

Self Study Focus Committee on the Student Experience:
Patterson Court Interview Questions and Answers with Connor House (continued)
February 20, 1995

5. What is the biggest asset and the biggest liability about being involved in a fraternity/ eating house?

Asset:

- Connor girls said that the biggest advantage of being in an eating house is the bond they get with the other members there.
- The mixed environment (that is partially diverse) helps them get to know and meet freshman women that they would not have known otherwise.
- Connor offers a menu of appetizing foods for vegetarian women.

Liability:

- Some women regret not being with those friends whom belong to other eating houses and fraternities.
- One of the other regrets about being in an eating house is not being around "boys".

In both instances they seem downtrodden in the fact that they are not around those friends in which they have made during freshman and other years.

6. What is the atmosphere like at your house for women?

- Women should be able to come to Connor house and relax, be themselves.
- In terms of student organizations, Connor is a diverse house therefore no one feels like there is any conflict.
- Everyone seemed to feel closely knit to one another. For instance, if one Connor member passed by another member there would always be an acknowledgement of "hello!", even if they did not know each other very well.
- They all reiterated the fact that Connor had a comfortable atmosphere, unlike that of Rusk House.
 - *In other eating houses, such as Rusk, they feel uncomfortable like someone is staring obtrusively at them.

For Men?

- Men should feel welcomed. They often have members of fraternities come and eat with Connor.
- *Yet, when they are invited to another fraternity (which is rare,if at all) they sit off in a corner by themselves while the other fraternity members converse among themselves.

7. What is the atmosphere like at your house for African-Americans?

-There is a problem with the lack of African Americans that do not join Connor as well as other eating houses/ fraternities in general. Which they can not explain.

-They feel that African-Americans would be comfortable if they only gave the Patterson Court system a try.

-One Connor Member said, " It seems as if African Americans do not want to get to know Connor house."

-However, Connor members also understand that since there are so few African Americans at Davidson, they might use the meals as a way of "Understanding what went on during their day." (bonding)

-They, themselves, do not go to the BSC parties because the house itself is a dry house. They did seem to hint that if BSC was an alcohol serving house than a significant more people would go and hang out there.

8. Would a co-ed eating house have had more appeal for you than a single-sex eating huse when you were making your decision to affiliate with a Patterson Court house?

-Connor members said that they would have considered being in a co-ed eating house if it were offered to them their freshman year; however, since they are in Connor "Their is no other place that they would rather be."

-They unanimously exclaimed that a co-ed house would appeal to other independents.

-Connor also agreed to not interfering with incoming freshmen trying to choose a co-ed house if there was a motion to make such an establishment.

9. What would you like to see as directions for the future?

*Less stereotyping between houses.

-Less campus wide stereotyping of Patterson court houses.

-Fraternity open-mindedness involving other eating houses. (more than just co-sponsoring parties).

-Fraternity kindness and cohesion throughout Patterson Court.

-The idea of Sororities should be expounded upon. Then addressing the equalities of eating houses and those of sororities.

-One person wished that the social life of Davidson was not entirely based on that of Patterson Court.

-No Administration and Faculty intervention in Patterson Court affairs and policy.

-There needs to be a College Union coordinator involved with social planning so that there won't be any conflict on time and place of social events between the Davidson College Union and the Patterson Court houses.

-Professor Pena asked an additional question which involved **changing the Patterson Court and policies involving it.**

-Connor members feel as though it would take a concerted effort to change any regulations

involving Patterson Court itself.

-In the group which was questioned people exclaimed that they didn't know how to change policy let alone the chain of command in which they must follow to get policy changed (besides going through Kurtis Holmes).

-Given that noone knew how to change Patterson Court life no one in Connor House has tried to change the Social life on campus.

-One woman of Connor did express the idea of trying to co-sponsor social activities with that of the Union, since it was very hard to coordinate events with fraternities.

Self Study Focus Committee on the Student Experience:
Patterson Court Interview Questions and Results from Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE)
February 14, 1995

1. How do you view your experiences on Patterson Court as contributing to your education?

- The Patterson Court is the closest thing to the real world Davidson has on Campus.
- It also provides a place to build leadership skills and to interact with others.

