

In this issue of Life at LMU, we share with you information about what the Division of Student Affairs does to provide a very real educational moment for students who are at a crossroads in their lives. We are providing you with information about this work we do with students because we feel the effort the Division puts forth is something that all of us can take pride in.

Directed by Judicial Affairs, staff throughout the Division commit a great deal of time and effort to the process. Aiding students in more thoroughly understanding the concepts of personal accountability and responsibility can be trying at times, but it is also one of the most satisfying things we do as educators.

Lane Bove
Senior Vice President,
Division of Student Affairs

In such cases, Off-Campus Student Life has “had light-bulb moments when students realized the difference between their rights and what’s courteous,” says Smith. “As we all know, it’s your right to have people over at your house; but it’s not courteous to be disruptive.”

Students who realize this become more willing to join their fellow students in constructive community efforts.

“A vast majority of neighbors have responded well to students living off-campus,” Smith adds. Many students play a positive role in their neighborhoods by becoming involved in the happenings on their block, whether it be babysitting or pulling a neighbors trash bins out when the neighbor is out of town.

Off-Campus Student Life also aids students by serving as student advo-

cates, offering mediation services, encouraging their participation in town hall meetings, and providing them with community service opportunities within the Westchester community.

Smith encourages LMU faculty and staff to continue to model positive behavior for students who are immersed in the process of becoming independent, informed citizens and socially conscious members of the community.

“Faculty and staff play a really important role in students’ lives in helping their maturation,” she says. “Students look to faculty as examples and connect what they do on campus and what they do in the community. The University is dedicated to helping students develop their sense of civic responsibility and social justice. Faculty and staff are critical to help shape young civic-minded students.”

life at LMU

THE NEWSLETTER OF LMU'S DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Spring 2009

Values-Added Education

Student Affairs' Division-wide emphasis on values helps students make the right choices while in college — and for the rest of their lives.



A Letter From Dr. Lane Bove

American institutions of higher education dedicate a great deal of time and resources to student behavioral issues. Like many, we at Loyola Marymount University tailor our programs for the individual students to focus on fairness, personal accountability and support of the student during a challenging time as measured against the safety of the LMU Community.

But what I truly believe sets LMU apart is our belief that there is no one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter approach when it comes to responding to inappropriate student behavior. The work we do with students often goes well beyond sanctions, sometimes involving medical and psychological counseling, spiritual direction, community service and mentoring. We strive to educate throughout the process, so that students come to understand how their actions specifically impact their academic success as well as the LMU community.

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One of the most satisfying parts of attending college for many students is the freedom it provides.

In many instances, these emerging adult students are for the first time making their own choices about their course of study, their living situations, what to buy at the grocery store and much more.

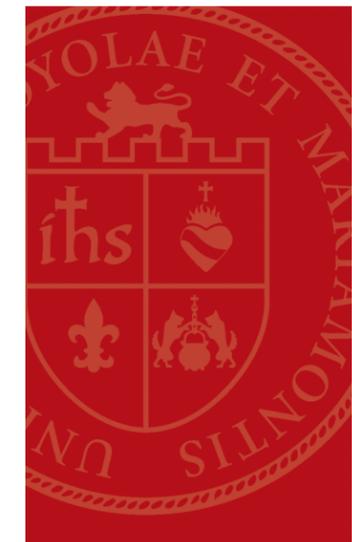
Some of these choices can lead to positive outcomes. Others can lead down slippery slopes. Sometimes poor decisions result in violations of institutionally established codes of conduct. “Students, sometimes knowingly and other times unknowingly, can get themselves into difficult situations,” according to LMU Dean of Students Dr. Linda McMurdock.

McMurdock believes that positive choices can be encouraged when students have a more holistic sense of who they are and what they value. In order to encourage responsible citizenship and prosocial behavior, McMurdock recommends that students weave together the co-curricular with the curricular experience.

“The more you see how your values are interconnected, the more you can integrate them into your life,” she says.

To help engage students and to bring their inherent values to the forefront, McMurdock encourages faculty to “talk about the different issues -- to talk about what’s going on and what’s meaningful to students and to integrate their individual

THE LION'S CODE



values into the classroom experience.”

For example, during fall semester, some professors integrated the key presidential election and the visit of seven Nobel laureates as part of Peace Jam into their classroom curricula. The response from students was enthusiastic.

'I am a Lion'

The Lion's Code is another way the University encourages everyone on campus to move toward more personal responsibility.

The Code, first introduced

in 2007-08, is incorporated in faculty, staff and student orientations, featured prominently in the University's Community Standards booklet, displayed throughout the campus, and included by some professors as part of their curricula.

The purpose of the Code is to provide a reference point that helps students focus in the midst of the numerous distractions and misleading messages that can lead to unhealthy lifestyles and destructive behavioral choices.

The Lion's Code serves as reminder to all who study, live and work at LMU of the University's values and of what it means to be a “Lion” -- or an active member of the LMU community.

Maintaining focus

Still, there are times when students at Loyola Marymount University become swept into unhealthy lifestyles during their college years. Those unhealthy lifestyles often involve alcohol and drug use.

The result is increased stress

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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Student Affairs



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INSIDE

Some Neighborly
Advice for Students
Page 2

A Journey Through
Judicial Affairs
Page 3

Some Neighborly Advice for Students

Jade Smith recognizes the drastic life transitions that college students go through. As Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Director of Off-Campus Student Life, part of her goal is to help students adjust.

