

Alvernia University Antihazing Policy

Section I: Policy Statement

Consistent with its Catholic Franciscan mission, it is the express intent of Alvernia University that hazing of any type will not be tolerated. Any student, student group, student organization,¹ team, or other persons associated with a student organization found responsible of Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, or Organizational Hazing under this Policy, whether occurring on or off campus, may face disciplinary action from the University, up to and including expulsion, and may also face criminal charges under state law including, but not limited to, prosecution pursuant to The Timothy J. Piazza Antihazing Law, 18 Pa. C.S. § 2801, et seq.

Section II: Purpose

The purpose of this document is to state Alvernia University Anti-Hazing Policy; identify the manner in which Alvernia University will enforce this Policy; and identify resources for reporting violations of this Policy.

Section III: Application — It is the express intent of Alvernia University that this policy shall apply to each of the following:

- Individual students—this includes all enrolled students, any prospective students (including recruits) and any students who have been admitted to the University.
- Organizations—this includes all registered student organizations, teams, honor societies, student groups affiliated with specific departments (ex: student ambassadors, orientation leaders, resident assistants, tutors, etc.)
- Other persons associated with an organization —this includes any advisors, alumni, coaches and any representatives, directors, trustees or officers of any national or parent organization.

Section IV: Jurisdiction

This Policy applies to any acts of Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, or Organizational Hazing, as hereinafter defined, occurring on or off campus.

Section V: Prohibited Acts

Alvernia University adheres to The Timothy J. Piazza Antihazing Law and the federal Stop Campus Hazing Act.

Alvernia University defines hazing to include: Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, and Organizational Hazing. Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, and Organizational Hazing (defined below) are each prohibited by Alvernia University Policy. It shall not be a defense to a violation of this Policy

¹ “Organization” includes any organization, regardless of whether the organization is or was established or recognized by Alvernia University.

that the consent of the minor or student was sought or obtained, or that the conduct was sanctioned or approved by the organization.

Hazing: 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 items listed below in (1) — (8) or otherwise causes or creates a risk of physical or psychological injury, beyond the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or organization. Hazing shall NOT include reasonable and customary athletic, law enforcement or military training, contests, competitions or events.

1. Violate Federal or State criminal law;
2. Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the minor or student to a risk of emotional or physical harm;
3. Endure brutality of a physical nature, including but not limited to whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics or exposure to the elements;
4. Endure brutality of a mental nature, including but not limited to activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact, being restricted from practicing personal hygiene or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment;
5. Endure brutality of a sexual nature or be caused, coerced, or induced to perform a sexual act or to be exposed indecently;
6. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the minor or student or places a person in reasonable fear through the use of threatening words or conduct.
7. Be transported against their will.
8. Be caused, coerced, or induced to perform an act of personal servitude.

Aggravated Hazing: A person commits the offense of aggravated hazing if the person commits a violation of Hazing that results in serious bodily injury i.e. bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ, or death to the minor or student; and

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the minor or student; or
2. The person causes, coerces, or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the minor or student.

Organizational Hazing: An organization commits the offense of Organizational Hazing if the organization intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly promotes or facilitates a violation of Hazing or Aggravated Hazing.

Section VI: Reporting Violations of this Policy

Alvernia University encourages all members of the Alvernia University community who believe that they have witnessed, experienced, or are aware of conduct that constitutes Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, or Organizational Hazing in violation of this Policy to report the violation to:

1. Director of Public Safety
George Smith
Dr. Frank A. Franco Library Learning Center 105A
400 St. Bernardine St., Reading, PA 19607
(610) 790-1975
george.smith@alvernia.edu
2. Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Abby Swatchick
Campus Commons 204
400 St. Bernardine St., Reading, PA 19607
(610) 796-8205
Abby.swatchick@alvernia.edu
3. Director of Community Standards
Corinne Iya
Campus Commons 104G
400 St. Bernardine St., Reading, PA 19607
(610) 796-5114
corinne.iya@alvernia.edu

Pennsylvania Safe Harbor law provides protection from criminal prosecution to individuals who make an immediate report of hazing to obtain medical attention for a victim.

Section VII: Enforcement of this Policy and Investigations

Any violation of this Policy shall be deemed a violation of Alvernia University Code of Citizenship and applicable laws. All allegations of Hazing, Aggravated Hazing, or Organizational Hazing will be investigated by Public Safety and referred to Community Standards for follow up based on the results of the investigation(s)

Section VIII: Sanctions

Sanctions will be imposed for violations of this policy, even if another Alvernia University policy or policies are violated and sanctions are imposed pursuant to that other policy or policies.

Anyone found responsible for violating this Policy may face disciplinary action as stated in the Student Handbook including expulsion from the University.

Organizations found responsible may suffer withdrawal of University recognition and prohibition of future existence on campus.

Section IX: Institutional Reporting

Bi-Annual Report required by State Law

In compliance with state law, Alvernia University will maintain a report of all violations of this Policy or of Federal or State laws related to hazing that are reported to Alvernia University.

Alvernia University will update the report biennially on January 1 and August 1 and will post the updated report on its publicly accessible Internet website. This report will include the following information:

1. The name of the subject of the report
2. The date when the subject was charged with a violation of this policy or state or federal law related to hazing.
3. A general description of the violation, any investigation and findings by the institution, and if applicable, penalties.
4. The date on which the matter resolved.

In compliance with FERPA, no personally identifiable information will be included in the Biannual Report.

Biannual Report data will be retained for a period of five (5) years.

Annual Security Report

Beginning January 1, 2025, all reports of hazing made to campus or local police will be included in Alvernia University's Annual Security Report, which is published by October 1st of each year. The first Annual Security Report to include hazing statistics information will be the 2026 Annual Security Report.

Campus Hazing Transparency Act Report

Beginning July 1, 2025, Alvernia University will begin to collect data for its Campus Hazing Transparency Act Report. The Campus Hazing Transparency Act Report will include all incidents of hazing for which a finding of responsibility is issued. The first report will be made publicly available on Alvernia University's Internet website no later than December 23, 2025, or upon the first finding of responsibility for hazing. Thereafter, the report will be updated biannually no later than December 23rd and June 23rd of each year. In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, no personally identifiable information will be included in the Campus Hazing Transparency Act report, except as permitted by FERPA regulations at 34 C.F.R. 99.31. Campus Hazing Transparency Act report data will be retained for a period of five (5) years.

This report will include the following information:

1. The name of the organization
2. A description of the violation, including the date of incident, the date an investigation was commenced, and any alcohol or illegal drugs involved in the incident.
3. A description of the finding issued by the University.
4. The sanctions placed on the organization by the University.

Section X: Prevention and Education Strategies

In furtherance of this Policy, Alvernia University provides students and employees with training on hazing deterrence and prevention, including training on this policy, bystander intervention training, training on ethical leadership, and training on methods for promoting group cohesion without the use of hazing.