

Dear Students,

We're writing to clear up some inaccurate accounts of what have been described as excessive or punitive actions by the University toward Greek chapters through enforcement of underage drinking laws, anti-hazing policies and similar activities.

There have been several recent incidents reported, principally involving several Greek chapters. In addition to reports of hazing, there are concerns regarding social policy violations, irresponsible distribution and consumption of alcohol and failure to seek immediate help for others whose health or safety is at risk due to excessive alcohol consumption. The University's [medical amnesty policy](#) is in place to ensure that students seek immediate help and medical attention for fellow students whose health or safety is at risk.

In accordance with long-standing university policy, we have required the fraternity chapters where these actions allegedly took place to suspend all new member activities until an investigation into these allegations can be completed. These investigations will be completed in a thorough and professional manner.

It is a baseline expectation to have students who attend Lehigh feel safe, and to not feel pressured to act in any way that puts their own health and safety at risk. Please remember that the University cares first and foremost about your health and safety. When we become aware of circumstances where health and safety are compromised, we have a moral obligation and a legal responsibility to examine these circumstances more closely. Hazing is not only a violation of state law and university policy, it is also antithetical to our community's most basic values.

Further, we cannot tolerate circumstances in which students end up requiring medical attention for dangerously high blood alcohol levels. In a recent case, one student was found unconscious and was so impaired that hospitalization for severe alcohol poisoning was required.

There has been a great deal of misinformation circulating through social media, some of which implies that there is a focused effort to undermine the Greek system at Lehigh. This is false. Reports that Greek chapters are being "raided," or that students are being "lined up and forced to submit to breathalyzer tests" are also not true.

The Greek system has been and remains a strong part of our institutional history. We fully support groups and organizations that encourage personal growth and well-being, development of leadership skills, philanthropic activities, institutional pride and social affinity. What we will not support is activity that threatens the health, safety or inclusiveness of our community.

Unfortunately, even a small minority of members can act in ways that put themselves or others at risk. We must hold those individuals – and those who support them – accountable.

Adherence to both our community standards of behavior and the law is part of a clear understanding between the university and the students who choose to participate in Greek life. All students are required to follow all applicable policies, including the Lehigh University Code of Conduct. The expectations for behavior are outlined, as are the consequences for disregarding those guidelines.

We affirm our pledge to work with you to create and sustain an environment we can all feel proud of, and we encourage you to seek support from the dedicated staff of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs, or university administrators, offices or other resources.

To report hazing, you can submit an anonymous hazing reporting [form](#), contact the anonymous National Hazing Hotline at 888-NOT-Haze or call the Lehigh University Police Department at [610-758-4200](tel:610-758-4200).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, as part of the responsibility of being a member of our Lehigh community, we also ask you to stand up and speak out if your health or a fellow student's health and safety are at risk. Please do all that you can to help and protect each other.

Sincerely,

Patrick V. Farrell
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Ian Birky
Interim Vice Provost for Student Affairs