

UW-RIVER FALLS REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATION AND STUDENT GROUP CODE OF CONDUCT

Any violation of the following regulations by an RSO/Student Group may result in disciplinary sanctions against the organization/group. Registered Student Organizations/Student Groups are not exempt from discipline for such actions under this Policy that constitute violations of federal, state or local laws, and may be subject to additional action by an appropriate university conduct body.

Definitions

1. Registered Student Organizations (RSO) – a group of students who gather for a common purpose that are recognized by the University’s Student Involvement Office
 - a. Includes Competitive Sport Clubs/Teams
2. Student Groups – a group of students who gather for a common purpose that are operating as a unit but are not registered with Student Involvement
 - a. Includes Intramural teams
 - b. Non-registered student organizations

All Registered Student Organizations and Student Groups must abide by the below expectations. Alleged violations of this code of conduct will result in an investigation conducted by the Dean of Students Office.

1. RSOs/Student Groups must comply with the eligibility requirements and financial regulations published in the [Student Organization Resource and Policy Guide](#).
2. Discrimination: RSOs/Student Groups shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed other than commitment to the beliefs of the organization, religion, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status parental status, or sex, unless pursuant to an exception recognized by applicable federal and state law.
 - Student organizations that select their members or officers on the basis of commitment to a set of beliefs (e.g., religious or political beliefs) may limit membership, officer positions, or participation in the organization to students who, upon individual inquiry, affirm that they support the organization’s goals and agree with its beliefs, so long as no student is excluded from membership, officer positions, or participation on the basis of their race, color, creed other than commitment to the beliefs of the organization, religion, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status or parental status, or, unless exempt under Title IX, sex.
3. Law violation: RSOs/Student Groups may be subject to university disciplinary action as a result of violations of federal, state, or local laws not otherwise addressed in this Policy.
4. Policy: RSOs/Student Groups shall be responsible for compliance with all University policies (including UWS Chapters 14, 17, 18, as well as all administrative policies) and all reasonable requests related to the application and enforcement of these policies.
 - These may include, but are not limited to, the use of University facilities and grounds, fleet vehicles, electronic information technology and facility reservation contracts, and the Registered Student Organization Code of Conduct.

5. Individual policy violation: RSOs/Student Groups may be subject to university disciplinary action as a result of actions of individual members of the organization undertaken while representing the organization.
6. Assumption of Risk: By participating in student organizations, as a member and/or as a participant, it is assumed participation is voluntary and by its very nature, carries with it certain inherent risks. Specific risks vary based upon the activity and can range from minor injuries to catastrophic accidents that can result in major injury or death. UW-River Falls encourages participants to consult with a doctor regarding any strenuous activity since no health or accident insurance is provided for student organization participants by the University of Wisconsin-River Falls or the State of Wisconsin. Participants acknowledge, understand, and accept the risks that are inherent in participation in student organization activities and assert that participation is voluntary and that participants assume all such risks.
7. Risk Management: While conducting business or participating in events, an RSO/Student Group shall be responsible for all activities and/or damages that may result. An RSO/Student Group must exercise reasonable caution to ensure that it and its contracted agents and vendors not cause harm and/or damage to the property of students, University employees, the University, or other organizations. RSOs/Student Groups are responsible for not harming individuals or fostering an environment that may constitute a serious danger to the personal safety or well-being of a member or guest of the University community and do not obstruct or seriously impair University run or University authorized activities.
 - RSOs/Student Groups should abide by and utilize [UWRF's Risk Assessment Matrix](#) when planning activities/events to ensure risk is minimized.
8. Non- RSO/Student Group Partnership: May not knowingly organize, sponsor, cosponsor, or in any way coordinate an event with any student organization that has been prohibited from participating in that type of event or has had its RSO/Student Group status terminated. If an RSO/Student Group is suspended or on probation, the RSO/Student Group shall not participate in any activities which would violate the conditions of the suspension or probation.
9. Honest Communication: Are accountable, through their primary contact, officers, and other designated representatives, to the University. When an organization's primary contact, officers, or other designated representatives make a knowingly false statement, either orally or in writing, to any University employee, committee, or agent, on a matter relating to the activities of the organization or its members, the organization shall be subject to disciplinary action.
10. Updated Rosters: It is an expectation that RSOs/Student Groups and competitive sports teams provide updated membership rosters via FalconsConnect by October 1st of each Fall semester.
 - Organizations must also submit any updated contacts to the Student Involvement Office if/when contacts or the contact information for contacts change.
11. Alcohol and Drugs: Registered student organizations/student groups that serve or permit possession of alcoholic beverages and/or other drugs, including controlled substances, at student organization functions, on or off campus, may be disciplined if violations of alcohol and/or drug policies, laws, or other university regulations occur at student organization functions if the violations involve members and/or guests.

