



Hazing Awareness

A Research Report from the
2024 Student Life Survey

Regional Campuses

Center for the Study of Student Life

April 2024



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explores student knowledge about and perceptions around hazing of undergraduate students at The Ohio State University's regional campuses. Data for this report are from the 2024 Student Life Survey. In January 2024, 4,165 students at the regional campuses were surveyed, out of which 882 responded, resulting in a response rate of 21.2%. Data were weighted to be representative of the full Ohio State population.

RECOGNITION OF HAZING BEHAVIORS

- Students were most likely to indicate that being physically assaulted (81.9%), being required to participate in a drinking competition/game (71.5%), and being yelled, screamed, or cursed at by other team/organization members (63.3%) are hazing.

STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD HAZING

- **88.7%** of students agreed/strongly agreed that hazing is unacceptable at Ohio State.
- **84.0%** of students disagreed/strongly disagreed that hazing activities are common at Ohio State.

INTERRUPTING AND REPORTING HAZING

- **72.9%** of undergraduate students agreed or strongly agreed that they knew how to interrupt hazing.
- **97.7%** of undergraduate students agreed or strongly agreed that they would interrupt hazing if someone's life was in danger.
- **82.1%** of undergraduate students agreed or strongly agreed that they would interrupt hazing if someone's life was not in danger.
- The **top reporting options for undergraduate students** were Ohio State faculty (**51.8%**), law enforcement (**46.3%**) and Ohio State staff affiliated with campus organizations for students (**44.4%**).

INTRODUCTION

This report explores recognition of behaviors, perceptions of the campus culture, and reporting resources related to hazing of students at The Ohio State University.

METHODS

The Student Life Survey is administered annually by the Center for the Study of Student Life to examine trends in student engagement, sense of belonging and satisfaction with the college experience. The 2024 Student Life Survey was administered to a population sample of 4,165 regional campus Ohio State students at the beginning of spring semester (January 2024). This sample comprised 4,165 undergraduate students at the Lima, Marion, Mansfield, Newark, and ATI-Wooster campuses. A total of 882 students responded to the survey, resulting in an overall response rate of 21.2%. See Appendix A for a summary of respondents' demographic and academic characteristics. Demographics of the students included in the report did not substantially vary from the overall Student Life Survey sample. Note that not all students who completed the survey answered every question, resulting in different totals for some questions.

WEIGHTING PROCEDURE

Responses were weighted to address differences between the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents compared to the general student population at Ohio State in the spring semester of 2024. Weights were adjusted so the survey data are representative of the student population at Ohio State. For example, 62.6% of survey respondents in the Student Life Survey were female, but 52.4% of the total population at Ohio State was female. The rake weight procedure adjusts for the over-representation of female students in the data to make responses more reflective of the student population, thus making the data more generalizable to Ohio State students. The procedure adjusted the base weight to the demographic data available on the sampling frame using sex, race/ethnicity and student status (i.e., undergraduate, graduate student or professional student). Weighted and unweighted demographic data for survey respondents is available in Appendix A.



DEFINING HAZING

The Ohio State University (n.d.) Anti-Hazing Policy defines hazing as doing, requiring or encouraging any act, whether or not the act is voluntarily agreed upon, in conjunction with initiation or continued membership or participation in any group, that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm or humiliation. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, use of alcohol, creation of excessive fatigue, and paddling, punching or kicking in any form.

The Spectrum of Hazing™ was used as a framework to create the items used in the hazing module of the Student Life Survey (Allan & Kerschner, 2020). The Spectrum situates different hazing behaviors on two spectrums: recognition and frequency. According to Allan and Kerschner (2020) recognition and frequency of hazing behaviors have an inverse relation to one another, meaning that highly recognizable hazing behaviors (e.g., physical assault) tend to occur less often while less recognizable hazing behaviors (e.g., use of demeaning names) tend to occur more frequently. Within these two constructs are three categories (intimidation, harassment, and violence) that were used to group hazing behaviors together by recognition and frequency. A summary of the Spectrum of Hazing's™ categories, recognition and frequency levels, and examples of behaviors is included in Table 1.

