



Hazing Prevention Awareness Info
W&M Hazing Prevention Coalition

WHAT CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION DO?

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Hazing Prevention Coalition is here to help. If your organization wants a program or an informational consultation to get you started, we are happy to connect!!! Reach out at hazingprevention@wm.edu

[WWW.WM.EDU/
HAZINGPREVENTION/](http://WWW.WM.EDU/HAZINGPREVENTION/)

Why Can't We Just Agree to Stop Hazing?

There are two factors (precursors) that make it very difficult to eliminate hazing.

1. People have a deep-seeded human need for affiliation, belonging, and acceptance.
2. individuals have a strong desire for accomplishment and rites of passage experiences

RECOGNIZE | PREPARE | ACT

Because of these precursors, organizations must be CONSTANTLY vigilant in combating the slippery slope of hazing behaviors. Any organization where individuals transition through membership is susceptible.

WHAT CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION DO?

- Regularly evaluate new member programs, plans, and activities.
- Critically examine organization traditions.
- Make the joining experience one where new members feel value, belonging, and are set up to be good members of the organization.

WHERE SHOULD OUR ORGANIZATION START?

Here are some questions to get you started in a review of your organization activities.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION? What are your aspirational goals as a group?

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NEW MEMBER PROCESS/EXPERIENCE IN YOUR ORGANIZATION? The purpose of your new member process should be to create good members for the organization. Create a list of what it means to be a good member (the qualities that make a good member).

WHAT ARE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NEW MEMBER PROGRAM...all of them...not just the official ones. Do the activities align with the objectives and the purpose? If they do, you're in good shape – if there are any where there is NOT alignment, that's a good place to start with your organization review. Your activities should support the qualities and behaviors that make good members. New members should have the opportunity to practice or demonstrate these qualities in the new member process.

DOCTOR GENTRY'S TWO-PRONGED HAZING TEST

The Hazing Prevention Coalition thinks this is a GREAT 2-pronged test to assess your organization new member activities. You can read more at the link below. (The lens of this blog might be fraternities, but apply your own club sport, a cappella group, interest group, membership – the concepts are the same.)

Test #1 – “Is there a group-relevant point or purpose to this activity?”

You have to start with the first test, and the key word here is “noble.” Is the purpose of the activity something that we could all agree would be a good outcome, and is the activity logically matched to producing that outcome. The outcome needs to be specific – not some vague notion of “it builds brotherhood.” What kind of brotherhood? How? To what end? Insist on specific linkages between the activity and the outcome. If the activity does not pass the first test, then you are done. No need to go on to the second test. The activity failed. Organizations should not be doing activities with their new members that serve no noble point or purpose. Note: “Because we’ve always done that with our new members” is not a good reason and would not pass the test. Many activities will pass the first test. There will be activities that are directly linked to some positive outcome, and once you have made that determination, you are free to move on to the second test.

Test #2 – “Is the activity dangerous, demeaning, excessive, or illegal?”

This one is pretty self-explanatory. I don't care how noble the outcome may be from Test #1, if it meets any of the criteria in Test #2, it's a no-go. No activity can put a new member in danger, we should be above any activities that demean or degrade new members, and none of us are in a position to allow things that are against the law.