

Delta Upsilon Fraternity



Technology Chapter

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
526 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02215

RE: Allegation Letter

February 28, 2014

Tim Dowd, Oklahoma '75
Secretary, Delta Upsilon Fraternity

Brother Dowd,

I want to assure you that no acts of hazing ever occurred, or at worst nothing we did was ever done with the intention to belittle, endanger, harass, or otherwise adversely impact our associate members. While it is possible that we had some technical violations of which we were unaware, at no time did we believe we were committing any acts that could constitute hazing. Since we only found out about these allegations recently we are not even sure why there is a belief that we hazed. From what we can tell, the MIT investigation was brought about due to the withdrawal of one associate member, Des, from DU at the beginning of Help Week.

As he told the MIT administrators, Des's decision to withdraw was a result of personal and family issues, and done after speaking with us. The brothers and I remain on amicable terms with Des and have continued to support him. From what I can tell (although this may be incorrect), when the MIT administrators became aware that Des separated from the fraternity they initiated an investigation because, in their experience, a late withdrawal could be the result of hostile conditions. While I appreciate the diligence being shown by MIT, I still do not know why we are being accused of most of the items below and are committed to assisting with your investigation and the MIT process. To that end, please see my response below. I will detail our New Member Education Program, including Help Week and the following ceremony known as Larry Legend, in the format given from your letter.

1. *What took place.*
2. *The event planning, preparation, and execution details associated with the allegations.*
3. *Acceptance of responsibility or denial of responsibility for the allegations.*

The New Member Education Process

To begin, throughout the entire pledge process, at every pledge and house meeting, we take time to discuss how the associate members are doing and if they are comfortable and satisfied with how their education program is progressing. House and new member specific events are always opt-out for academic, athletic, work, or other personal reasons. This has and is made clear to the potential new members during Rush and throughout their education period, and many of them utilize that policy throughout the process, as do many brothers during their entire time at DU. We recognize that brothers and associate brothers have scheduling conflicts where the conflicting event takes precedence.

Associate Member Meetings

Our New Member Educator facilitates weekly meetings throughout the process focused on a variety of topics. The program consists of reading and studying the Cornerstone, learning our chapter's history, and other lectures and activities on dating, technology and organization, MIT classes, getting internships, and other professional skills. At these meetings, the New Member Educator also reviews the chapter responsibilities that the associate members will share with us as brothers. For example, teaching them about the weekly cleanings and daily waitings at midnights that brothers do. (Waitings are the term for the duty of helping setup and serve dinner. Midnights are the term for the duty of cleaning the dirty dishes and the kitchen each night.) As with all events, the associate members can choose not to attend if they are heavily burdened with athletics or schoolwork, but these meetings are an excellent way for the new members to bond and learn about each other, the brotherhood, and life skills. For many of them, this is their favorite part of the pledge process.

Boston Orientation Trip

Early in the fall term, an Orientation Trip is planned for the associate members to get acquainted with the cities of Boston and Cambridge. Typical itineraries include a suggestion to take photos with popular landmarks, e.g. Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Harvard Yard, Mike's Pastry, and Fenway Park. The associate members are able to navigate via smartphone and are given passes to use public transportation. Should they become lost or encounter trouble, the New Member Educator and other brothers are available by phone throughout the trip.

Big Bro Lil Bro

Big Bro Lil Bro is a brother-only event that takes place in the fall where the associate members are given their big brothers. During the semester, associate members are encouraged to do signature talks, or “sig talks” with as many of the brothers in the house. These talks are opportunities for associate members to get to know brothers beyond MIT. Brothers and associate members share stories about their road to MIT, their goals and ambitions, and what they want out of MIT and life. Based on whom they connected well with, associate members list three brothers that they want to have as their big bro. Big bros serve as mentors and support for associate members during their first year at MIT and beyond. They are often associate member’s strongest connections in the house beyond their other associate members.

Work Week

We are not certain of which events would be associated with the allegations, but I will discuss Help Week since that was the only event that took place in January.

Help Week is a mirror event of Work Week. Both of these events are essential to the survival of our house. The Technology Chapter has resided at 526 Beacon St. continuously for over 100 years. We are incredibly lucky to have such beautiful house, and understand that it needs constant care and maintenance. The history of the house is intertwined with the history of our chapter.

