

ANTI-SEMITIC INCIDENT #2
(BETA/GAMMA RESIDENCE HALLS)
SUMMARY REPORT

By

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At the request of the University President, the Equal Opportunity (EO) Office looked into the incident described below. The EO Office now provides this Summary Report regarding its review of what occurred.

Factual Background

Based on information contained in a Symplicity Incident Report, on the night of February 2, 2016, two Resident Advisors (RAs) conducting rounds at the Ridgeway Beta residence hall (Beta) saw an object near Beta rooms [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Upon approaching the object, the RAs saw that it was a porcelain doll without a head. Attached to the doll was a piece of paper on which was written “Death to all Jews.” Student [REDACTED] is a resident in room [REDACTED] of Beta. Students [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] reside in room [REDACTED].

The EO Office learned about this incident through the Incident Report filed by the Resident Director (RD) and from Assistant Dean of Students, Michael Sledge. On February 15, 2016, Dr. Guenter-Schlesinger, Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity and Employment Diversity, contacted John Purdie, Associate Director for Residence Life, University Residences, to gain further details about this issue. On February 16, 2016, Dr. Guenter-Schlesinger and Mohammed Cato, Assistant Director, Equal Opportunity Office, met with the following staff from University Residences to discuss the incident: John Purdie; Hui-Ling Chan, Assistant Director for Residence Life; and Jonathan Richards, Beta/Gamma RD. During this meeting, Dr. Guenter-Schlesinger and Mr. Cato were informed that the students were receiving sanctions that included attending an ethics workshop and writing a reflective paper. Dr. Guenter-Schlesinger indicated that she would like to meet with all three students and also have an opportunity to review the reflection papers to ensure the individuals had developed increased awareness and sensitivity to issues of anti-Semitism.

According to the Symplicity Report written by University Residences staff about the incident, when the RAs knocked on the doors of rooms [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to inquire as to whether those inside knew anything about the doll, [REDACTED] answered the door in room [REDACTED] and said he had no idea where [the doll] came from or who did it.” The Symplicity Report states that although Mr. [REDACTED] said the doll was originally his, he had left it outside and “was unsure of who” had put the note on the doll. After speaking with Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED], the RAs brought the doll to the office of RD Jonathan Richards. Mr. Richards then met with each of these students. Mr. [REDACTED] admitted he had put it on Mr. [REDACTED] door. Mr. [REDACTED] admitted he saw Mr. [REDACTED] put the doll with the note on Mr. [REDACTED] door. Mr. [REDACTED] admitted that he threw the doll somewhere outside his door when he saw it, so his new roommate wouldn’t see it.

Interviews

Dr. Guenter-Schlesinger separately interviewed each of the three students on February 22, 2016. All three students expressed recognition that the note on the doll was a problem, but did not appear to understand the gravity of displaying the statement “Death to all Jews.” Most notably, Mr. [REDACTED], who had the note in his possession and who attached it to the doll and placed it on Mr.

█████ door, said: “I thought in my mind he would never take that as an offense. Hindsight is 20-20; I didn’t think of that as being particularly bad because it was for an audience of one. We definitely have conversations and joke around with each other behind closed doors.”

When interviewed by the EO Office, Mr. █████ stated that his sister had snuck the doll into his suitcase during Thanksgiving break. The doll had “the face of an old woman and was really scary.” Mr. █████ stated in his interview that somehow the doll’s face was broken during winter break, and that the doll was then moved around in the stairwell near their rooms for a few weeks early Winter quarter. According to Mr █████, he was cleaning out his backpack on February 2, 2016 and found the “Death to all Jews” note, which he says a high school friend had written. Mr. █████ says he planned to show the note to roommate Mr. █████ and then throw it away, but then saw the doll and “decided to go get the note on the desk and put the note on the doll and put the doll on the door handle.” He “thought this would be a prank.”

At the time Mr. █████ put the doll on Mr. █████ door, Mr. █████ had left his room to bring keys to his new roommate and to help him with his luggage. Mr. █████ returned to his room a few seconds before his new roommate came up the stairs, and upon seeing the doll he “took it off [his] outside door handle and grabbed it and put it outside...” Mr. █████ then forgot about the doll until later that evening when two RAs knocked on the door and were holding it.

Mr. █████, Mr. █████ roommate, acknowledges that he saw the doll on Mr █████ door and that it’s “fair to say I didn’t do enough to stop it. I didn’t think harassment and disruptive charges were necessarily fair. I didn’t see █████ [████████████████] write the note, but I saw him put it on the doll.” █████ said that he felt angry toward his suitemates about what happened and that he had not previously joked with his suitemates about Jewish people. He said that Mr. █████ “doesn’t do religious or racial or gender stuff a lot, ... it happens like in the form of jokes.” Mr. █████ agreed that he should have done something with the doll other than put it outside, but he doesn’t “think it warrants an ethics class.”

Discipline Imposed by University Residences

The relevant Symplicity Reports state that Mr. █████, Mr. █████ and Mr. █████ were found responsible by RD Richards for violations of University Residences’ policies regarding (1) disruptive behavior and (2) harassment and threats of violence. RD Richards found that based on his own admission, Mr. █████ attached the note and placed it on Mr. █████ door thinking it would be funny. The other two students were found to be culpable bystanders. Specifically, RD Richards found that Mr. █████ was present when his roommate, Mr. █████ attached the note to the doll and put it on Mr. █████ outside door, and that Mr. █████ failed to try to prevent Mr. █████ from doing so. RD Richards found that upon discovering the doll on his door, Mr. █████ left it outside where others could see it.

The Conduct Notification Decision issued by University Residences for Mr. █████ states that he was placed on disciplinary probation concluding June 11, 2016. Additionally, the Conduct

Notification Decisions for each of the three students state that by February 29, 2016 they were required to attend a 1.5 hour long Ethics Workshop provided by Residence Life and to write a short reflection paper after attending the workshop.

Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED] appealed their conduct decision which was heard by Hui-Ling Chan, Assistant Director, University Residences. Ms. Chan modified her conduct decision requiring these two students to participate in community service.

Finding

Due to the nature of this incident, a full investigation was not required, as the three individuals involved, including the actual perpetrator, Mr. [REDACTED], admitted to the behaviors. It is the determination of the EO Office that a preponderance of evidence exists that this incident constitutes illegal discrimination and that Mr. [REDACTED] has violated University Policy 1600.02, “Ensuring Equal Opportunity and Prohibiting Discrimination and Retaliation.” As such, this report is being copied to the Assistant Dean of Students/Student Conduct Officer Michael Sledge for review of appropriate sanctions.