"For many students, college is their first time living independently, away from their parents' home and their first time assuming the role as a young citizen within a greater community," says Smith. "Many students have never lived on their own, rented a room, leased an apartment, or in some cases owned a home before."

Off-Campus Student Life attempts to help students understand and effectively manage the responsibilities that come with being a member of a community.

A fairly new department at LMU, Off-Campus Student Life was created two years ago in response to an increasing number of LMU students living off-campus. This migration resulted in an "increased need for community relations and development within our immediate neighborhood," says Smith.

Community residents filed about 100 complaints during the fall semester 2008 regarding LMU students who rent, lease or own homes in Westchester neighborhood and elsewhere off-campus. Complaints range from public urination, loud parties and other disruptive behaviors. Some students have also complained that some neighbors have violated the trust of students by taking advantage of their inexperience with leasing, renting, and living independently for the first time.

One focus of Off-Campus Student Life is helping students understand issues that impact long-time Westchester residents.

At the beginning of the year, Off-Campus Student Life holds an orientation for all freshmen living on-campus regarding common courtesies to practice the moment they step off-campus. The session also familiarizes students with local and city



While neighborhood clean-up days are popular with LMU students, the department of Off-Campus Student Life encourages students to take on positive leadership roles in the community each and every day.

ordinances. Neighbors and students also receive a letter from Smith's office that outlines the University's expectations about community relations. The office has also designed an online orientation and begun an address collection system that will be launched in the fall.

When disruptive incidents occur, Off-Campus Student Life goes into the community to talk with students about standards and expectations. In some scenarios, these students go through the University judicial process.

"As we all know, it's your right to have people over at your house; but it's not courteous to be disruptive."

—Jade Smith, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Director of Off-Campus Student Life

ASLMU's Party Smart

Party Smart is ASLMU's student-to-student campaign to promote safe and smart practices of living in the neighborhood.

Through fliers, posters, t-shirts and other reminders, students exchange tips on how to be safe and neighborly. The Greek Council also distributes information to homes within the community.

Website:
<http://aslm.org/blog/party-smart/>

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A Journey through JUDICIAL AFFAIRS

When a student is documented for violating the University's Community Standards, it initiates the University judicial process.

The mission of the University's Office of Judicial Affairs is to maintain an academic environment by upholding community standards in a spirit of respect and integrity.

"We believe that through accountability, there can be transformation," says Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Chief Judicial Officer Francesca Piumetti, who describes Judicial Affairs as an educational process. "Our goal is not to judge students, but to evaluate their behavior. Judicial Affairs gives students an opportunity to look inward, examine their actions and decide what path they want to pursue."

Once the Office of Judicial Affairs receives a report (usually from Public Safety or Student Housing) of an alleged

violation, the case is then assigned to a Judicial Officer. The Judicial Officer meets with parties involved and provides the complainant and respondent opportunities to be heard. In cases where the Judicial Officer finds a student responsible for violations, the Judicial Officer assigns sanctions.

The range of sanctions includes disciplinary warnings, fines, removal from Student Housing, suspension and dismissal from the University. Students may appeal Judicial Officer decisions to the Student Conduct Committee.

The majority of cases handled by Judicial Affairs involve alcohol or drug use or a students' failure to comply.

Piumetti recommends that faculty and staff educate students regarding the types of behavior that violate the Student Conduct Code and emphasize the concepts of personal accountability and responsibility.

WHO ARE JUDICIAL OFFICERS?

There are 33 professional staff members from different departments throughout the Division of Student Affairs who serve as Judicial Officers, including Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Chief Judicial Officer Francesca Piumetti, Associate Director of Judicial Affairs Ben White and Assistant Director of Judicial Affairs John Orozco.

The Judicial Officers primarily adjudicate cases in individual hearings with students.

Judicial Officers go through training to understand the process, procedures and policies within the context of the Student Conduct Code.

JUDICIAL AFFAIRS BY THE NUMBERS

	2006/07	2007/08
No. of Cases	629	796
No. of Individual Students seen by Judicial Affairs	883	873
% Female	39%	40%
% Male	61%	60%
% Accountability	73%	79%

I WILL OWN
THE ACTIONS
OF MY MIND

I WILL JOIN
THE DISCOURSE

I STAND IN FAITH

I AM A LION

VALUES-ADDED EDUCATION CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

levels and difficulty maintaining their academic focus, according to McMurdock. "When you're drinking and drugging, it's hard for you to be mentally present in class," she says. "You can be physically present, but your mind is somewhere else."

Alcohol and drug use and abuse also can lead to violations of the University's Community Standards, which brings students to the Office of Judicial Affairs. (For more on the Judicial process, see above left.)

Supporting students

Departments within the Division of Student Affairs, including Off-Campus Student Life and Judicial Affairs, seek to help students better handle the responsibility and additional freedom that comes with college life.

For the vast majority of students at the University, it doesn't take much prodding, if any, to inspire a sense of responsible citizenship.

"Compared to other graduate and undergraduate students, Loyola Marymount University students are generally more interested in social justice and like the fact that our campus culture encourages social responsibility and dialogue," McMurdock says.

McMurdock says she often hears from employers that current LMU students and alumni are much more focused than others on altruism and the overall good of their community.

"I think that speaks very well to the work we are doing at the University," McMurdock says.