New alcohol policy

Dean for Student Affairs Shirley M. McKay released a Policy Statement on the Use of Alcohol to the MIT community Monday (see story on page 7). The text of the statement follows:

General Policy

MIT supports the observance of all laws and regulations governing the use, purchase and serving of alcoholic beverages by all members of its community and expects that these laws will be adhered to at all events associated with the Institute. This includes activities on the MIT campus, in MIT-approved independent living groups and at off-campus functions sponsored or supported by MIT or any of its affiliated groups. A reference guide to ensure state laws is available from the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs.

The Institute strongly encourages all faculty, staff and students to become familiar with these laws and to consider the associated penalties and other potential risks that may result from violations.

Included in these laws are those that govern driving under the influence of alcohol, the purchase of alcohol by and for persons under the legal drinking age and the serving of alcohol to persons who are either under age or intoxicated. It should be noted that the drinking age in Massachusetts will be raised to 21 as of June 1, 1985, and will apply to all individuals who have not turned 21 before that date.

The Institute does not intend through its guidelines or policies to restrict the responsible use of alcohol by members of the MIT community who are 21 and above the Massachusetts legal drinking age. However, efforts to observe existing laws and regulations in an environment in which the majority of the undergraduate student body will no longer be of drinking age will almost certainly impose some constraints upon those who are of age.

Residence/Orientation (R/O) Policy

The increase in the drinking age to 21 by the State of Massachusetts virtually guarantees that all freshmen entering will be under age. This situation places a special responsibility upon all members of the Institute community planning activities for freshmen to insure that alcohol is not made available to them on such occasions. Of special concern are activities held during Residence/Orientation, an official part of the First Year Program, designed to orient new students to the MIT environment and to assist them in the selection of a living group.

Given the purpose of the Residence/Orientation period and the under age status of the majority of freshmen, a special policy on the use and availability of alcohol is needed during the initial days of R/O when activities are primarily focused on freshmen.

In view of the historic emphasis on self-governance within the Institute's residential system, it is important to have such a policy developed and enforced by students. The Institute has therefore decided to adopt the following policy on R/O that is based upon separate policies developed by the Dormitory Council and the Interfraternity Conference respectively.

Rush will be dry from Friday afternoon to Monday evening with the exception of Saturday and Sunday from 6:00 pm to 1:00 am beginning with R-O, 1985. A dry rush is defined as the absence of alcohol at events in common areas during the period when freshmen are being recruited for dormitories, fraternities and other independent living groups.

Living groups may serve alcohol at the times noted above in compliance with all current city and campus policies providing they meet the following guidelines:

- The living group planning the event must send at least four representatives to an Alcohol Education Session (AES).
- The AES all Rush workers will be presented a pamphlet explaining all guidelines along with a statement which must be signed that indicates agreement to abide by and enforce all of the guidelines given.

The first AES will be run jointly by the Undergraduate Association Social Council and the Campus Activities Office, with representatives from the Interfraternity Conference acting in an advisory capacity, on the Wednesday preceding the Freshman Picnic. At this session, potential liabilities will be explained and the following guidelines which govern all events where alcohol is served will be reviewed:

- All persons will be required to present a positive proof of age at all entrances to the event;
- All persons of drinking age expressing a desire to drink must be given a stamp or a wristband as proof of their status;
- Alcohol can be served or made available only to persons who have been stamped or given wristbands;
- There must be both non-alcoholic beverages and food readily available;
- All alcohol must be served by official Rush workers;
- Alcohol must not serve more than one drink to any individual at any particular time;
- Alcohol must not be served to anyone who is intoxicated;
- Any violations of these provisions will be dealt with by the appropriate judicial body.

Enforcement

The Institute recognizes it cannot guarantee that this policy or the alcohol-related laws will be honored by everyone. It must therefore rely upon the good judgment of students, student groups, faculty, staff and other members of the Institute community to observe the relevant policies and laws. Those who choose to violate them must be prepared to accept total responsibility for their individual actions and should understand that possible outcomes include disciplinary action, loss of rush privileges, personal liability, fines and/or imprisonment.

Review of Policy

The Residence/Orientation section of this policy will be reviewed following R/O, 1985. Other sections will be reviewed as necessary.

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