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PIKE Fraternity Put on Probationary Review

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PIKE Fraternity Put on **Probationary** Review



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PIKE fraternity will remain on probationary review through December 2007 due to an incident involving consumption of alcohol by underage students at the fraternity house.

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ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop University officials have placed an off-campus fraternity on probationary review through December 2007 and will monitor its adherence to a set of sanctions following chapter officials' acknowledgment that alcohol was consumed by underage students at the fraternity house in early February.

The action follows an investigation by Rock Hill Police Department into an allegation made by a 19year-old female student that she was the victim of criminal sexual conduct by an acquaintance at the chapter house after consuming a large quantity of alcohol there. City police later said their investigation found insufficient basis for bringing charges in the case; Winthrop authorities continued to pursue the underage drinking issue, which resulted in this week's actions.

In a letter to the president of the Winthrop chapter of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, Winthrop officials told the fraternity that they are to hold no social events involving alcohol (even for those of legal age) at the fraternity house for the remainder of this academic year, and they will be monitored as they carry out a variety of educational activities and programs regarding alcohol abuse, including hosting an alcohol awareness seminar in which at least 85 percent of all Winthrop fraternity and sorority members are to participate.

Dean of Students Bethany Marlowe's letter told the fraternity president that "the chapter will remain on probation pending the completion of these sanctions, followed by another period of probationary review and observation through the Fall 2007 semester. Probation means that any subsequent violations of Winthrop rules, regulations or policies will result in more severe sanctions." Marlowe is responsible for overseeing the university's student judicial process.

The letter also tells the fraternity that Winthrop expects the chapter to review its policy for allowing nonstudents to rent a bed in the chapter house. That Pi Kappa Alpha policy is unusual among Greek organizations, according to Winthrop spokeswoman Rebecca Masters, who said it contributed to the problems that occurred at the house on Feb.3.

"While Winthrop has no role in managing fraternity property, we are deeply concerned that this chapter allows nonstudents who are beyond the reach of the university's student judicial process to reside there," Masters said.

"Through the course of this inquiry, we learned that the acquaintance identified by the female student in her initial report was a nonstudent living in the house, and that he had allowed consumption of alcohol by underage peers in his room, in addition to drinking himself, while members and their guests awaited the arrival of transportation to an off-campus event," Masters said.

Since the incident, the fraternity's own Judicial Council has expelled the nonstudent from the house and banned him from attending any functions in association with the university in response to Winthrop's concerns.

Masters said the university will continue to monitor this aspect of the issue closely, in addition to its regular on-going initiatives against alcohol abuse among all students.

"This is an important issue nationwide, and it will continue to be addressed proactively by Winthrop," Masters said, indicating that the female student involved has been referred to special alcohol counseling. The outcome of any further student judicial processes are considered confidential

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