

# Hazing and Bullying Policy

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## I. PURPOSE

Goucher College is committed to providing a healthy, safe, and productive educational environment for all members of the College community. Consistent with this commitment, the College prohibits hazing, bullying, cyberbullying, and related misconduct from all sources and in all its programs and activities (academic and co-curricular).

## II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Goucher College.

## III. POLICY STATEMENT

Hazing, bullying, cyberbullying, and related misconduct are expressly prohibited by Goucher College. Individual students, or campus organizations, who commit an act of hazing, bullying, cyberbullying, or related misconduct are subject to disciplinary action by the College up to and including dismissal, and may be referred to local authorities.

The State of Maryland prohibits hazing as outlined in Maryland Anti Hazing Law (§ 3-607): A person may not recklessly or intentionally do an act or create a situation that subjects a student to the risk of serious bodily injury for initiation into a student organization of a school, college, or university. A student's implied or expressed consent to hazing is not a defense under this section. The College's anti-hazing policies apply to all student groups and organizations on campus.

Maryland law makes it illegal to participate in or cause acts of hazing. A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, on conviction, is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding \$500 or both. In addition, under Maryland law, consent of those being hazed will not be accepted as a defense for those who violate college policies on hazing.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

**Bullying:** Persistent unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying may inflict harm or distress, including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

**Campus organization:** Any social, honor, service, athletic, recreational group, or team.

**Cyberbullying:** Bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. In addition, it can include sharing personal or private information about someone else, causing embarrassment or humiliation.

**Hazing:** Any action taken, or situation created intentionally, whether on or off campus, inflicted on the person(s) joining a group or member(s) of a group that creates mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. Hazing includes any psychological or physical requirement, request, or obligation which emphasizes one individual's power over others; that could cause pain, disgrace, or injury; that is personally degrading; and/or that violates any federal, state, local law or university policy.

## V. PROCEDURES

If a person becomes aware of conduct that possibly violates this policy, the individual must make a report to the [Dean for Students](#) as soon as possible. The Dean for Students & Associate Vice President or designee receives the report, makes an initial evaluation of the information received, and determines appropriate next steps given the information received and specific circumstances of the situation.

When appropriate, the College will investigate. If the conduct violates the policy, it will stop the prohibited conduct, remedy its effects, and take measures to prevent a recurrence of prohibited conduct in the future.

## VI. RESOURCES/FAQ

[Stop Bullying](#)

[Stop Hazing](#)

## VII. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

The [Office of the Vice President & Dean of Students](#)

## VIII. HISTORY

Adopted: September 2023