

# Not WSU's job to help frats clean up their act

Murf Raquet/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

Washington State University officials have some big decisions to make beyond budgets, raises and canceling classes before big games.

Students abusing alcohol and their subsequent behavior have been part of the college community long enough. A university task force launched a high-priority search for solutions after the alcohol-related death of a WSU student nearly a year ago.

Some of those possible solutions were discussed last Thursday and Friday at the WSU Board of Regents meeting in Pullman, including phasing out fraternities as a housing option for freshmen men, reinstating WSU Police patrols in the residence halls, adding more alcohol-free floors and notifying parents the first time an underage child violates WSU's rules against drinking.

We believe those policies, if administered strictly and fairly, will have a positive - perhaps more maturing - effect on the social behavior of many students.

That said, we have reservations when it comes to some WSU fraternities.

During the meeting with regents, one fraternity president said the Greek organizations have received suggestions for changes but have been given no direction in implementing them.

That's disturbing, especially in light of two alcohol-related falls at fraternity houses in the past month.

We understand it's tough to alter behavior based on years of tradition - but, news flash, it has to be done.

Using the cop-out of lacking guidance is not addressing the problem.

Fraternities are living groups. Decisions are made all the time, from menu selections to room and board fees.

Members already know what they have to do; it should be a simple process to get to that point and need not involve hand-holding by the university.

If a fraternity's members can't reach the how-to level and engage in some important behavior modification, they may not be ready to run a fraternal organization.

We are encouraged by WSU's efforts to curb underage drinking and the parties that result in too many minor in possession offenses and trips to the hospital for detoxification from alcohol poisoning.

We hope leaders of some Greek organizations can recognize the importance of the social changes coming down, or move out of the way and make room for those who can.

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