

Forum to discuss code

Student Senate wants feedback for student conduct code revisions

BY JESSICA RAPP
News Editor

Empty beer bottles scattered on the countertop might suggest a celebration. But some students aren't celebrating the University's current method for dealing with students who violate the alcohol policy.

Student Senate will host a forum Nov. 12 to give students the chance to discuss revisions for the Student Conduct Code. The Board of Governors approves revisions to the code every three years and closely considers Senate suggestions.

Senate member sophomore Jo-Ellen Flanagan has met with Dean of Student Affairs Lou Ann Gilchrist to discuss what Senate feasibly can change in the code and to gather student feedback. She said she has put much of her focus toward revising the Good Samaritan policy because that is what has attracted the most concern.

Under the Good Samaritan Policy, if a student has reported a friend who is under the influence of alcohol and in need of help, the University upholds the right to prosecute under the code but will consider overlooking the offense depending on the situation.

Flanagan said she thinks a policy that guarantees the protection of students would be beneficial. The amnesty policy would prevent the student aiding a friend from getting in trouble with the University, eliminating the fear that students might have to make a tough decision, she said.

"Students should feel comfortable enough to report that someone ... is physically ill to the point of having alcohol poisoning," she said. "That's not a safe environment. That's not good. That's not conducive to growth, it's not conducive to development and it's the exact opposite of what this University should be trying to do."

A policy that leaves intoxicated friends nervous to report an incident might be problematic in reporting a sexual assault case, she said. Flanagan said she's found from talking to representatives of the Women's Resource Center that women who report a sexual assault will often go to the police but that the police will concentrate on whether or not the student qualifies for an MIP before taking care of the situation.

This issue, however, falls under the jurisdiction of state law, and the code wouldn't have any affect on whether or not a student receives an MIP from the Department of Public Safety.

"If I'm dealing with somebody with a medical issue because of alcohol consumption, I'm going to make sure they're OK," Sergeant Chad Whittom said. "I'm going to make my decision on what to do based on what the seriousness is."

He said officers decide whether or not to issue an MIP to a student on a case-by-case basis and that most cases are reported because of complaints. He said a change in the Student Conduct Code alcohol policy most likely would not have a significant effect on how officers issue MIPs, but they still would decide whether or not to issue an MIP depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Residence Life or the University could not report an alcohol violation to DPS after the incident had occurred because DPS has to investigate the incident firsthand to gather evidence necessary for a prosecution, he said. But that doesn't mean a student should be afraid to report to the campus police, he said.

"Because we're emergency service providers, I would always hope that someone would contact us if they had a situation where they think the person's in danger," he said. "Officers

have a lot of leeway based on officer discretion. ... Just because we're dealing with someone who may have consumed alcohol and they're underage, it doesn't mean that we're required to make an arrest."

Gilchrist said that in the University Good Samaritan policy, a lot of weight is put on the seriousness of the situation at hand when considering punishment.

Some universities that use the amnesty policy in their code include Harvard University, the University of Georgia, Yale University and Cornell University. Clemson University in South Carolina started its amnesty policy early this year. Tom Richey, president of graduate student government for Clemson, said in a February article on the campus Web site that their policy closely follows the goals of the university.

"Although it is my hope that this policy will never have to be used, I am glad that Clemson has sent a message to the student body that punishment does not await those who try to help their friends," he said in the release.

Gilchrist said she thinks Truman has chosen the middle ground for a policy to reflect the values of the University.

"By nature, conduct complaints are going to be one of those areas where you're not going to be able to make people happy all of the time," she said. "In fact, I'd be a little concerned about a conduct process where someone isn't upset on occasion. ... The question is, how far should the Student Conduct Code go for students who make one or two bad choices but make a good choice that may affect the safety and help of another student?"

Students interested in discussing the Code, which includes other policies under review, can attend the forum, which will take place from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the student complex area on the first floor of the Student Union Building.

BUST | Operation Trick or Treat yields results for Adair

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William W. Hatter, 23, of Bevier, Mo., were each charged with a Class A misdemeanor and placed on \$1,000 cash-only bond.

James A. Cook, 23, of Kirksville, Mo., was also taken into custody for an outstanding warrant for felony forgery and is being held on a \$25,000 cash-only bond.

Authorities also conducted 38 compliance checks for Halloween provisions with registered sex offenders in the county. Thirty of the 38 registered sex offenders were inspected in Kirksville, Novinger and Brashear. Examples of Halloween provisions registered sex offenders must follow include abstaining from all Halloween related contact with children, posting a sign that states "No candy or treats at this residence," remaining indoors from 5 to 10:30 p.m. and keeping all exterior lights off after 5 p.m.

Logston said there were five violations discovered in total: Three offenders were not home, and two individuals had exterior lights on and no sign posted. These violations resulted in a Class A misdemeanor. As of Monday, charges had yet to be filed on the offenders in violation of the Halloween provisions.

Sophomore Mandy Love said Halloween weekend might not have been the safest time to conduct a sting operation. However, Love said people might have been more inclined to participate in illegal activities on Halloween.