12. Hazing: Membership in a registered student organization at UWRF is intended to be a valuable and beneficial experience to each student who takes part. RSOs/Student Groups are expected to provide new members with an orientation that is positive, informative and in alignment with federal, state, and local laws, as well as UWRF policies. Any form of hazing is prohibited by University policy and Wisconsin State Law, in accordance with Wisconsin statute 948.51 which can be further understood [here](#). An RSO/Student Group shall not conduct or condone any activity expected of someone joining the RSO/Student Group or to maintain full status in the RSO/Student Group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, endangers, sexually violates, causes emotional and/or physical harm, or requires a person to give up personal liberty regardless of the person's willingness to participate. If this behavior is reported to the university, the university may investigate the concerns related to a potential hazing policy violation.

- Definitions:

- For activities to be considered hazing, forced or mandated participation is *not required*.
- If a new member feels that they will not be considered a fully participating member of the group or feels that they would be ostracized for not participating in particular behaviors, then such implied coercion would be considered hazing.
- SUBTLE HAZING: behaviors that emphasize a power imbalance between new members/rookies and other members of the group or team are termed "subtle hazing" because these types of hazing are often taken-for-granted or accepted as "harmless" or meaningless. Subtle hazing typically involves activities or attitudes that breach reasonable standards of mutual respect and place new members/rookies on the receiving end of ridicule, embarrassment, and/or humiliation tactics. New members/rookies often feel the need to endure subtle hazing to feel like part of the group or team. Examples include:
 - Deception
 - Implied requirement to participate in illegal or dangerous activities
 - Silence periods with implied threats for violation
 - Deprivation of privileges granted to other members
 - Requiring new members/rookies to perform duties not assigned to other members
 - Socially isolating new members/rookies
 - Line-ups and drills/tests on meaningless information
 - Requiring new members/rookies to refer to other members with titles (e.g. "Mr.," "Miss") while they are identified with demeaning terms
 - Expecting certain items to always be in one's possession
 - Servitude
 - Taking away cell phones
 - Not allowing class attendance
- HARASSMENT HAZING: involves behaviors that cause emotional anguish or physical discomfort in order to feel like part of the group. Harassment hazing confuses, frustrates, and causes undue stress for new members. Examples include:
 - Verbal abuse
 - Threats or implied threats
 - Asking new members to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire
 - Stunt or skit nights with degrading, crude, or humiliating acts
 - Expecting new members/rookies to perform personal service to other members such as carrying books, errands, cooking, cleaning, etc.
 - Sleep deprivation

- Sexual simulations
- Expecting new members/rookies to be deprived of maintaining a normal schedule of bodily cleanliness
- Being expected to harass others
- Engaging in activities designed to create excessive fatigue
- Smearing of substances on skin
- VIOLENT HAZING: includes behaviors that have the potential to cause physical, emotional, and/or psychological harm. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Forced or coerced (explicit or implied) alcohol or other drug consumption
 - Beating, paddling, or other forms of assault
 - Branding
 - Forced or coerced ingestion of vile substances or concoctions
 - Burning
 - Water intoxication
 - Expecting abuse or mistreatment of animals
 - Public nudity
 - Expecting illegal activity
 - Bondage
 - Abductions/kidnaps
 - Exposure to cold weather or extreme heat without appropriate protection
- Reporting: If there is an activity or event that could be considered hazing, RSOs/Student Groups are expected to report hazing by submitting a Report It form. If there is imminent danger or bodily harm, RSOs/Student Groups are expected to contact emergency services (911, UWRF police 715-425-3133, or City of River Falls Police 715-425-0909).
- Resource: Due to the complexity of hazing, additional information for RSOs/Student Groups to reference for other examples and commonly accepted definitions can be found at www.stophazing.org.

13. Complaints: RSOs/Student Groups shall abide by decisions of Student Involvement/Campus Recreation and the Dean of Students Office regarding complaints arising out of this Policy.
14. Retaliation: Retaliation is defined as intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any member of an RSO/student group for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege related to participating in a student group OR because a student has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner of an investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to RSO/student group misconduct. This behavior is strictly prohibited, and any concerns of retaliation should be directed to the Dean of Students Office for further discussion and possible investigation.