Table 1. *The Spectrum of Hazing*™ Summary¹

Category	Recognition Level	Frequency	Behavior Examples
Intimidation	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deception • Assignment of demerits • Social isolation • Use of demeaning names • Requiring members to always have certain items in their possession
Harassment	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats or implied threats • Degrading or humiliating acts • Sleep deprivation
Violence	High	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced alcohol or drug consumption. • Physical assault • Abduction/kidnapping • Sexual assault

¹This table was created using Allan and Kerschner's (2020) *The Spectrum of Hazing*™.



FINDINGS

RECOGNITION OF HAZING BEHAVIORS

Students were asked to identify if the behavior listed is hazing when required as a part of joining or maintaining membership in a student organization or group. Students could select 'never', 'sometimes' or 'always' as their answer. Items were predefined as different types of hazing using The Spectrum of Hazing™ created by Allan and Kerschner (2020). Items were categorized by their level of visibility (subtle/intimidation, harassment, violence and not hazing). Items were shown to students in a randomized order. Table 2 shows the list of behaviors categorized using The Spectrum of Hazing™.

Table 2. Hazing Behavior Items When joining or maintaining membership in a student organization or group, which of the following activities do you consider hazing?	<i>The Spectrum of Hazing™ Category²</i>
Be called an embarrassing name	Intimidation
Be required to only associate with people in the organization	Intimidation
Be required to participate in excessive exercise/physical activity	Harassment
Be yelled, screamed, or cursed at by other team/organization members	Harassment
Be required to wear matching outfits/clothing	Harassment
Be required to complete chores for active members	Harassment
Be required to participate in a drinking competition/game	Violence
Be transported to and dropped off in an unfamiliar location	Violence
Being physically assaulted (e.g., beaten, paddled or branded, etc.)	Violence
Be required to attend a new member meeting	Usually not hazing
Be required to attend an organization event	Usually not hazing
Be invited to a social event	Usually not hazing

² Items were assigned to overarching visibility levels using Allan and Kerschner's (2020) *The Spectrum of Hazing™*.



Table 3 show how students at regional campuses categorized the behaviors listed in the survey.

Table 3. Undergraduate Student Categorization of Behaviors

When joining or maintaining membership in a student organization or group, which of the following activities do you consider hazing?	Never	Sometimes	Always
Be called an embarrassing name	18.0%	35.6%	46.5%
Be required to only associate with people in the organization	18.2%	23.4%	58.5%
Be required to participate in excessive exercise/physical activity	17.6%	33.1%	49.3%
Be yelled, screamed, or cursed at by other team/organization members	17.3%	19.4%	63.3%
Be required to wear matching outfits/clothing	41.8%	49.6%	8.6%
Be required to complete chores for active members	19.6%	32.4%	48.0%
Be required to participate in a drinking competition/game	15.3%	13.2%	71.5%
Be transported to and dropped off in an unfamiliar location	15.6%	21.4%	63.1%
Being physically assaulted (e.g., beaten, paddled or branded, etc.)	15.2%	3.0%	81.9%
Be required to attend a new member meeting	69.3%	26.6%	4.2%
Be required to attend an organization event	58.3%	37.0%	4.7%
Be invited to a social event	75.7%	21.7%	2.6%

Note. The sample included responses from $n = 794$ - 797 undergraduate students.

STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD HAZING

Students were asked to rate their agreement with items about the presence and acceptability of hazing at Ohio State. A four-point Likert scale was used for these items (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). As shown in the pie chart, the majority of undergraduate (88.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that hazing was unacceptable in our Buckeye Community.

Students were also asked to rate their agreement with other statements on the acceptability and commonality of hazing at Ohio State. Most students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements shown in Table 4.

