

The Max Gruver Act bans individuals in student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, at colleges, universities, and technical schools from subjecting students, as a condition of membership or status, from performing any act that could endanger their physical health or from coercing them into consuming food, alcohol, or drugs that could result in vomiting, intoxication, or

unconsciousness.

### **Definitions:**

#### Hazing:

- SCHA defines hazing as “any intentional, knowing, 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
  - [I] is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in a student organization, [e.g., a club, student government, athletic team, fraternity, or sorority]; and
  - [II] 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:
    - (a) whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone’s body, or similar activity;
    - (b) causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
    - (c) causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
    - (d) causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
    - (e) any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
    - (f) any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law; and,
    - (g) 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.”
- Max Gruver Act defines hazing as a "means to subject a student to an activity which endangers or is likely to endanger the physical health of a student or coerces the student through the use of social or physical pressure to consume any food, liquid, alcohol, drug, or other substance which subjects the student to a likely risk of vomiting, intoxication, or unconsciousness regardless of a student's willingness to participate in such

activity”.

#### School/Institution:

- "School" means any unit of the University System of Georgia, any unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, or any private postsecondary school, college, or university in this state. Truett McConnell University is subject to the Max Gruver Act as well as to the SCHA.

#### Student/school organization:

- SCHA defines the term “student organization” as “an organization at an institution of higher education [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.”
- Max Gruver defines the term "school organization" to mean any association, corporation, order, club, society, fraternity, sorority, athletic team, or a group living together which has students or alumni as its principal members, including local affiliate organizations.
- For purposes of this policy and investigation purposes, the terms “student organization” and “school organization” are used interchangeably.

#### Student

- Student means any person enrolled or prospectively enrolled at Truett McConnell University.

### **Recognizing the Signs of Hazing**

Hazing is not always obvious, and individuals may not realize they are being subjected to it. Common signs include:

- Being required to carry certain items or dress in a specific way.
- Performing demeaning tasks for other members.
- Forced physical exertion beyond reasonable expectations.
- Withdrawal from normal activities or exhibiting distress.
- Secrecy surrounding group activities or initiations.
- Justifications such as “it’s a tradition” or “we all went through it.”
- To determine whether an activity constitutes hazing, ask: Would this be acceptable if reviewed by a college administrator, coach, or parent? Would

you feel comfortable defending this activity in a court of law? If the answer is no, it is likely hazing.

### **Hazing Prevention and Education**

To combat hazing, TMU and student organizations can take proactive steps to educate and enforce policies. Effective prevention strategies include:

- Education and awareness - Ensuring students and organizations understand anti-hazing laws and policies. Education and awareness programs are posted on the TMU website.
- Bystander intervention – Encouraging individuals to speak up and report hazing when they see it.
- Promoting alternative traditions – Creating positive team-building experiences without harmful practices.
- Strict policy enforcement - Holding organizations accountable with a zero-tolerance approach.

### **Pre-clearance**

Any team, club, organization which is planning any sort of initiation or induction for members is advised to submit their plans to [stophazing@truett.edu](mailto:stophazing@truett.edu) for review prior to the event to determine compliance with the Hazing Policy.

### **Report Hazing**

Prevent hazing by fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and positive traditions. If you witness or experience hazing, report it immediately to the Office of Student Life and Athletics or Campus Security at [stophazing@truett.edu](mailto:stophazing@truett.edu) to ensure a safe and inclusive student environment. Call 911 if you or someone else is in danger.

Any Truett McConnell University faculty member, coach, or other employee who becomes aware of hazing activity or suspected hazing activity is **required** to report such to [stophazing@truett.edu](mailto:stophazing@truett.edu).

All students who become aware of hazing activity or suspected hazing activity **should** report such to [stophazing@truett.edu](mailto:stophazing@truett.edu).

All reports will be taken seriously. The Office of Student Life and Athletics or the

Vice President's designee will investigate all complaints and take appropriate action upon confirmation of a violation.

### **Sanctions for Hazing**

- Any TMU employee violating the Stop Campus Hazing Policy shall be subject to disciplinary action by Human Resources and/or the Vice President for Finance and Operations.
- Employee sanctions can range from suspension to termination.
- Any TMU student, student organization, or athletic team who violate this Policy or engage in hazing activities shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Office of Student Life. Sanctions can range from organizational loss of recognition to suspension to expulsion for individuals.
- Any TMU employee or student who violates applicable local and state laws shall face appropriate legal action.
- Any person who violates the Georgia SB 85, Max Gruver Act, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

### **Hazing Incidents Reporting Requirements**

#### Max Gruver Act

In compliance with the Georgia SB 85 "Max Gruver Act", TMU will publicly disclose administrative adjudication of hazing or hazing related convictions.

#### Campus Hazing Transparency Report

A key requirement of the Stop Campus Hazing Act, the Campus Hazing Transparency Report is designed to enhance public awareness of hazing incidents in higher education and help create a system of accountability. It mandates that colleges and universities participating in federal financial aid programs collect and publicly disclose information about student organizations found responsible for hazing violations.

Key Features of the Report:

1. Collection of Information:
  - Institutions must begin gathering hazing incident data by July 1, 2025.
  - Data must include cases where a student organization was found responsible for hazing.
2. Public Availability:
  - The report must be made available on the institution's public website

within 12 months of the Act's enactment.

- It must be updated at least twice a year to reflect new incidents.

### 3. Contents of the Report:

For each hazing violation, the report must include:

- Name of the student organization involved.
- Description of the violation, including whether it involved alcohol or drugs.
- Institution's findings and any sanctions imposed on the organization.
- Key dates, including:
  1. When the alleged incident occurred.
  2. When the investigation started and concluded.
  3. When the institution notified the organization of the findings.

### 4. Data Privacy:

- The report must not include personally identifiable information about individual students, ensuring compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### 5. Additional Information:

- Institutions may provide state law requirements or additional details for context.
- The report must remain publicly available for at least five years after publication.

### 6. Exemptions:

- Institutions are not required to create a report until they have a finding of a hazing violation.
- If no new hazing violations occur during an update period, no update is necessary.

## Excellent Hazing Resources

[Full Text of Senate Bill 85](#)

[Hazing Prevention Network](#)

[Stop Hazing](#)

[Inside Hazing Anti-Hazing Education](#)

[We Don't Haze: A Clery Center Documentary](#)

[Short film – The Lonely Dog - Hazing Prevention Network](#)

[Home | The Gordie Center](#)

## Interpreting Authority

For questions regarding interpretation or implementation of the Hazing Policy, please contact Amy Brown, Directory of Advocacy and Title IX Coordinator, Nix Building, [stophazing@truet.edu](mailto:stophazing@truet.edu).

**Approval Process**

**Approved by Jenni Shepard, Vice President of Student Life and Athletics**

**August 5, 2025**