



McGill

Memorandum

TO: Senate

FROM: Senate Committee on Student Affairs, Linda Jacobs Starkey, Interim Dean of Students and Chair, ex officio

SUBJECT: Policy on Hazing and Inappropriate Initiation Practices

DATE: November 21, 2006

DOCUMENT #: D06-27

FOR: DECISION APPROVAL DISCUSSION

ISSUE: Addressing hazing and inappropriate initiation practices among students.

BACKGROUND: In a memorandum from the Provost to the campus and the community at large on October 18, 2005, the Dean of Students was mandated to strike a Workgroup on Hazing. In addition, the Senate Committee on Student Affairs [CSA] was asked to draft an appropriate policy to ensure that hazing does not occur at McGill and that all students are welcomed into groups by means of positive team-building activities.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION Be it resolved that a new "Policy on Hazing and Inappropriate Initiation Practices" be included in the Handbook for Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Policy Statement

McGill University is committed to an environment of respect and to a *Charter of Student Rights*. The University insists that all students be welcomed to all activities by means of positive group- and team-building activities that respect the dignity, safety, and well-being of individuals, including their right to participate voluntarily without any pressure.

McGill University forbids hazing and any other form of inappropriate student initiation activity on property owned or occupied by the

FOR APPROVAL:

University, or in a University context. Hazing is defined as any activity expected of anyone as an explicit or implicit condition of initiation or entry to, affiliation with, or continuing association or membership with a group or organization, that humiliates, degrades, abuses, threatens, or causes a reasonable person to feel threatened, or endangers another, regardless of the person's willingness to take part. Inappropriate initiation activities are forbidden in all circumstances whether or not consent to participate is given by a person or persons. Inappropriate initiation practices include, but are not limited to, activities such as those provided in Appendix 1 of this Policy. Hazing and inappropriate initiation activities are regarded as non-academic offences under the *Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures* (for example, but not limited to Article 8). Depending on the context and circumstances, hazing also constitutes harassment, sexual harassment and/or discrimination under the *Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Discrimination Prohibited by Law*.

This *Policy on Hazing and Inappropriate Initiation Practices* applies to all types of activities including orientations for academic, athletic, and non-athletic activities and programs.

Hazing activities are potentially and frequently illegal. If any person's or group's human, civil or property rights are violated through an initiation activity, then such activity constitutes hazing.

In addition to the direct conduct of any forbidden practice in initiation activities, or other inappropriate initiation activities, engaging in their planning or organization, threatening a member of the McGill community with being subjected to such activities, or being a part of the audience, are themselves also regarded as hazing under this *Policy on Hazing and Inappropriate Initiation Practices*.

If any member of the McGill community is in doubt as to the appropriateness of any prospective activities, consultation with one of the offices or services listed below (see "Positive Alternatives") should take place before planning or engaging in the activity.

Procedures

Any victim, observer, or person with knowledge of a hazing or inappropriate initiation incident is urged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students (514-398-4990). The Dean, Associate Dean, or other members of the staff of the Office of the Dean of Students are available to meet in confidence with any student who, for any reason, is hesitant to initiate a complaint about a hazing or other inappropriate initiation activity, and will refer the incident to the appropriate University official.

Positive Alternatives

Assistance is available to any McGill group of any size and any type in creating positive team- and group-building activities by which to welcome new members and to stimulate the continuing allegiance and participation of members. All groups are urged to consult one or more of the following offices or services before planning welcoming activities.

For all athletic and sporting activities, students are encouraged to contact the Intercollegiate Office at 514-398-7003.

For all types of student activities, students are encouraged to contact the following:

The Leadership Development Program, First-Year Office (Office of the Dean of Students, 514-398-6913, www.mcgill.ca/firstyear), offers workshops and consultation with individuals and groups, and interacts with student associations with regard to alcohol policy, welcoming activities, and community involvement.

The Social Equity and Diversity Education Office, 514-398-2039, www.mcgill.ca/equity_diversity/, offers workshop-presentation materials on hazing, a fact sheet, and general consultation and educational activities.

Student Societies at the University and Faculty levels also offer a variety of programs and services to guide students and student groups in creating positive and welcoming activities.

RATIONALE:	Clarity about McGill's commitment to an environment of respect and understanding the consequences of hazing and unacceptable behaviours will help to promote supportive and constructive interactions between students and student groups.
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PRIOR CONSULTATION:	The Work Group on Hazing provided the Provost with a final report in May 2006. This report was subsequently submitted to CSA for review and discussion. On Nov. 1, 2006, CSA members voted to submit this policy to Senate for approval.
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NEXT STEPS:	Senate approval.
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1: Examples of Forbidden Practices in Initiation Activities
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Appendix 1: Examples of Forbidden Practices in Initiation Activities
(This list is illustrative, not exhaustive)

Requiring of a person or persons, or subjecting a person or persons to:

- yelling, cursing, or swearing
- wearing embarrassing clothing
- tattooing, head shaving, piercing, or branding
- mocking or degrading any individual or social group
- disrobing or appearing nude in a public or private place
- engaging in, or simulating, sexual acts
- including or excluding others based on specific characteristics
- providing personal service to senior members
- making prank calls or harassing others
- conducting interrogations
- performing calisthenics not related to a sport
- deprivation of sleep, or food, or hygiene
- paddling, whipping, beating or kicking
- serving alcohol to minors
- consuming alcohol or illegal drugs
- drinking games or competitions
- consuming distasteful food, drink, or any unwanted substance
- destroying, defacing, or stealing property
- participating in any activity without consent

To compel, or instruct a person or persons to engage in forbidden practices is also prohibited.