Work Week occurs a few weeks before the fall semester. The agenda for Work Week is set by a group including the President, House Managers, and other interested brothers. A list of needed repairs and projects is assembled with the consultation of a licensed contractor. During Work Week, brothers are broken down into teams of 5-6 with one brother having the responsibility of team leader. Each team is assigned projects and parts of the house to clean. The contractor is working throughout the week, including guiding and assisting on projects. Local alumni are also invited to attend, and have done so on occasion.

Help Week and IAP

Help Week occurs during the last week of Independent Activities Period, or IAP. IAP takes place over the month of January and the beginning of February. MIT students have the opportunity to participate in many international programs, externships, special classes and workshops at MIT, for-credit classes, and research at MIT. Some sports teams have more practices as well, including crew, swimming, and track & field. Even though all of these opportunities exist, the month is generally much less stressful than during the semester. Many brothers and students choose to use it as an extended vacation or work away from Boston. The people who are in Boston during the month have a lot more free time. This is especially true for freshmen. Not only that, there are many activities and competitions such as MIT Puzzle Hunt, the web design competition, Battlecode, Maslab,

and many more, that students pursue with very unusual work hours. For people across campus, IAP is an eclectic and exciting month. Because of the free time that IAP affords, brothers who are in town spend more time around the house. As a result of this, the house is in worse shape than during the semester, but never “trashed” on purpose by anyone.

Help Week is 8 days long, from Saturday morning to Saturday night. It takes place over the last week of IAP. The new members are informed of Help Week during Rush. They are given more information throughout the semester. It is not kept a secret from them in any way. They are free to sign up for whatever IAP events they like without having to consider Help Week as a potential conflict. You can choose to defer Help Week to the following year due to a program, job, or other personal reason. That occurred this year—one upperclassman took part in Help Week after deferring it from last year. The associate members are asked to be at the house by that Saturday, but exceptions are always made without consequence. For example, one of the associate members did not return until Wednesday of that week because he was in India visiting his family.

There is no event the night before Help Week begins. Brothers are hanging out in their rooms and in the house like a regular Friday night during IAP. There is no event to mess up the house. This year, late in the night after everyone went to sleep, a brother decided to take spray paint from the tool room and paint some of the walls. The rest of the brothers were furious upon finding this the next morning. The house held the brother accountable by a deduction in housing points. More action was not taken since the walls were already chosen as ones to be painted during Help Week.

The freshmen meet on the morning of the first day where the New Member Educator gives them expectations and guidelines. The New Member Educator informs them of what practices have worked well in the past and what order they might want to clean in. It is at this point that the associate members choose two team captains for the week. It is made clear that they have special ownership of the house. They have the ability to cordon off any area that they want while it is being cleaned, and request check-offs whenever needed. Check-offs are performed by the brothers who served as team captains during their pledge year, or in the case of the kitchen, brothers who cleaned that area their year. The associate members and team captains amass a list of supplies and snacks that they need to begin cleaning. At the conclusion of the meeting, the team captains go to Home Depot and Costco with brothers to purchase said items. These items are purchased with chapter funds. These trips happen throughout the week as supplies are needed.

Brothers are around constantly during Help Week. They are checking in on the associate members wellbeing and progress, offering guidance, sharing stories, and occasionally helping out the associate members. The brothers are moving rooms throughout the week

and cleaning their rooms out as well, so cleaning supplies and taking out the trash are shared between the brothers and the associate members.

The associate members set their own schedule for Help Week. Each of them has various commitments, including two-a-day practices for the members of the swim team, research positions, and classes. They manage themselves accordingly. They are free to come and go as needed, and free to rest and relax as desired. At no point are their phones or other electronics taken from them. The associate members usually regulate themselves very well, not wanting to let down their associate members by not pulling their fair share of the work.

