

Dorm residents push for policy reconsideration on co-ed housing issue

It looks like the lines are being drawn for another skirmish on an old issue: will the University allow co-ed housing on campus?

It started a month ago. Freshman Chris Duyck wanted to know why fire doors separating men's halls from women's halls in Bean complex couldn't be opened.

He took the issue to Housing Department Director, H.P. Barnhart. Duyck quotes Barnhart as saying... "as long as I'm here, those doors will not open. I'm the top. You can't go anywhere else."

Barnhart denies he used those words. He says Duyck considers opening the fire doors a simple matter of having co-ed dorms. But he says opening those doors would also make for less privacy, less safety in fires, and disruptive traffic pattern through the halls.

According to Duyck, Barnhart said, "If you want to live in a co-ed dorm, go to the College Inn."

Barnhart says he did recommend the College Inn to Duyck as one alternative.

Complaints like Chris's have been heard before, and they have been answered the same way.

But soon the University will own the College Inn. The question it may face then is: if dorms with co-ed floors are available on the main campus?

Vice-President of Student Services, Gerald Bogen, answers the question very simply. "The University has never set itself out to be all things to all people... does not have the obligation to provide co-ed housing."

Bogen says he has never heard any requests for co-ed dorms.

He may be hearing one from the

Bean President's Council, the student governmental body in Bean complex. For the last two weeks, the council has had two committees working on the issue. If they determine most Bean residents want co-ed housing, they may request the University open the fire doors separating men's halls from women's halls.

By PETER MEAD
Of the Emerald

Chris Duyck's investigation of the chance of keeping fire doors opened showed it would cost the University little to do this. According to Jack Moore of the A & B Door Closer Co., fire doors that close automatically in smoke or heat would cost somewhere between \$60 and \$80 apiece. They would meet the city Fire Dept.'s standards, he says.

The cost would not include the cost of installation, however.

A sheer chance inspired Chris to take up the issue in the first place. In the first week this term, residents of third-floor Ganoë, a men's hall in Bean complex, discovered their laundry-room keys also opened the fire door separating them from third-floor DeBusk, the neighboring women's hall.

Most living in the two halls seemed to enjoy the result, a mild version of co-ed living. Until the fire-door's lock was changed a week later, they kept the door open, closing it around midnight each night.

No one filed any complaints that anyone remembers, according to the floor resident assistants. Some thought it was no noisier than usual, except when some Ganoë men skate-boarded through the hallways. Others said

the noise levelled off by the end of the week, as people got used to the situation. Many thought the residents acted more maturely, not less.

One housing department employee says the department opposes dorms with co-ed floors for philosophical reasons. "It's really not a question of facilities," he says, "it's a question of attitude."

To support that position, he notes that the housing department allows co-ed floors in the dorms for summer conferences and summer session students. "I see no reason why what they do in the summer with other people can't be extended to students."

But if the University continues with its present policy, the recent experience of the students in Bean will be the first and last case of co-ed floors on campus for regular session students.



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