2. How do you as members of a fraternity/ eating house perceive your relationship with the faculty?

- The faculty has a bias against fraternities and especially Sigma Alpha Epsilon, even though they do invite faculty members down to meetings and social events.
- Two members told their accounts of frequent interactions with professors in which portrayed the teachers bias against those fraternity members. At the end everybody did say that they had similar experiences.
- Also mentioned that they had to put forth more effort in order to know teachers because of the fact that they were in SAE.

With Administration?

- Their relationship with the administration was better than that of the faculty because they had to get along with them.

With Physical Plant?

- The Physical Plant and the Sigma Alpha Epsilon chapter had always gotten along yet, sometimes they feel that the Physical Plant thinks that all Patterson Court houses are full of rich, Caucasian that do not appreciate them.

With other Student Organizations?

- There is no real unity on Patterson Court. This can be seen in the social chair committee meeting when others boast their contributions to the community (Davidson or Outside if Davidson) and down play other organizations involvement.
- Every Patterson Court organization seems to be out for themselves and everyone is afraid to be penalized
- No eating house/ fraternity wants to sponsor events with Sigma Alpha Epsilon even though the other organizations have the money
- It seems as though everyone wants to take credit for the positive things that happen with Patterson Court and no one wants to take responsibility for Patterson Court. (They could not

clarify what type of responsibility they meant.)

3. How do members of your fraternity / eating house relate to members who choose not to consume alcohol?

- Sigma Alpha Epsilon does not force members to drink.
- Even though all their members do drink alcohol, they feel that if people didn't want to drink they wouldn't be involved in this predicament to begin with.

What about those who consume too much ?

- If someone in the fraternity does drink too much other members do take care of those drunk individual(s).

4. What is it you get from Patterson Court that you couldn't get from other outlets on campus?

- This is the only real social outlet that they feel that the students condone on the weekend.
- This is also a place that they can be themselves in.
- "Place where guys can do guy activities."

5. What is the biggest asset and the biggest liability about being involved in a fraternity/ eating house?

Asset:

- support of close friends
- relaxing environment
- support from all group members (alumni etc. who are connected with the fraternity)

Liability:

- stereotyping.**
- They say that the current members of Sigma Alpha Epsilon did not deserve/ earn the common stereotype that existed in the past.
- This stereotype does make the organization feel excluded from the rest of the campus
- Because everyone in this organization is close and resembles one another in beliefs the Davidson people share an apprehension about this chapter.

6. What is the atmosphere like at your house for women ?

- Some women don't take the time to really get to know members in Sigma Alpha Epsilon because of previous stereotypes etc.
- Many women feel comfortable.
- Since there is only a set group of women that come into SAE then they all feel comfortable.

For men?

- They exclaimed that all are welcome (men and women alike).
- Because of the same stereotype many men, not associated with the fraternity, do not want to get to know members of SAE.

7. What is the atmosphere like at your house for African-Americans? for other minorities?

- As stated before, they really don't notice or care about other minorities/ African Americans coming into their house for parties etc. They have no biases against any minority/ organization.
- Parties are open to all, so they insinuated that this question is not even a proposition to consider.

8. Would a co-ed eating house have had more appeal for you than a single-sex eating house when you were making your decision to affiliate with a Patterson Court house?

- No!! (Unanimously)
- The single sex order provides better leadership, & experience.
- None of the members would want to change.
- Their perception of Patterson Court and the college, in general, is that no one wants to make a co-ed house. They cited some examples in the commons where few tables consist of both men and women. [They spoke of one male student in which they did not look too highly upon (in general) as always being part of women's tables]
- Also restated that the people of Davidson want to be with those people like themselves individually.

9. What would you like to see as directions for the future?

- SAE, as a whole, wants more autonomy from the administration.
- They feel that the Davidson administrators are receiving pressure from the faculty and therefore imposing undo restrictions on the Patterson Court houses
 - Since the Administration does not pay for the house, they should have minimal rights or no rights in putting additional regulations on them.
 - Since they pay adult type fees for their membership in their house then they expect to be treated like adults. In that, they feel that they should not have to comply with Davidson laws in closing their week night parties around 12:30 a.m., etc.
 - They would be happy to get one strong, unchanging set of guidelines to comply with (such as North Carolina Law) and not deal with the additional administrative guidelines.
 - By imposing additional guidelines, Davidson's administration seems as though they are afraid to let SAE, and other Patterson Court Houses, have more responsibility.