Larry Legend (LL)

LL is the name for the day following the end of Help Week. When the associate members return to the house after a nice sit down dinner with alumni around 9 pm on Saturday night, the house's windows are covered with cardboard and tin foil, in order to darken the inside. They enter the house where the brothers are waiting in full suits, wearing sunglasses. The house is pitch black, except for the intermittent light from the flame of the lighter that each brother flicks in his hand. The freshmen are asked to stand in pledge order and turn in their electronics and time-keeping devices. They are then escorted upstairs by an upperclassman to a bedroom on the 3rd floor. In the room, there are ample beds and couches for them to rest and sleep comfortably on. Two upperclassmen wait outside the door of this room in case the freshmen have any requests (bathroom, water, food, etc.). The upperclassmen are responsible for making sure that they are not wandering around the house as we set up for the dinner and test that will be taken the next morning. The associate members have Cornerstones in the room and use them to study for the exam. The associate members also write an essay on what being a part of a fraternity means to them and why they want to be a member of the Delta Upsilon fraternity. These essays are fun to read years later, and some have even been quoted in our alumni newsletter in the past. After completing the essay, the associate members go to sleep in the room around 11pm.

The associate members are woken up around 6am the next morning, when we take them to the dining room to take their exam. The exam is a series of questions about Delta Upsilon and the Technology Chapter, based on the Cornerstone and other history from their pledge meetings. The exam is half an hour long. After finishing the exam the associate member's big bros come into the dining room and review their essays about DU for about a half hour. After the essay evaluation, they are brought back to their previous room, to sleep for another hour. During this time the brothers are preparing and setting up for an elaborate seven course meal for the associate members. After the hour the associate members are brought back down to the dining room for the meal. There are two brother acting as waiters, dressed in formal attire. They are responsible for running

the meal and ensuring that every whim of the associate members is met. They are straight-faced and courteous, and the associate members catch on that it is their job to try and make the brother laugh. Each course takes around 15-20 minutes; the entire dinner takes around 2 and a half hours.

After the dinner the associate members are brought out into the common room where all the brothers are waiting, dressed in silly costumes. The associate members are told to stand in pledge order. At this point they are presented with their fake paddles. These paddles are terribly done and completely underwhelming. They usually range from a wet sock, to a plain wooden dowel. A senior brother monologues about the importance of their paddles and how much work each big bro put into making the paddles. Then the senior describes an intellectual challenge created for the associate members, one where they must work together to solve a set of riddles. These riddles are based off of general house information or information specific brothers, done with a distinctly nerdy and challenging MIT flair. The associate members move throughout the house looking for the items, without any deadline or time limit. After they solve or try to solve the riddles and present what they have found to the rest of the brothers, they are brought back to the room on the 3rd floor.

After resting in the room for about an hour, the associate members begin to go through a set of rooms. They are escorted one-by-one by their big bros, who are there to ensure that they are not overwhelmed and are enjoying themselves. There is a puzzle room, a meditation room, a song lyrics room, a drawing room, a Mario Kart room, and a question room. It takes about two hours to go through all of the rooms, so about four hours for all of the associate members to complete all of them. Upon completion of the rooms the associate members are led to a bedroom on the fifth floor where they hang out while their peers go through the rooms and the brothers prepare the Chapter Room for watching the Super Bowl. During this time two brothers monitor them to ensure that they have any food, water, and bathroom breaks as needed.

Upon completion of the rooms, every brother reports to the Chapter Room wearing their DU jock shirt. Pizzas and soda are ordered. The associate members are brought down to the Chapter Room one by one by their big bros. Once in the Chapter Room, they are asked to tell a joke. The associate member then tells the joke that his big brother has shared with him on the way down the stairs. The big bro then takes the associate member's real paddle that they made and motions the paddle as if to spank the freshman but never actually making contact. During this motion, all of the brothers count down from 3 as if to raise the tension, laughing on the third motion when contact is not actually made. The associate member is then handed his paddle and mug. All of the brothers enthusiastically congratulate and welcome the new brother. The new brothers are given their phones, and we all eat pizza and watch the Super Bowl as a united brotherhood.

3) Acceptance of responsibility or denial of responsibility for the allegations

Possession, use, and consumption of alcohol on chapter premises and during chapter events not in compliance with the applicable laws of the state of Massachusetts, policies of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the Loss Prevention Policies of Delta Upsilon Fraternity.

We acknowledge that individual members of our fraternity of legal drinking age have served underage guests using alcohol purchased with their own money. This is in violation of the policies of MIT, the Delta Upsilon Fraternity, and the State of Massachusetts, and we regret that we did not take more preventative measures as a matter of course, and that the members responsible for such incidents did not face more appropriate disciplinary action from within the Technology Chapter. We would like to develop a better system of inspection, control, and, if necessary, disciplinary action in the future.

