

# Anti-Hazing Policy

## Background:

In December 1987, the anti-hazing legislation, Chapter 269, Sections 17 through 19, was amended by the Legislature in Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1987. The amendment increases the criminal penalties for hazing infractions and alters the manner in which institutions notify individuals of the law.

Specifically, WPI is required to inform groups, teams or organizations of the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 269, Section 17, 18 and 19, which are below. **A club officer must read sections 17, 18, and 19 of this law and pass out a copy to each member of the organization.** Once you have shared the information with your organization, sign the bottom of the page and return it to the Student Activities Office. Have all of your members sign the attached sheet.

Not only is hazing against the law, but it is a practice which diminishes the integrity of individuals and their organizations. Hazing is clearly defined below, and has no place in our society, particularly at an institution of higher education.

WPI is committed to emphasizing that all organization activities be made constructive, educational and safe. Therefore, in support of the college's commitment to the mental, emotional and physical well-being of every student, it is the policy of the University and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that "hazing" in any form be prohibited, and its practices in any fashion be condemned.

## Commonwealth of Massachusetts An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing

*Chapter 269 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following three sections:*

**Section 17.** *Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$3,000 or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than 1 year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.*

*The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections 18 and 19, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.*

**Section 18.** *Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section 17 and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000.*

**Section 19.** *Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.*

*Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.*

*Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.*

I hereby declare that I have read "MGL c.269, Ss.17, 18 and 19" to the organization,

\_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_  
(organization) (date)

As \_\_\_\_\_ of the organization, I pledge that the organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this law.

Print your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_