

opinion

how?

Greek questions validity of pledge bill of rights

by Bob Moser

"Sure, it was a good idea, but it wasn't carried out in the right way." This seems to be the consensus of members of fraternities and sororities at Elon about the recently enacted pledge bill of rights.

Though the idea of the administration to tell pledges of fraternities and sororities what they may not be expected to do may be a good one, good intentions are not enough.

Not A "Greek Effort"

The planning and writing of the bill was not an organized, cohesive Greek effort, as the administration has asserted. The bill was the result of the work of the Panhellenic Council along with William Long, dean of student affairs. After the bill was written up, it was simply approved by Panhellenic and the Inter-Fraternal Council. Many leaders in the Greek community who may have offered valuable input were left out of the process completely. The fraternities and sororities as a whole were not included in the process, since the bill was passed before it could be discussed in individual chapter meetings.

Perhaps because the Greek organizations were widely left out of the process of drawing up the bill, the content of the bill is a cause of concern for many Greeks. Many of the guidelines are extremely vague and open to a great number of different interpretations.

An example of this vagueness is in article three, which states that a pledge must not perform any act which "is immoral." As Brad Kesler of Sigma Pi Fraternity commented, "One man's immorality is another man's religion." Specific examples of what actually constitutes immorality would be necessary for this article to have some, if very little, effect.

Qualifications Needed

Qualifications of such vague terms as "unreasonable period of time," "normal amounts of sleep," "personal services," and "extended periods of time" are also necessary if the bill is to have a positive effect. Otherwise, the organizations may have a different view of what each article means. Conceivably, a Greek organization could be penalized for an infraction it unknowingly committed.

Another objection to much of the pledge bill is that fraternities and sororities on campus already have rules forbidding many parts of the bill. These rules have

been actively enforced by fraternities and sororities already. Pledges have been told in the past not to do anything that "is illegal," "places the pledge in physical danger or in jeopardy of losing his or her life," "interferes with the academic process," or "requires the pledge to consume alcohol." The violation of these rules is rare, and is generally dealt with within the organization.

A Distorted Picture

The inclusion of many articles in the bill is also incriminating to the fraternities and sororities. As Alpha Sigma Alpha President Beth Hungerford commented, "It makes us look like we'd been doing immoral or illegal things all along, and we haven't." Many non-Greeks may easily get a negative impression from the bill of rights and believe that the practices it outlaws have been common in Greek organizations.

Overall, the pledge bill of rights gives a distorted picture of the actual pledge period

Greeks agree that the bill of rights gives an unfair picture of the actual activities involved in pledging a fraternity or sorority. Nancy Fox, vice-president of Sigma Sigma Sigma, commented that "the purpose of all of the pledging activities we have is to promote trust and unity. Pledges only do things which help them to be a part of the sorority."

Many leaders in the Greek community, fear that if constructive pledging activities must be eliminated, the organizations will become very weak. Doug Surratt, president of Sigma Pi, said that "we are afraid that if we don't encourage pledges to learn the purpose and goals of the fraternity, the brotherhood will be lost and the concentration will be only on partying."

Pledging Is Constructive

The pledge period of Elon's fraternities and sororities concentrates on activities that will promote the spirit and purpose of the organizations, and part of the bill of rights attempts to eliminate activities which are necessary to promote these ends. One such attempt is in article 12, which prohibits "individual questioning activity." This activity is an integral part of the

pledge period. "This is the only accurate way to test a pledge on the history of his national fraternity and his chapter," commented one Greek.

One of the college's major objectives in developing a pledge bill of rights was to stop the downturn in grades that has occurred during pledge periods. Yet most Greek organizations have study times for pledges, and non requires a pledge to participate in a pledging activity the night before a test. Sigma Pi, for example, requires pledges to study in the library from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. every week night. Other organizations have similar rules to encourage academics and to discourage activities which interfere with studying. "It's not easy, but if a pledge budgets her time, she should have no problem keeping up her grades or even improving them," Hungerford commented.

Overall, the pledge bill of rights gives a distorted picture of the actual pledge period. The pledge freely chooses to engage in the pledge period, knowing what he generally will be asked of him before he accepts a bid. A pledge can quit any time he feels he is being treated unfairly or that the pledge period is detracting from other activities.

All pledging activities have a constructive purpose: to

promote trust and unity among pledges and members.

Bill Needs Revision

If the pledge bill of rights is to be fair and effective, it must be revised with the help and consent of officers from every fraternity and sorority on the campus. Laws which already exist in national and chapter by-laws should be consulted, and ambiguities in the regulations must be cleared up. Portions of the bill which give an improper representation of the Greek organiza-

tions should be reworded or eliminated. If a pledge bill of rights is compiled with the help of all the organizations, it will be a helpful and effective device to eliminate unnecessary pledge activities. As it stands, however, the pledge bill of rights fails to accomplish its objectives and is unfair to the fraternities and sororities of Elon.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The writer is a member of the Inter-fraternal Council and a member of Sigma Pi fraternity.

Housing sign-up cont. from p. 1

who have been accepted at Elon. The upperclassman must obtain a confirmation slip from the Office of Admissions, and bring this slip to the lottery.

As has been the case in the past, the Oaks will not be available to freshmen. "When we switched Moffitt and Staley, Staley had 202 spaces and Moffitt had 104. We have to move as many girls out of Staley as we could," says Klepcyk. "We decided to move them by seniority, so Moffitt ended up being all upperclassmen. Next year it will be more of a mixture."

Klepcyk says that organizations will be offered suites in the new dorm area. Also, next fall, two-thirds of the

rooms in Smith and Carolina will be "de-tripled." Those rooms' numbers will be posted on April 14, and they will be clearly marked on the large charts at the gym on April 24.

The weekend scheduled for the lottery is the weekend during which this area of the country switches from Eastern Standard Time to Daylight Savings Time. Students are asked to set their clocks forward sometime Saturday evening so that they arrive at the lottery at the right time.

On Tuesday, March 29, there will be a college program in Whitley Auditorium to explain the lottery and answer any questions students may have.



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