

SCAPE—May 4, 2012

Present: Morgan Levy, John DiSarro, Melissa Kelley, Alicia Lewis, Jared Hilton, Vinny Derienzo, Monica Smalls, Ben Swanson, Matt Skurnick, Mike Kemp-Schneider, Jessica Ecock, Laurel Contomanolis

Dean Levy: The topic of conversation today is how we should deal with organizations when it comes to a medical amnesty policy. We have never held an organization responsible just because someone was drinking and they called for help. We have held organizations accountable if they violate school policy by serving alcohol to underage students. In “An Examination of Factors Influencing College Students Self-Reported Likelihood of Calling for Assistance for a Fellow Student Who Has Engaged in High-Risk Alcohol Consumption” one influencing factor was membership or leadership in a Greek-lettered social organization. The people most likely to call for help were officers in said organizations followed by unaffiliated students followed by general membership of Greek social organizations. What do people think of extending the medical amnesty policy to organizations?

Ben Swanson: If you have 2 freshman drinking in a dorm room and they’re being served there does that differ from coming to a fraternity house and getting served there?

Mike Kemp-Schneider: My view is that drinking is an individual choice so why have organizations take responsibility for an individual’s choice?

Dean Levy: Say an organization calls Security for help because there is someone in need of medical attention due to drinking and Security arrives and finds an unregistered party of 150 people. In my mind this is different than an individual, residential room because it is 150 people with access to alcohol as opposed to 1 person in a room.

Alicia Lewis: Some students can tell you exactly where they got the alcohol they consumed and give details leading up to having to call MERT but some students can’t remember what they were doing or where they got alcohol.

Dean Levy: If the calling for help is in the context of a registered event, I’m not worried about getting the organizations in trouble. I’m more concerned about hazing events because if we get a call from a hazing event there is obviously not going to be amnesty for a hazing event.

John DiSarro: Looking at an individual situation I think it would be comparable to if a student calls from a room for his roommate and Security comes and sees marijuana in their room they will still get in trouble for that because the student calling is only getting amnesty for violating the alcohol policy, not other policies. Organizations would still be held responsible for hazing or fire safety violations.

Ben Swanson: I think we should remove any barriers from calling. Having been in a situation where you're at a social event, just by calling you're associating your organization with a negative occurrence even if you're doing everything right.

Monica Smalls: What is our threshold in allowing student organizations to potentially assist with the harm of an individual and not see any response to that? I understand the situation of a student going into a house where there is a registered social event who had already been pre-gaming, they get a beer, and that beer is what puts them over the edge into a dangerous state. In this case, give the organization amnesty. I'm uncomfortable with that happening a number of times and I'm uncomfortable with us having other things going on that might be even more dangerous and us not being able to respond to that. It's a threshold piece that we need to decide upon.

John DiSarro: With individuals it's not that there would be no response; the response would be educational rather than disciplinary. I think with groups it would be similar in that there would be some kind of response—perhaps not disciplinary probation but maybe looking at risk management policies, etc.

Monica Smalls: At some point, if we continue to allow an organization who has repeated offenses to host events, isn't that us being negligent in realizing that there is something wrong with the organization's ability to host safe events?

John DiSarro: If that's the case that an organization is continually serving underage students there are going to be people that get caught beyond just the person that makes the phone call.

Dean Levy: This is only for if there is a medical emergency and someone calls for help. If a freshman comes back to their residence hall and vandalized the hallway because they are intoxicated and claim they were at an organization's party, we would still hold that individual student accountable for their actions.

Alicia Lewis: How often is it that MERT is called to a fraternity house or other organization? To have a general rule that we will work things out with students can be a dangerous thing because some organizations might take advantage of it. To develop a general rule for something that only happens once or twice a year seems excessive to me.

Jared Hilton: Even if it's one or two calls a year those could be very serious calls about very bad situations. I'm worried that if someone shows up to an organization and are heavily intoxicated that the organizations turn them away to avoid being held accountable rather than get them the medical attention they need.

Ben Swanson: That is most definitely what happens. People are more likely to drive their friend to the hospital than to call MERT because they think the school is less likely to find out about it.

Alicia Lewis: I think it's an educational piece of letting students know that they can help their friends by calling for help.

Melissa Kelley: We have a bystander program that will start in the fall that will replace social host training and alcohol education programming so every student gets the same education through the bystander program. That program will help support whatever decisions and policies we make in this group.

Dean Levy: If an organization calls for help and we find out that hazing was involved, they will get in trouble for hazing involved. If someone calls for help because of a violation of the alcohol and other drugs policy, they will get amnesty for that violation but not other violations. I hear the concern about repeated offenses but I don't think that the numbers will increase drastically; we can always revisit the policy if it becomes an issue.

Mike Kemp-Schneider: We could formally do something about that by calling them in to have a conversation with them and hopefully they would respond to administration's power.

Matt Skurnick: If there is an organization that has to have a facilitated conversation, they are not allowed to register events with John until the conversation happens. That is kind of an informal way of putting the group on social probation until the situation is cleared up.

Monica Smalls: We need to make sure the education piece gets across the fact that the call is not what got the organization in trouble but other policies that they were in violation of is.

Dean Levy: I am thinking mostly about large registered parties. I was thinking we could hand out cards or put up a sign in all the houses that has important phone numbers that can be called to get help without getting in trouble.

Dean Levy: To review, we're thinking that medical amnesty should apply to organizations in the same way that it would apply to individual students so that if there were someone that needed to be transported, the organization would not get in trouble for that individual being too drunk. If when Security were responding to the situation they discover other policy violations, those would be brought through the conduct system like they normally would be. It's not that we wouldn't speak to the organization about the incident and there would be some sort of educational program involved but the organization wouldn't be put on probation or kicked off campus, etc.

Laurel Contomanolis: The question I have is what if it happens multiple times from the same house?

Dean Levy: I don't think it will be an issue of multiple offenses. I'm interested in how we're going to collect data about incidences. I think if we find out that multiple offenses is an issue we can regroup and have a conversation about that.

Laurel Contomanolis: There is an increased responsibility on fraternities and sororities that are serving alcohol.

Alicia Lewis: There might be an increase in calls but maybe not because there are more incidences but because organizations are calling more.

Matt Skurnick: I think there should be a harsher punishment if organizations *don't* call when necessary.

Monica Smalls: I wonder if there is a need to get all the student organization advisors together to talk about this so that we're advising the groups to effectively understand the policy and can speak to the policy.

Dean Levy: If this is something to put in place for next semester, we'll need to work on it over the summer thinking about assessments and the educational aspect. We still need to get Dean Feldman's approval. I don't think SCAPE needs to meet over the summer to make decisions about topics other than this. I will send an email to SCAPE about meeting over the summer to see who is available to meet over the summer about this.

Laurel Contomanolis: Will this policy change for off-campus organizations?

Jared Hilton: In terms of MERT I don't think the service provider should change their response if it's an off-campus call.

Jessica Ecock: I think if off-campus organizations are held to the same standards as on-campus organizations, then medical amnesty should apply to them as well.

Dean Levy: I will send a wrap-up email and get an idea of who will be here this summer to work on the amnesty issue. I will also send out tentative agenda items for the fall.