

# A Lesson To Be Learned From Rho Fiasco

## Staff Report

The bard, William Shakespeare, summed it up best when he said, "There's something rotten in the state of Denmark."

This time, however, there is something rotten at Fayetteville State. Recently, members of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc., were charged by a member of its own organization with assault. The Broncos' Voice won't go into complete detail, but let's just say this was a situation that got out of hand. The gist of the scenario is that the member who filed charges against the others said the attack was without provocation. The victim said she only reminded one of her attackers about possession of sorority paraphernalia in public.

Confused?

Again, without going into detail, The Broncos' Voice will make the picture a little clearer. Sigma Gamma Rho allegedly initiated a young lady they knew did not meet university criteria for admission. They told

her she would be initiated but could not wear any of the sorority's letters until she met full admission criteria, i.e., obtaining the required university grade point average of 2.5. The initiate agreed.

A done deal, right?

Not exactly.

As told to The Broncos' Voice by the assault victim, this initiate disregarded the plan and took it upon herself to have paraphernalia in her possession. She was approached by the assault victim and reminded about their agreement. The initiate conceded she made a mistake and promised it wouldn't happen again. Well, it did. She was again accosted by the victim and things went downhill from there.

Now, The Broncos' Voice isn't here to pass judgment, but it feels someone needs to be rapped on the knuckles, and hard, for what transpired.

First, Sigma Gamma Rho needs charm school lessons in how young ladies should

conduct themselves in public. Not that they are the only fraternity or sorority who could use instruction in manners and civility, but when such incidents happen in public view and they become physical, there's a serious problem and it needs to be addressed, and fast.

Criminal charges were filed against members of Sigma Gamma Rho by the victim. How sad. What does this say about sisterhood?

The university stepped in as well and served punishment on those involved. Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Olivia Chavis, said she punished those involved accordingly. Bravo. These ladies need to know such behavior will not be tolerated, especially from an organization whose aim is to promote sisterhood.

But as severe as the problem with Sigma Gamma Rho may seem, that's not the issue here. The whole brunt of this matter is the mere fact that a sorority was willing to sacrifice its own high standards, and The

Broncos' Voice now uses that term loosely, for the sole purpose of bringing in a new member. The question The Broncos' Voice must ask, "Was it all worth it?"

Let's hope the answer is "no", but Sigma Gamma Rho obviously feels otherwise. Plain and simple, the initiate didn't meet all of the criteria for admission, therefore, she should not have even been considered for membership. What part is so difficult to understand?

Let's face it, Greek-lettered organizations have been involved in dirty practices for years to weed out unwanted members, and to get those who don't meet all of the criteria. Some of those practices include rejecting individuals without even the courtesy of granting an interview, or interviewing candidates and not informing them at all of their acceptance or denial. Or, even worse, rejecting the individual simply because he or she isn't popular.

These unethical, blatant violations of university policy may be news to university administrators, but they are nothing new to Greeks who know how to manipulate the system. In that respect, Sigma Gamma Rho isn't the only guilty party. They just got caught. Other Greek-lettered organizations on the campus have been engaging in such a practice for years. The individual meets all of the criteria of the national body, but maybe fails to meet one rule of the university.

Their excuse: "My national organization only requires that we ... so we ..." The group then initiates the individual and then tells him or her that he or she isn't allowed to wear paraphernalia on campus, but they can elsewhere with hopes they are not seen by anyone from their school. The group doesn't submit the individual's name as a member to the university, but in the eyes of the organization and its national body, the individual is.

It is not The Broncos' Voice's practice nor place to call names, but the guilty parties know who they are. To say this is an unfair practice is putting it mildly. It's almost criminal, particularly for those students who work hard, have all of the necessary credentials, but are denied simply because of who they don't know and not what they know.

Here is The Broncos' Voice's charge to the university. Clamp down hard and issue firm punishment for those groups who participate in such practices. Initiating members without the proper grade point

average rips at the underlying fiber and principles of all Greek-lettered organizations—scholarship. This practice is a cancer. It's an abomination. It's a leach that's sucking the blood out of the sole purpose for which each of these nine groups stands.

And how can the university monitor this situation? Easy.

No Greek-lettered organization wants to compete for members, so most hold their interest meetings on different nights. The Pan-Hellenic advisor or designated official, graduate advisor and the graduate chapter president or designee must be present in order for the interest meeting to take place. Only those individuals who attend an interest meeting would be allowed to become members of a Greek-lettered organization, providing they meet all criteria. Anyone who doesn't attend the meeting will not be able to join. Yes, things come up. Emergencies happen. If an individual cannot attend the interest meeting, he or she must inform the graduate advisor and the Pan-Hellenic advisor of his or her reason for not attending. Once the groups have selected its potential candidates and are ready to move forward with intake and eventually initiation, the graduate advisor and a member of the graduate chapter should be required to sign a notarized statement informing the university they were present at the initiation, and the members listed were the only ones initiated.

The accountability for making sure those who do not meet university and organization criteria, will rest on the shoulders of the campus advisor and graduate chapter. Surely no self-respecting, law-abiding, advising adult wants to be a part of a plan where illegal members are initiated. Or at least we hope not.

Then, the university, not the organization, will submit to the groups' national body, the names of those students initiated during the spring of whatever year. That way, no names can be added to the list by, how shall we say, someone with their own agenda. In that regard, the student, if initiated properly, will be officially recognized by his or her school and his or her national body.

Then that initiate can attend university, local, state and national functions wearing paraphernalia without a cloud of suspicion hovering over his or her head, or without having their cover blown by a fellow

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