Love said she thought the sex offender compliance checks were a good thing to do but some of the measures and provisions are a little extreme.

"I'm also an education major, so I really love kids, and I feel like they need to be safe and protected at all costs," Love said. "But I feel like you're taking rights away from the sex offenders."

DUKUM | Drinkin' with Lincoln fans pay more

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Dukum has ever done. The cups give customers something to take home with them and have environmental benefits, he said.

"The week before [the new cups were introduced] we threw away 300 plastic cups in the dump, and this week, zero," Champagne said.

Champagne said the Dukum averages 150 to 160 patrons Thursday nights.

"A lot of people use it as a springboard for their evenings," Champagne said.

Junior Aaron Razavi said he is so upset about the price increase that he started a petition and has gathered 35 names. He said he has collected all the names so far in class but plans on going to the Dukum for signatures this Thursday.

"This is a college town, and college kids don't have a lot of money," Razavi said. "I feel like they're just exploiting us right now."

Razavi said he is especially angry because he wasn't given any notice about the price increase. He said he was told as he was paying for his drink and that

he would not have been as upset if he'd been given some warning.

Razavi said he will no longer give his business to the Dukum but now will go to other local bars instead.

"I would rather be in Australia than pay \$7 for all-you-can-drink at the Dukum," Razavi said. "I'm sure prices aren't that steep there."

He said he does not like the idea of the reusable cups, either.

"I'm never going to remember to bring it," Razavi said.

Junior David Sherwood said he goes to Drinkin' with Lincoln about every other week. He said he was angry about the increase but that his attendance probably won't be affected.

Sherwood said he was present the first night prices increased and was so angry he left. He said others at the Dukum that night also were unhappy.

"I walked in the door dressed in my costume for Halloween expecting a night of fun, but then was broadsided by a \$2 increase from the Dukum," Sherwood said.

VOTE | Student who registers with College Democrats files complaint under Conduct Code

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I wasn't. I was going to vote for Obama so that wasn't an issue. I felt like I was stripped of my right to vote. In the back of my mind, I think I should have actually gone to the County Clerk's office, but you trust someone who says they're going to take your form when they're taking a bunch of others."

Emlund filed a complaint under the Student Conduct Code by claiming the College Democrats broke sanctions 13.2 and 2.1 for deceiving and misleading students. The consequences, if the organization is found guilty, can be as severe as the retraction of its charter.

County Clerk Sandy Collop said that on Election Day, they received calls from multiple people who had issues with being registered in other places throughout the state. Collop said that if the voter registration form wasn't turned in, they had no control over registration.

Jimmy Lang, president of College Democrats, said he had only heard of one instance of a student not being able to vote because of registration problems with his organization. He said he didn't think there was a pile of voter registration forms lying somewhere.

"We began the process understanding that we'd be undergoing a huge effort on campus, and I think when you put that power into volunteers'

hands and into anyone's hands there's a risk of misplacing or losing something," Lang said. "I haven't heard any widespread issues of people registering with us then not being able to vote."

Emlund said that when he contacted Lang, Lang informed him that the problem could have arisen when the forms were being ripped in half and they were misplaced.

"[Jimmy Lang] asked what he could do, and I said give me my form back since it has my personal information on it, and he said he can't because he didn't know if he could find it," Emlund said. "I don't think he did it on purpose, ... but I think they should have been more aware."

Lang said the group's registration process was coordinated through the local Obama for America campaign.

He said they followed all procedures and tried to keep everything as organized as possible. He said any situation with a massive amount of registrations is bound to attract problems. Any implication that the College Democrats intentionally infringed on students' right to vote is ridiculous, he said. Lang said the College Democrats aren't taking this issue lightly.

"I apologize for any and all occurrences of that, on behalf of our organization," Lang said.



Amy Glaves/Index

Students wait outside the Student Union Building for their turn to vote Tuesday afternoon. 1,192 student-voters turned out throughout the day to cast their ballots.

ELECTION | Voters discuss local issues after election results stream in Tuesday night

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local representative seat in my district was someone that I didn't want to win," she said. "So I kind of wanted my vote to count there rather than here."

Other Truman students decided to vote locally because they thought issues in the Kirksville area would affect them more.

"My friend is in Vote Local and she said that if you vote local you can vote on the issues

that are affecting you right now and I'm not in my home town," Dabrowska said. "I feel that you should vote for [issues] that are closer to you."

Senior Courtney Robbins said she thought McClanahan's policies did not represent Missouri well and that some of her ads were contradictory to her policies.

"She's much more liberal than she lets on," Robbins said.

Jimmy Lang, president of College Democrats, said he thought Thom Van Vleck, Republican candidate for state representative, had a shaky platform.

"It was clear early on that Thom Van Vleck didn't have much of a platform to run on and he ran a campaign that sought to smear Rebecca and to distort her record in a way to get votes," Lang said. "But I think that what we'll see

tonight is that voters in Missouri responded to the issues that Rebecca has always campaigned for: local business, agriculture, education and health care."

Lang said he thought McClanahan's platform citizens cared about.

"Those are the needs of this community, and I think when it came down to it, it was a no-brainer," Lang said.

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