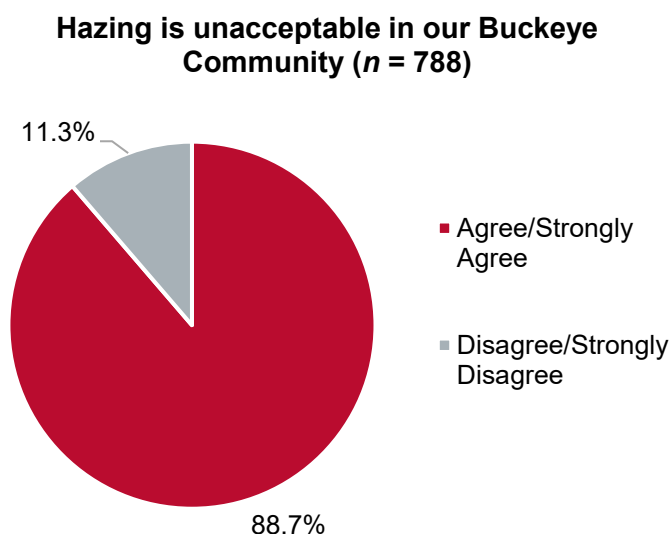


Table 4. Attitudes and Presence of Hazing

% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	Undergraduate students
Hazing activities are common at Ohio State.	84.0%
Hazing is an expected part of college life.	82.2%
Hazing is acceptable if it is an important part of the organization's tradition.	95.6%
Participating in hazing makes you a true member of an organization.	95.5%

Note. The sample included responses from $n = 784-790$ undergraduate students

INTERRUPTING AND REPORTING HAZING

Students were asked to indicate their knowledge and likelihood of interrupting and reporting hazing. A four-point Likert scale was used (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). Table 5 and 6 show student agreement on items related to interrupting and reporting hazing.

Table 5. Interrupting Hazing

% Agree/Strongly Agree	Undergraduate students
I know how to interrupt hazing.	72.9%
I would disrupt a hazing activity if someone's life was in danger	97.7%
I would disrupt a hazing activity if someone's life was not in danger.	82.1%

Note. The sample included responses from $n = 786-788$ undergraduate students

Table 6. Reporting Hazing

% Agree/Strongly Agree	Undergraduate students
I know where to report hazing.	59.7%
I would report someone I know for involvement in hazing.	87.5%
I would report hazing even if I was afraid of the social consequences.	88.7%

Note. The sample included responses from $n = 784-786$ undergraduate students.

Table 7. Who do you feel most comfortable reporting hazing to? (Select up to 3 options)

	Undergraduate students (n = 781)
Another Ohio State student	27.1%
Ohio State staff affiliated with campus organizations for students (in Sorority and Fraternity Life, Student Organizations, Housing and Residence Education, Recreational Sports, etc.)	44.4%
Student Conduct staff	28.4%
Other University staff (e.g., academic advisor, career counselor, program mentor)	42.0%
Ohio State faculty	51.8%
Someone outside of the university (a parent/guardian, volunteer advisor/coach not affiliated with the university, etc.)	20.3%
Law enforcement (e.g., Campus Security, Ohio State Police Department, Local Police Department)	46.3%
None of these	3.2%
Other (write-in option)	0.8%

Note. To enhance readability, some open-ended responses were edited for length, spelling, or grammar.

Other Responses:

- “Professors”
- “Academic advisor”
- “Anonymously”
- “Not sure where to report”
- “Anyone who looks like they could deal with it”
- “All of the above”
- “Chad Welker of OSU Lima”



Table 8. What Anti-Hazing training(s) have you taken during your time at Ohio State? Please select all that apply.

	Undergraduate students (n = 733)
The BuckeyeLearn Collin's Law: Anti-Hazing Training	77.2%
An anti-hazing training with an organization (e.g., with a student organization, Sorority, Fraternity, or Sports Club)	9.1%
Hazing training outside of Ohio State	9.7%
None of these	20.3%
Other (please specify)	0.4%

Note. To enhance readability, some open-ended responses were edited for length, spelling, or grammar.

