

Delta Sigma Phi

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free.

"It will make it easier on ourselves by the year 2000 if we are already rolling and know what's going on," Lyons said.

Interfraternity Council President Steve Sutton encourages fraternities to make the change on their own.

"It's a lot more painful process if they don't want to do it," Sutton said. "When a young student enters into a chapter, it's not just what we tell them, but what we do ourselves."

Enforcing the new resolution is a serious matter and new territory for the fraternity to explore. Members who bring alcohol into the house may have it confiscated and may go before a house board, Lyons said.

"A lot of guys know they can go somewhere else," he said. "In the house is not such a big deal."

Tim Loun, Interfraternity Council co-rush chair and Theta Chi member, said his fraternity's decision to go alcohol-free by the year 2003 may increase his chapter's membership.

The Sigma Nu fraternity, which has 65 houses nationwide with alcohol-free housing, studied the 1997-98 recruitment of new members. The fraternity found membership increased from the previous year on those campuses with an alcohol-free chapter.

Dale said he believes the Delta Sigma Phi resolution will attract new members who avoid the greek system because of the "Animal House" stereotype of binge drinking.

"We'll attract people who aren't just interested in getting wasted," Dale said.

A 1994 study published in the Journal of American Medical Association found that 86 percent of fraternity members engage in binge drinking, which is defined as five consecutive drinks for men and four drinks for women.

Nationwide fraternity membership is down 20 percent, and only 10 percent of the University campus is involved in greek life. Fraternity membership at the University is down 25 percent from three years ago, according to the Greek Life Office.

"The main idea for us is getting back to the reasons we started and the principles and values of 1856," Loun said. "We want to become better men, better leaders and a better fraternity."

Theta Chi did not allow alcohol in its houses until 1968, and Loun said the introduction of alcohol led to the first major infractions in the houses.

Liability insurance may decrease over time if the national fraternity commits to substance-free houses. Alcohol abuse is directly responsible for 85 percent of the accidents, injuries and assaults in chapter houses, according to the national Fraternity Board of Directors.

Three sororities have pledged their support for the substance-free decision. Chi Omega, Kappa Kappa Gamma and Delta Gamma have pledged to stop holding social functions by the year 2000 in fraternity houses where alcohol is present.

Lyons said the sorority support ensures chapter members will still be able to socialize with sororities. If the fraternity members who are against the resolution are told that, "it ends the discussion," Lyons said.

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