

Proceed with caution in housing changes

Michael Eyster, director of the Office of University Housing, has proposed new family housing eligibility requirements in the hopes of changing existing guidelines. But first he wants constructive student feedback, after which he will determine what changes to make.

His goal should be to restructure the guidelines in a family-oriented way. As it stands now, students with children are given priority — if they are within a specific income group — and married students are next. The new proposal instead gives priority to students with children who have demonstrated financial need, and gives preference to childless students who have financial need. Couples and affluent parents are given lowest priority.

Although the proposal has some good points, Eyster needs to straighten out a few significant flaws before it can be passed.

First, because the proposal would give childless graduate and undergraduate students with financial need priority over students with children who don't have financial need, the name "family housing" becomes a misnomer. A family, for the purposes of the University, is traditionally made up of a parent or parents raising a child, or two people sharing a relationship.

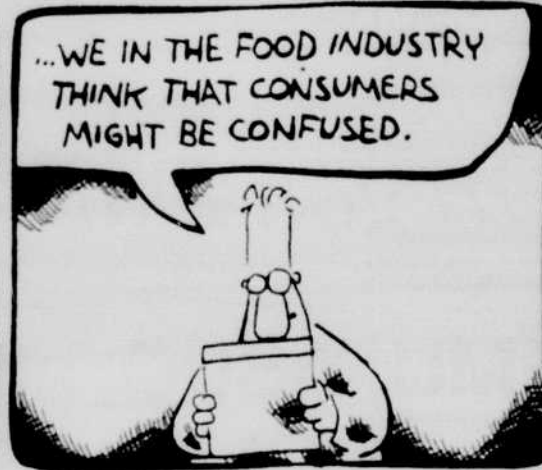
Under the current rules, single graduate students are last on the priority list, not second or third. Eyster needs to make clear whether low-income students will become the focus of the housing units, or if families will remain the priority. If the complex does focus primarily on low-income students, the apartments should not operate under the guise of "family housing." They should be identified as what they are — low-cost apartments.

Second, "financial need" has to be solidly defined. In the proposal as it was written, "financial need" meant people who receive financial aid. But Eyster said the proposal was inaccurate, and he will have a different set of guidelines based on a variety of criteria.

Eyster needs to make sure aid-less students who have children are given a fair shake at housing units. If one of these families can't afford normal housing, they should be given priority over single students, no matter what their tax returns say. There are always extenuating circumstances to every situation. There's nothing wrong with denying housing to affluent parents, but not all aid-less families are affluent.

Third, opening the units to non-married couples is admirable because it will allow homosexual couples to live in family housing. Unfortunately, it may also cause students who are looking for low-cost housing to just grab a roommate and sign up. That would be a blatant abuse of the new guidelines and needs to be prevented.

Family housing units need to be delegated properly. They are meant for parents and couples who can't afford a \$400-per-month apartment along with child expenses. And Eyster can't forget this.



LETTERS

Shipping out

Apparently there is some bitterness concerning the omission of Madonna's book *Sex* from the University library. Well, if Madonna is indicative of scholarship and leadership in current American culture, then I humbly request a transfer to a desk-job assignment in one of our overseas embassies. Thank you.

Scott Camp
Political Science

Lay off

I think it's about time someone spoke in favor of Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. Niki Rauch spoke out in her letter (*ODE*, Dec. 1) and said she was not protesting against the individual that raped her, but the fraternity itself. Her reason for not condemning the rapist was because he acted "maturely and responsibly" after the rape. She said Phi Psi promotes an atmosphere of rape, abuse and harassment to women.

Now let's get some things straight. After the rape happened, Phi Kappa Psi visited sororities to tell the girls what happened. Members admitted a rape had occurred, and that the pledge had been disaffiliated.

They said they planned a seminar for their fraternity members and pledges. I know they carried through with their plan because I went to it.

Phi Kappa Psi is as much a promoter of rape as any other fraternity, co-op, dorm or club. Any place where alcohol is served — and there are people willing to abuse it — there is an environment for rape.

People should stop laying the finger on Phi Psi. Members were at least responsible enough to admit to the rape and take action. We should lay our focus on the organizations that keep these incidents quiet. Stop using Phi Psi as the scapegoat to a much broader problem.

Isadora Fried
Finance

Stay home

This letter is written in response to the "opinion" written by Tammy Batey (*ODE*, Dec. 7). First of all, it is in my "opinion" that Batey's column is the exact reason as to why there are so many problems with race relations not only on this campus, but in society as a whole.

Batey and I attended the same meeting that her column was about (Korean/African-American race relations). I think. If we did, her column was based on totally misconstrued information in order to make the organizations that put on the forum look bad, as well as the people who attended it. But do not get me wrong, we really did appreciate her being there.

Secondly, Batey wonders why some people did not want people from the press there. Well, just look at all of the great press we received for it. A wonderful token article (*ODE*, Dec. 3) and, of course, her beautifully well-written, misconstrued fact containing "opinion" column.

It was that we were just too plain modest to have all of that good press come our way. We just wanted to share the fortune with others not so fortunate. But hey, thanks for coming.

Finally, if Batey came to the forum to try to learn and help, I'm sure all who were there appreciated her noble efforts, but she would have been even more help if she would have "stayed home in bed" with her door locked.

Craig A. Sims
Black Student Union

Left out

I was wondering where Middle Eastern students (Arab and Jewish students) fit in the neat little chart — "Minority Students at the University" — that appeared on the cover of the Dec. 7 *Emerald*.

I guess the answer is nowhere.

If any students should feel lonely and isolated, it should be Middle Eastern students because they are left out of the picture completely. Are African, Asian, Latino/Chicano and Native Americans really the only minority groups represented here on campus?

Christina Komeshian
TCF

Ask for 'Sex'

The *Emerald's* recent interest in library-collection building is both noteworthy and praiseworthy. Unfortunately, the University library's position was not presented fully and accurately in the Dec. 2 article on the library's review of Madonna's *Sex* for possible inclusion in the collections.

Cheryl Kern-Simirenko noted that if the library received a cogent statement of research or instructional need, the library would buy it. She further observed that the presence or absence of controversy was not a reason to purchase or not purchase. An item's relevance to the University's research and instructional mission would be the determining factor. Accurate inclusion of this information would have rendered the editorial superfluous.

Kern-Simirenko also noted the book's possible value to the study of popular culture and her expectation that research libraries with large popular culture collections would purchase it. The University library does not collect extensively in popular culture and therefore inclusion of *Sex* did not seem warranted.

These were all salient points in the discussion of the issues and should have been shared with the campus community. I regret you did not do so.

George W. Shipman
University Librarian

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