



# Hamilton

March 1, 2011

Dear Campus Community,

The purpose of this message is to reiterate the Hamilton College policy on hazing. Hazing of any kind violates Hamilton College Policy and is against the law in New York State. Pledging, which has begun for most fraternities and sororities, may last no longer than 7 weeks and **must end for all organizations by Friday, April 22, 2011.** The College's official policy on hazing can be found online in the student handbook.

**Simply put, hazing is any action taken or situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. *Activities shall be presumed to be forced, regardless of an individual's willingness to participate.* Such activities may include but are not limited to the following:**

- **Forcing or requiring an individual to drink alcohol or use other substances or consume unreasonable amount of food or decent and edible meals** (examples include excessive drinking, taking away meal cards for a period of time or only allowing students to eat what they are given by other members)
- **Engaging in activities that compel an individual or group to remain at a certain place, or transporting anyone anywhere without their knowledge and/or consent** (examples include walking in specific patterns on campus, late night swims away from campus, kidnaps or drop-offs where students are given no directions, shoes and/or limited clothing, or requiring another student to do your laundry or other chores)
- **Creating excessive fatigue or distress through the deprivation of privacy and/or sufficient sleep** (examples include requiring a student to live away from their own residence, forcing students to remain up all night or to sleep in uncomfortable positions, on-call late-night driving, group sleeping rooms)
- **Participating in morally degrading or humiliating games and activities** (examples include requiring students to dress in costume or in drag, or perform embarrassing skits in public)
- **Participation in or creation of situations that cause physical harm or emotional strain, such as causing a member or non-member to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule** (examples include using brutality or force, fighting, prohibiting eye contact with individuals or groups of people, avoiding physical contact (tagging) from other members)

***Still confused? Ask yourself these questions:***

Would I feel comfortable participating in this activity if my parents were watching? Would we get in trouble if the Dean of Students walked by? Am I doing anything illegal? Does participation violate my values or those of my organization? Is it causing emotional distress or stress of any kind to myself or others? Could I defend my behavior in court?

**Spending a considerable amount of time questioning whether or not a particular activity violates the hazing policy is usually a good indication that the activity may indeed be considered hazing. For additional clarification, or to discuss the matter further in a safe and confidential setting, feel free to contact me directly in the Student Activities Office (859-4194) or via email ([lmagnare@hamilton.edu](mailto:lmagnare@hamilton.edu)). Thank you for your immediate attention to this information.**

Sincerely,

Lisa Magnarelli  
Assistant Dean of Students for Campus Life