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Volume 53, Number 35

## Facebook policy is topic of SGA resolution

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Take a closer look at what you post on Facebook, as it may now lead to university punishment.

SGA Senator Wade Luckett has helped produce a resolution advising the administration about how to handle the issue of illicit Facebook pictures and messages. Luckett, a junior communication management and psychology major, says that the proposition has been adapted from other colleges' policies.

The resolution advises that the administration not use evidence on Facebook as the only reason for citing violations. There have been only two examples of RAs using Facebook to cite students, however, the issue remains important.

The resolution says the aim is to "Prohibit the use of facebook.com pictures, messages, associations, profiles and opinions as singular evidence in cases of misconduct by an individual student or group of students."

According Debra Monk, Director of Community Standards and Civility, the only two examples of Facebook being used to cite students occurred when two different students complained of harassment through Facebook.

Two specific incidents can be traced to Northern Kentucky University and North Carolina State University, where campus police monitored Facebook and charged students with violations after finding photos of them drinking alcohol. As cited in the SGA resolution, the violation at N.C. State issued violations based solely on evidence from Facebook pictures. However, Luckett emphasized that they do not want the university to use Facebook as sole evidence for violations.

UD does not have an official policy, rather a position, on Facebook.

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"We do not have staff members searching for violations and we do not encourage them to search for violations," Monk said.

However, Facebook was consulted when students denied being at a party they were been charged for being at.

The difference in this case is that students who stated they were not at the party were caught through the use of Facebook pictures. In this case the pictures were used as secondary evidence.

The administration will not charge students unless a complaint is made by another student.

"I will not take action unless I believe someone will be harmed [violently]," Monk said. "Residential Assistants are not allowed to write-up [students] for finding things on Facebook."

However, past UD fines, the ramifications of illicit photos may be more long term. According to Monk, at least a handful of alumni have been fired from their full time job because of Facebook pictures.

It was only a matter of time before universities started to adapt their policies to Facebook. The number of students on Facebook is simply staggering. According to ComScore, an Internet tracking service, Facebook has registered more than 85 percent of all college students. This equals out to a mind boggling 3.9 million members.

"We wanted to take a proactive stance," Lockett said, after noticing the trend at other colleges around the country. He said it draws a fine line between invasion of privacy and public information.

"It is public, but you do have to search it out," he said.

Some UD students, however, do see this as an invasion of their privacy.

"UD has no right to search Facebook, because the site has no affiliation with the university," said Greg Kolber, a junior biology major. He added that it is even difficult to prove that there was actually alcohol in a cup, making the evidence unsubstantiated.

While students may not like it, some reluctantly understand. Dan Bauer, a sophomore history major said that it makes sense.

"Do I like it, No, but it has standing....it's very plausible," he said. He said that people put [pictures, messages] out on the internet, placing responsibility with those who post it.

Some students may see it as inevitable that UD make a policy regarding Facebook. Monk believes there will never be a policy, however, because

Facebook is going to go away and something else will replace it in a few years.

For now, the fad is here to stay. Students will continue to post photos of underage drinking just as they continue to illegally download music and skip classes. Monk says she would not want a strict Facebook policy because, "It only sets [the administration] up against the students."

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