Other Responses:

- "I can't remember, at least 2 different ones."
- "It was online."

CONCLUSION

This report shared findings from the 2024 Student Life Survey module on student awareness of and attitudes towards hazing on the regional campuses of the Ohio State University. Findings from this report indicate that undergraduate students on regional campuses can identify a range of hazing behaviors, but some hazing behaviors such as required matching outfits, name calling, forced completion of chores for other members and forced excessive exercise were more difficult for students to identify. Many students (88.7%) expressed agreement with the sentiment that hazing is not welcome at Ohio State. Just over half of undergraduate students (59.7%) indicated that they knew where to report incidents of hazing. Additionally, more students (51.8%) indicated that they were likely to feel comfortable reporting hazing to an Ohio State faculty member than any other reporting option. These results indicate a need for targeted education around hazing recognition and reporting at the Ohio State regional campuses.

REFERENCES

Allan, E. J. & Kerschner, D. (2020). *The Spectrum of Hazing*TM, StopHazing Consulting.

<https://stophazing.org/resources/spectrum>

The Ohio State University. (n.d.). *Hazing Prevention*. Hazing Prevention.

<https://stophazing.osu.edu/>



APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Note: Participant demographics below represent all respondents in the 2024 Student Life Survey.

	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent
Total	882		
Academic Level	882		
First-year undergraduate	514	58.3%	59.3%
Second-year undergraduate	203	23.0%	22.9%
Third-year undergraduate	96	10.9%	10.3%
Fourth-year undergraduate	41	4.7%	4.4%
Fifth-year or beyond undergraduate	28	3.2%	3.1%
Gender Identity	882		
Man	252	28.6%	37.6%
Non-binary	11	1.3%	1.2%
Woman	570	64.6%	55.8%
Another identity not listed	12	1.4%	1.3%
Multiple identities selected	21	2.4%	2.1%
Prefer not to answer	16	1.8%	2.0%
Transgender Identity	879		
Transgender	21	2.4%	2.3%
Cisgender	831	94.5%	94.6%
Prefer not to answer	27	3.1%	3.1%

	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent
Race/Ethnicity	882		
Black and/or African American	78	8.8%	11.2%
Asian/Asian American, Pacific Islander, Desi American, and/or Native Hawai'ian	41	4.7%	4.9%
Latine and/or Hispanic	27	3.1%	3.1%
Middle Eastern and/or North African (MENA)	7	0.8%	0.8%
White and/or European American	627	71.1%	67.2%
Multiracial and/or Biracial	65	7.4%	8.1%
Another identity not listed	6	0.7%	0.9%
Prefer not to answer	31	3.5%	3.9%
Sexual Orientation	878		
LGBQ+	196	22.3%	21.2%
Heterosexual/straight	649	73.9%	74.9%
Prefer not to answer	33	3.8%	3.9%
Generational Status	882		
First-generation student	400	45.4%	43.9%
Continuing-generation student	449	50.9%	52.6%
Unknown	33	3.7%	3.5%
Disability	881		
Has a disability	135	15.3%	15.4%
Does not have a disability	704	79.9%	79.9%
Prefer not to answer	42	4.8%	4.7%
Education Route	880		
Campus change	41	4.7%	5.0%
Transfer student	160	18.2%	17.3%
Continuing Ohio State student	679	77.2%	77.7%

	<i>n</i>	Un-weighted Percent	Weighted Percent
Residence	879		
On-campus	174	19.8%	19.0%
Off-campus	705	80.2%	81.0%
Sorority or fraternity housing	—	—	—
Campus	882		
Lima	150	17.0%	14.1%
Mansfield	134	15.2%	15.9%
Marion	168	19.1%	16.9%
Newark	327	37.1%	44.3%
ATI-Wooster	103	11.7%	8.8%