

Subject: FW: Hazing Prevention, Student Safety and RSO Accountability
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From: Thaxton, Macey
To: Student Media Ten
Attachments: image001.png

From: DoNotReply <DoNotReply@ou.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, 13 October 2026 17:36:56
Subject: Hazing Prevention, Student Safety and RSO Accountability



Dear Registered Student Organization Presidents and Advisors:

As Chief of Police at the University of Oklahoma, I am writing to address serious concerns about hazing and student safety and to reinforce expectations for all registered student organizations across the OU Norman, Harold Hamm Health, and OU-Tulsa Campuses.

The University has received multiple reports of suspected hazing this semester. While a report does not establish that a violation occurred, these concerns warrant immediate attention. Every organization and individual involved is entitled to a fair process, and a report begins a process of gathering information and determining what occurred. Student organizations are an important part of the OU experience, providing opportunities for leadership, service, friendship, and meaningful connections. Those opportunities carry a responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of every member.

Hazing is prohibited by University policy and Oklahoma law. Under Oklahoma law (21 O.S. § 1190), hazing includes conduct that recklessly or intentionally endangers a student's mental or physical health or safety in connection with initiation, admission or affiliation with an organization. Hazing may involve pressured alcohol or drug consumption, dangerous physical activity, humiliation, intimidation or other harmful practices. An activity does not become acceptable because it is considered a tradition, has occurred before or appears voluntary. Any hazing activity on which initiation, admission or affiliation is directly or indirectly conditioned is presumed by law to be a forced activity, even if the student willingly participates. 21 O.S. § 1190(B). The statute also makes the University's policy prohibiting hazing part of the bylaws of every organization operating at the University. 21 O.S. § 1190(C).

The legal consequences can be significant. Under Oklahoma's hazing statute, individuals convicted of hazing may face up to 90 days in jail, a fine of up to \$500 or both. Organizations convicted of hazing may be fined up to \$1,500 and required to forfeit, for not less than one year, all rights and privileges of operating at the University. Related conduct involving assault, sexual violence, drugs or providing alcohol to minors may constitute separate criminal offenses, including felonies. For example, furnishing alcohol to a person under 21 is a crime under 37A O.S. § 6-120, and a second or subsequent offense is a felony. Depending on the circumstances, individuals and organizations may also face civil liability.

Accountability extends to off-campus conduct. Student organization activities may take place in private residences, event venues and other off-campus locations. The OU Police Department works closely with local law enforcement agencies and other appropriate authorities to address criminal conduct within their respective jurisdictions and refers matters to the appropriate prosecuting authorities where warranted.

Separately, OU's [Student Rights and Responsibilities Code](#) may apply to certain off-campus conduct, including activities involving our student organizations.

University disciplinary proceedings and criminal investigations are separate processes. A University outcome does not resolve an individual's or an organization's criminal exposure, and the absence of criminal charges does not prevent the University from acting under its own policies. Depending on the findings, students and organizations may face University sanctions, including restrictions on activities, changes to new member activities, educational outcomes, probation, suspension or loss of University recognition. Individual members may also face University sanctions separate from any consequences imposed on the organization. Organizations affiliated with regional, national or international entities may face additional consequences from those entities, including suspension or closure.

Reports involving sexual misconduct are addressed through the University's applicable policies and reporting processes, including the [Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#). Organizations found responsible for hazing are also subject to applicable public disclosure requirements through OU's [Campus Hazing Transparency Report](#). Those reports are publicly available, including to prospective members and their families.

Prevention requires action from those entrusted with student organization leadership. OU provides education on hazing prevention, alcohol and other drugs, consent, bystander intervention and sexual violence prevention. Presidents and advisors should connect with their campus Student Affairs office for available training and resources and ensure members understand applicable University policies and participate in any required educational programming. Education is important, but it must be reflected in the decisions members make and the behavior organization leaders allow.

I am asking registered student organization presidents and advisors to take the following steps:

- **Review activities before they occur.** Presidents and advisors need to work together to review recruitment, initiation, new member and other organization activities. Do not permit hazing or dangerous practices. Ensure activities comply

with applicable University policies, including alcohol, event registration and risk management requirements. Contact your campus Student Affairs office if you are uncertain whether an activity is appropriate.

- **Exercise active oversight.** Organization officers and advisors must address warning signs, including concerns raised during meetings or in group chats. Advisors should be present and engaged, particularly during recruitment, initiation and new member activities. Leaders should know what is occurring at organization events and address unsafe behavior. Knowingly permitting underage guests to possess or consume alcohol at a residence or on property one controls may itself be a criminal offense under 37A O.S. § 6-101. Organizations affiliated with regional, national or international entities should coordinate with those entities and the University when concerns arise. Those processes should not delay reporting or accountability.
- **Report concerns promptly.** You do not need to determine whether conduct meets the definition of hazing before reporting it. Do not delay reporting to conduct an internal inquiry, discourage anyone from coming forward or delete relevant information. Preserve messages, group chats, photographs and other records, and cooperate with University and law enforcement investigations.
- **Intervene and prevent retaliation.** If an activity is getting out of hand, stop it when safe to do so. Challenge inappropriate behavior and seek assistance. Retaliation against anyone who reports suspected hazing or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

Our concern extends beyond hazing. Excessive alcohol consumption, impaired driving, drug use, unsafe transportation, sexual misconduct, assault and other dangerous behavior connected to student organization activities can have serious consequences wherever they occur.

If someone is experiencing alcohol poisoning, an overdose or another medical emergency, call 911 immediately. Stay with the person and do not allow concerns about disciplinary consequences or the organization's reputation to delay getting help. OU's [Amnesty Policy](#) provides certain protections for students who seek emergency assistance involving alcohol or other drugs. Regardless of potential consequences, never delay calling 911 when someone needs medical attention.

Reports of suspected hazing can be submitted through [OU Stop Hazing](#) or OU Report It! at 844-428-6531, available 24 hours a day. To submit a report online through OU Report It!, select the appropriate campus:

- Norman Campus: ou.ethicspoint.com
- Harold Hamm Health Campus: ouhsc.ethicspoint.com
- OU-Tulsa Campus: outulsa.ethicspoint.com

For non-emergency campus law enforcement assistance, contact:

- Norman Campus: 405-325-1717
- Harold Hamm Health Campus: 405-271-4300
- OU-Tulsa Campus: 918-660-3900

Presidents and advisors may also contact their campus Student Affairs office for guidance on applicable policies, reporting procedures and prevention resources.

Reports of sexual misconduct may be made through the [Institutional Equity Office](#).

[OU Advocates](#) provides free, confidential support to anyone in the OU community who experiences sexual violence, relationship violence, stalking or harassment:

- Norman and Harold Hamm Health Campuses: 405-615-0013, available 24 hours a day.
- OU-Tulsa Campus: 918-660-3100, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; 918-743-5763 after hours and on weekends.

I ask organization presidents and advisors to share this communication with all members and new members and reinforce these expectations before upcoming activities. Presidents and advisors should work together to ensure appropriate oversight and accountability throughout the year.

OUPD and our law enforcement partners are committed to prevention as well as enforcement. Our goal is to prevent harm before anyone is injured. Every student who participates in a student organization, on any OU campus, deserves to build meaningful relationships, participate without fear of harm and return home safely.

Look out for one another. Hold one another accountable. Speak up and act before someone gets hurt.

Derek A. Fuller
Chief of Police and Associate Vice President
The University of Oklahoma Police Department