

July 30, 2013

Message to campus from the Dean of Campus Life

Dear Colleagues,

The investigation and adjudication of alleged conduct violations by the Delta Zeta chapter of the Sigma Chi fraternity have concluded, and the outcomes have been shared with the fraternity's leadership and national administration. Because of the unusual level of public attention and interest last spring, I'd like to take this opportunity to share a summary of the outcomes with the broader community.

The review began with, but was not limited to, behavior described in the social media posts published in May. It was carried out under standard university policies and procedures for investigating and adjudicating the responsibility of organizations accused of violations of the student code of conduct. Conduct reviews regarding the actions of individual students will take place early in the fall term.

The chapter was found to be in violation of university conduct standards and a range of sanctions was imposed pending appeal. These sanctions include the following: The chapter will be removed from its chapter house and prohibited from recruiting and initiating new members until remedies have taken root; it must transform its leadership and develop educational and advising programs; the full membership must participate in programming endorsed by the University and related to healthy masculinity; it must also abstain from social programming for the duration of the coming academic year. It merits mention that even before these and other sanctions were issued, the national administration of Sigma Chi took immediate actions to address the situation, and it has been working closely with the University to craft an integrated and effective response.

I have already reached out to fraternity members regarding alternative housing opportunities on campus, and various faculty and staff members will support them as they develop their new educational programs. Our values and mission call on us to build a safe community in which we hold each other accountable, offer support when we fall short, and ensure that sanctions are not simply punitive but provide opportunities for education, restorative justice and personal development.

Of course, the issues raised last spring went well beyond the specific actions of one fraternity. Next month, I will share a summary of actions the University is taking to respond to the broader issues, which will be supplemented later in the academic year by recommendations from the President's Working Group on Sexual Assault and Harassment. The President's Working Group has posted its membership, charge, meeting schedule and work plan at <http://www.willamette.edu/about/leadership/president/pwgsah/index.html>.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this update, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,

David Douglass

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David Douglass, Ph.D.  
Dean of Campus Life  
Willamette University  
900 State Street  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
Telephone: 503.370.6447  
FAX: 503.370.6770