Alcohol included in associate member activities.

Alcohol is not included in associate member activities and we deny this allegation.

Forced alcohol consumption

There was no forced alcohol consumption at any point and we deny this allegation.

Forced water consumption

There was no forced water consumption at any point and we deny this allegation.

Personal servitude

There is no personal servitude a part of the new member program or any other activity of the Technology Chapter. Although associate members are responsible for cleaning the common areas of the house during Help Week, it is part of the spring semester cleaning that takes place. As mentioned above, brothers clean their own space and no associate member is expected to assist with cleaning beyond the common areas. No individual errands are run, no special favors are asked, nor anything else asked of the associate members.

Caused mental and physical discomfort, embarrassment and ridicule to associate members

Associate members were and are not caused any mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or ridicule as any part of their new member education process and we deny this allegation.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse does not take part in any activity of the Technology Chapter of Delta Upsilon and we deny this allegation.

Urination on associate members

Urination on associate members is not a part of any Technology Chapter activities and we deny this allegation.

4) If a violation did occur, state what policy was violated.

Actions of our members violated item 1) of the section “Drugs and Alcohol” of the Delta Upsilon Fraternity’s loss prevention policy. Specifically, alcohol was served to guests under the legal drinking age on Technology chapter premises, in violation of the policies of MIT, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We wish to reiterate that these violations, to our knowledge and after investigation, did not occur during official events.

5) Recommendations to improve loss prevent practices within the chapter.

As the President of the DU Technology Chapter I see two areas where we can better uphold Delta Upsilon’s loss prevention policies. First, we can do a better job monitoring the behavior of individuals within the house. While we are thorough with risk-management during events, we recognize that we could be more diligent during “casual” times that are not official brotherhood events. Second, we should have taken more formal disciplinary steps against the brother who spray-painted the wall. While we did not believe there was any real harm done at the time since the walls were being painted, we now see how it could have looked and we regret giving the impression that we were trying to make the associates members work harder during Help Week.

Accordingly, our recommendations to improve our loss prevention practices are the following:

1. We will seek to implement a Judicial Board system within our chapter to do deal with loss prevention issues more promptly and appropriately. We understand that identical systems work well for many other chapters within Delta Upsilon and we hope to seek their guidance in creating ours.
2. We will create new policies regarding the possession and consumption of alcohol within our chapter premises by all members to ensure we can avoid loss prevention policy infractions moving forward.

6) What change is needed.

We, as the Technology Chapter of Delta Upsilon, believe that we were complying with the rules as they related to hazing and did nothing with the intention of hazing, demeaning, or otherwise belittling our newest brothers. To our knowledge, none of them ever felt hazed or belittled. If there were violations despite our intentions and efforts, we would like to hear and address them. We continuously review all of our chapter events activities openly and honestly, and will continue to do so to address shortcomings. Additionally, as a chapter, we think that we should prohibit any alcohol in the house until we can develop a plan to eliminate underage drinking. We believe, as a chapter, that this is the best approach to avoiding any future policy violations.

7) What support or education the chapter will pursue to assist the chapter moving forward.

As always, we welcome the guidance and experience of the Delta Upsilon International Fraternity. We are continuously seeking to improve our associate education and welcome working with your leadership consultants, attending conferences, and taking advantage of other resources make our house policies and new member education program even better and eliminate the possibility of these allegations in the future. We believe we can also take better advantage of resources at MIT to help us comply with Delta Upsilon's loss prevention policies, including PartySafe training, IFC Delegates' Councils, and other resources provided by the FSILG and Student Citizenship offices.

If I have not addressed a specific concern, please let me know, and I will be happy to do whatever I can to speak to all issues raised. We are not sure of the basis for these allegations and to the best of our abilities to provided complete answers. We welcome any further questions and appreciate your time and support.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Kugener', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Guillaume Kugener
President, Delta Upsilon Technology Chapter

CC: Board of Directors, Delta Upsilon International Fraternity
Dave Latham, Housing Corporation President
Justin Kirk, Executive Director
Adam McCready, Massachusetts Institute of Technology