

Underage drinking is going to happen

The newly adopted alcohol policy went into effect earlier this week for many of the fraternities and sororities across campus. This policy was encouraged by the Student Conduct Committee in a way that could not be overlooked by the greek system.

Last year, the Student Conduct Committee came before the greek system and insisted that a method be developed to curb underage drinking. The fraternity and sorority presidents were led to believe that if a new system was not approved by the Student Conduct Committee and in motion by this fall, the University would no longer recognize the greek houses.

Without University support, a fraternity or sorority's national support would no longer be available, resulting in the closure of many houses. Railroaded through the system, this policy was intended to encourage a safer environment.

Students heading off campus bring to mind new problems.

Underage drinking, obviously not condoned in any way, is going to happen. To no one's surprise it's going on at college campuses across the United States. This new policy, to an ancient occurrence, will not stop underage drinking; it can't. However, it will cause it to shift.

It will shift to off-campus parties and a potentially dangerous environment that can never be as safe as those promoted at the closed-off environment of many fraternities. Minors will head to off-campus houses in an effort to maintain the same atmosphere that any other non-greek student has.

Students heading off campus bring to mind new problems, such as driving under the influence and drunk and disorderly violations, all of which are directly reflected back on the University by the school's students.

This new policy incorporates wristbands as a method of identifying those who are of age — a policy for an organization that is stricter than any city or state law mandates. The policy seems to alleviate very little of the original problem, a problem that for some reason has recently surfaced with the Student Conduct Committee after nearly a century of success in greek organizations.

Certainly, much of the liability is removed from the University itself; however, the problem has not been eliminated, just sidestepped.

Instituting this new policy provides little remedy and the potential for many new problems. The greek system, and for the most part the University, both seem to be better off sticking with the policy that has been in effect for the years prior.

The University may be off of the hook; however, the greek system is a combined 20 percent of the student body, and with a little pressure, things could change.



COMMENTARY

Mixing art, religion and University

By Bob Weigel

I recently complained about the yin and yang design in the sidewalk between Willamette and Huestis halls. It is one of the most well-known pieces of religious symbolism on earth, and because there wasn't any significant context to indicate why it had been put there. I was very clear about both of these points in my complaint.

I received a letter from the person who initiated the placement of this symbol. He told me that his intent, of course, was purely philosophical and not religious. There may need to be some clarification of terms here. The religions that use the yin and yang are basically just that. They are philosophies of life. Each person may claim that their religion is more than that, but a state institution is not permitted to recognize any religion as more than a philosophy of life.

I could justify putting a cross on the sidewalk, using similar reasoning to what was given to me saying, "I just put it there to symbolize the meeting of completely diverse lifestyles" because the cross is simply two lines, of different length, going in completely different directions and meeting in one point in space. We all know that this would not make it. They have agreed and the yin and yang will be replaced by the "infinity" symbol. Just for the record.

In contrast, let me note the library makes use of what could be interpreted as "religious statements." There is actually scripture posted right on the front of the building. It says, "... and the truth shall set you free," which was, to my knowledge, originally spoken by Jesus Christ, who some people started a religion about.

To print such a statement on a library seems appropriate. Just because a person looked at as a "religious leader" said it does not mean we must rub it out of every state-funded thing. It's very likely that some religious leader

somewhere has said just about everything that is worth saying. I believe the statement on the library signifies, within that context, a standard of excellence for the materials that are handled there.

Perhaps most people's attitudes have changed since that slogan was printed on the library. Perhaps people in the library administration really don't care about helping people lead people into the truth, but rather think everything that is printed should be stocked on shelves without questions being asked. Perhaps that is why there are so many people confused today, hurting themselves and others. Perhaps it is time we remove that slogan, lest we be hypocrites.

This will be my last letter as a staff person here at the University. I'm going to be doing some traveling, playing music and sharing the love God has shown me. I may not have seemed very loving to some of you at times. I don't always say things people want to hear, but I try to say things that I think will help them. I've talked to an amazingly small number of people who really want to help me understand why those things weren't really helping anyone. I guess that makes my point as well as anything.

I'm a broken-hearted man, seeing children I love drink poison and slash their wrists because they can't get enough of what this world has promised. I am compelled to tell them that they are worthwhile and that this hateful world is not the only thing to live for.

Most people seem to make judgments about who I am from afar over sitting down and sharing a meal and talking about why I am the way I am. There is fear. Fear that if we reason, we might clearly see the reason that the

assumptions we think we are so sure they have more holes in them than an atom.

I spoke with one professor who kept responding to my rebuttal of reasoning that he used in a letter to the editor with "that's no-nonsense." Wow ... that's such a tidy way of dealing with something you don't have a logical response for. I spoke with a student who broke down crying when they left his class, because he used the same dogmatic, unwillingness to reason and drive his students to frustration. He is a discredit to the title. This unwillingness to reason allows falsehood to poison entire societies, so they become wide-open targets for various "slave masters."

I've enjoyed working with the many people in my department. I don't need to mention names, they know who they are. As they search the motives of their heart, they find peace and continue offering warm smiles and open invitations of friendship to all those they meet. Thank you.

This world is often a very cruel place to people like myself, who do not have a secure job, or anybody else who is not committed to being a helper to them in their time of pain or weakness. Don't cry for me, I know my God will lead me and supply for me.

I know God is that friend to me. He has allowed me to be broken so that his love can shine through me. I love you all, even those who have spoken behind my back and avoided confrontation with me. I hope that someday you will understand what Jesus really did for me and you, and that we may reason together about things seldom considered at the University.

Bob Weigel is a self-described "free-spirit."

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