

Student Organization Hearing Results
Pi Kappa Alpha
April 22, 2004

The Senate Committee on Student Discipline held a disciplinary hearing on April 14, 2004, regarding Student Code of Conduct charges against a chartered student organization, Pi Kappa Alpha. The charges were based upon a formal complaint alleging that the chartered organization had sponsored a party where alcohol was served without notifying their advisor or the University as required by the University Alcohol Policy. Additionally, during the party, which had a controversial and possibly offensive theme, two members of the fraternity were reported to have been dressed in "black face." More specifically, the student organization had been charged with allegedly violating three sections of the Student Code of Conduct: (1) Section 5.2 Discriminatory Harassment; (2) Section 13.10 Additional Policies; and, (3) Section 8.0 Alcohol Policy.

Based on the information presented during the judicial hearing, and subsequent deliberations, the Senate Committee on Student Discipline found the Pi Kappa Alpha chartered student organization responsible for violating all three sections of the Student Code of Conduct, as charged. The Committee believed that Pi Kappa Alpha members appearing in "black face" amounted to fighting words as defined in Section 5.2 of the Student Code of Conduct. The Committee also believed that given the party's hip-hop theme, the fraternity leadership (or advisor) should have made sure that its members understood the difference between appropriate costumes and crude or offensive costumes and that the failure to do so resulted in members appearing in black face at the party. The Committee further concluded that by allowing its members to attend the party in black face, Pi Kappa Alpha was also in violation of Section 13.10 of the Student Code of Conduct. Finally, the Committee concluded that Pi Kappa Alpha violated Section 8.0 of the Student Code of Conduct by failing to notify their advisor of the party (as required in Section 8.5.G), and by failing to properly check ages (as required in Section 8.5.C).

The Dean of Students concurred with the Committee's findings of responsibility on all violations of the Student Code of Conduct, as well as with the Committee's recommended sanctions as indicated below, adding relevant instructions and timelines related to each sanction:

1. Suspension of the Pi Kappa Alpha University Charter until the end of Fall 2004, ending on Monday, December 19, 2004. During this temporary severance of the student organization's relationship with the University, Pi Kappa Alpha may not exercise any of the privileges accorded to chartered student organizations including, but not limited to, use of University facilities. Arrangements are to be made with appropriate University officials to remove all belongings from the organization's current chapter room as soon as possible, but no later than May 21, 2004. Upon the conclusion of the suspension, if the organization would like to renew its University charter, they must submit such a request in writing per the Student Code of Conduct, Section 13 Chartering Student Organizations.
2. Restriction prohibiting alcohol at all Pi Kappa Alpha activities until May 14, 2005, or for at least one Fall or Spring Semester following renewal of the student organization charter. The fraternity leadership was asked to view this timeframe as a "probation period" during which the University expects no violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
3. Educational Sanction #1: Publicly apologize, in writing, to the members of Phi Beta Sigma and to the University community. Evidence of this apology must be submitted to appropriate University officials as soon as possible.
4. Educational Sanction #2: Participate in a community service activity of Phi Beta Sigma's choice. This activity must be completed within two months of the renewal of the student organization charter. The activity must be approved, in advance, by appropriate University officials as well as evidence provided of its completion within two weeks after the activity.

5. Educational Sanction #3: Participate in workshops on a regular basis to educate Pi Kappa Alpha members with regard to University policies on discriminatory harassment and alcohol. Within one month of the renewal of the student organization charter, Pi Kappa Alpha must submit a Three-Year Chapter Education Action Plan to be approved by appropriate University officials. Such a plan must include at least two relevant educational events during each semester within the three-year timeframe; any changes to this Action Plan must be approved, in advance, by University officials as well as evidence provided of the completion of all educational events at the conclusion of each semester.

Per the chartered student organization's due process rights as set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, Pi Kappa Alpha may appeal this decision to the Vice President for Student Services on the following grounds: (1) presentation of new evidence that was not presented at the hearing; (2) procedural errors at the hearing stage; or (3) the sanction is disproportionately severe. Further appeal rights include the President of Georgia State University followed by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.