I. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Cornell University recognizes hazing as a serious campus and public health issue. Hazing encompasses a range of practices that pose risks to the physical safety and mental health and well-being of individuals joining or continuing membership in various clubs, organizations, teams, and other groups. The impact of hazing on individuals can be severe, long-lasting, and even fatal. It can result in negative consequences for those who haze, the groups they are involved in, and the wider institution. Hazing is an abuse of power and is antithetical to the values and learning mission of the university.

The Cornell Campus Code of Conduct (Article II.A.1.f) defines hazing as follows:

"To haze another person, regardless of the person's consent to participate. Hazing means an act that, as an explicit or implicit condition for initiation to, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in a group or organization, (1) could be seen by a reasonable person as endangering the physical health of an individual or as causing mental distress to an individual through, for example, humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning treatment, (2) destroys or removes public or private property, (3) involves the consumption of alcohol or drugs, or the consumption of other substances to excess, or (4) violates any University policy."

II. RATIONALE

Hazing is a cultural phenomenon shaped by factors at multiple levels. Therefore, hazing prevention requires a comprehensive, social-ecological approach that addresses individuals, groups, the institution, local community, national organizations, and broader society. Effective prevention of hazing is an ongoing process that requires campus-wide coordination and leadership by staff, students, faculty, and alumni. Therefore, a leadership structure for developing and guiding the university’s hazing prevention strategies is necessary. Furthermore, a campus-wide council is consistent with the recommendations of the National Collaborative for Hazing Prevention and Research in which Cornell will participate during 2013-2014.

III. CHARGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Cornell University Council on Hazing Prevention is hereby established in response to the need for a campus-wide approach to preventing and effectively responding to hazing. The Council will comprise staff and faculty members, students, and alumni. The Associate Dean of Students for Fraternities, Sororities, and Independent Living and Director of Mental Health Initiatives will serve as co-chairs of the Council and its Strategic Planning Team. The Executive Committee on Campus Climate, Health, and Safety will provide administrative oversight.

The Council on Hazing Prevention will be responsible for a) studying the campus environment in relation to hazing, b) fostering development, implementation, and evaluation of prevention strategies, policies, procedures, and services, and c) advising the Vice President for Student and Academic Services and President on opportunities for fostering cultural change, reducing risks, and increasing support for members of the community affected by hazing.

April 10, 2014
The framework for the Council’s activities is as follows:

A. GOAL

The university aims to achieve a campus environment in which hazing does not exist.

B. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS

- National data informs us that hazing can occur in a wide range of groups, including intercollegiate athletic teams, ROTC units, fraternities and sororities, performing arts groups, clubs, and services organizations.
- Survey data suggest that overall, four in ten Cornell undergraduates experience some form of hazing before graduating. Approximately one-half of intercollegiate athletes and one-half of fraternity and sorority members experience hazing, as do one in three members of other types of student groups.
- The prevalence of hazing within student groups at Cornell is lower than findings from national data (i.e., nationally 55% of all students who participate in some type of group have been hazed, including approximately three-quarters of student-athletes and members of fraternities or sororities).
- While institutional efforts to prevent hazing have historically focused on the Greek system, it is vital to expand prevention efforts to the wider campus.
- Hazing is typically passed from one cohort to another, with those who have been hazed becoming hazers.
- Leadership from peers and alumni are critical to hazing prevention efforts.
- Most students who have been hazed do not label their experience as hazing.
- The psychological consequences of hazing can be severe and the harm caused is often hidden from the awareness of others.

C. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

As shown in the figure below, the university’s strategic framework for hazing includes three main areas (prevention, intervention, and response) that include the following elements:

Prevention
- Education to increase recognition of hazing
- Healthy recruitment and group-building traditions
- Consistent and predictable enforcement

Intervention
- Empowered community of interveners
- Clear and confidential reporting options
Response

- Coordinated support for victims
- Swift, certain and meaningful consequences
- Transparent response to violations

**Cornell University’s Model for Transformative Change**

Public Health Approach to Hazing

- Coordinated support for victims
- Swift, certain, & meaningful consequences
- Transparent response to violations
- Education to increase recognition of hazing
- Healthy recruitment & group-building traditions
- Consistent & predictable enforcement
- Clear & confidential reporting options
- Empowered community of interveners
D. **PRIORITIES**

The Council will pursue the goal of eliminating hazing using the university’s strategic framework and focusing on the following initial priorities:

1. **Policy review**
   - Assess the adequacy and consistency of current policies (e.g., Code of Conduct, departmental policies).

2. **Research and evaluation:**
   - Develop and implement qualitative and quantitative methods for assessing hazing and related attitudes, perceptions, and practices.

3. **Education, training and communication initiatives**
   - Develop evidence-based or theory-informed strategies for: increasing understanding of what constitutes hazing; fostering pro-social bystander behavior within and outside of groups (including staff, faculty, peers, alumni, and family members); correcting misperceptions about normative community values and attitudes about hazing; increasing knowledge of the consequences of hazing; and increasing knowledge about the role of coercion and consent in hazing.

4. **Non-hazing group-building efforts**
   - Groups which use hazing activities often identify legitimate goals they strive to achieve such as membership bonding, development of leadership skills, and demonstration of commitment. We must develop and promote non-hazing activities to help groups meet their needs and interests in relation to cohesion and solidarity.

The Council will work through its Strategic Planning Team to establish work groups or committees as needed to address these priorities.

E. **MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Council will include representatives as follows:

- Students leaders from organizations such as:
  - Student Assembly
  - Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
  - Residential Programs
  - Orientation Steering Committee
  - Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
  - Fraternity and Sorority Tri-Councils
  - Cornell Minds Matter

- Staff members from departments such as:
  - Athletics and Physical Education (intercollegiate)
  - Recreational Services
  - Office of Fraternities, Sororities and Independent Living
  - Residential Programs
  - ROTC
Council on Hazing Prevention
Spring 2014

- Judicial Administrator
- Gannett Health Services
- Student Leadership, Engagement & Campus Activities
- Cornell University Police

- Faculty members with expertise in areas such as:
  - Organizational development
  - Group psychology

- Alumni from groups such as:
  - Fraternities and sororities
  - Varsity athletic teams

The council will also engage family members, local community members, and representatives from national organizations as needed.