

Code changes to be aired today

By Dan Eisler
Emerald Reporter

A public hearing on proposed changes to the University Student Conduct Code will be held today at 3 p.m. in EMU Walnut Room.

The proposals include several amendments to the code about reorganizing student conduct tribunals and appeals boards and establishment of "unwanted sexual attention" as an offense subject to disciplinary action.

In addition, another proposal involves reorganization and renumbering of the code. "Students can have input that directly affect students," said Marlene Drescher, director of the Office of Student Advocacy.

Muriel Jackson, University assistant vice president for administration, will be the hearing officer.

The offenses rule amendment, proposed by the Student Conduct Committee defines "unwanted sexual attention" as "sexual attention when a

reasonable person would know that it was unwanted and would expect that such behavior would cause significant emotional distress, on University property or at University sponsored or supervised activities."

The proposed amendment would specifically address sexual misconduct, which isn't currently defined or punishable in the code, Drescher said.

The current code isn't clear about rape or sexual assault, but Oregon law is, said Suzie Hunter, chairwoman of the University Unwanted Sexual Attention Task Force's policy subcommittee. "The task force felt a provision needed to be added."

Work on the amendment, a new provision, began in late fall and was proposed last term, said task force member Kirk Bailey.

Disciplinary sanctions that can be imposed for code violations range from a written reprimand to suspension or expulsion from the University.

In addition, the committee

concluded the rules governing the tribunals operated independently by the residence halls, fraternities and sororities, under its authority, are cumbersome and difficult to read, understand and follow.

The proposed amendments would place tribunals and appeals boards operated by the Interfraternity and Panhellenic councils and minor tribunals operated by the Residence Hall Governance Committee under the supervision of the Student Conduct Committee.

By also requiring the three tribunals to incorporate operating procedures into respective governing constitutions, the need for three separate administrative rules would be eliminated.

University administrators will review any testimony submitted prior to and during the hearing for a period of not less than two weeks after the hearing.

The rules will go into effect only after filing with the Oregon Secretary of State's office.

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