

Morehouse Community Works on Ending Violence

Contributed by Edward Mitchell -- Black College Wire
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VP may end ban on outdoor activities

Student leaders are developing a plan to combat campus violence after a rare joint meeting of Morehouse administrators, faculty, staff and students on Tuesday afternoon.

The Kilgore Hall meeting, which was called by Interim Vice President of Student Services Herman "Skip" Mason, brought Campus Police, Gloster Hall, Student Services, the athletics department and other school officials together with leaders of the Student Government Association, campus fraternities, and other chartered organizations. At the start, Director of Student Life Raphael Moffett said he hoped the assembled parties would "come up with constructive, practical solutions" to the issue of campus violence, adding, "I don't want recent actions to overshadow the good that we've done this year."

"Fighting," Mason said, "degrades the culture, fiber, and fabric of why you're here [at Morehouse] in the first place."

Less than a week earlier, Mason shut down all outdoor activities in response to fighting at Hump Wednesday and other campus events. The ban remained in place as of press time Tuesday evening, but Mason indicated that he may lift the ban depending on student leaders' ability to formulate a plan to address campus violence.

SGA President Chad Mance led those efforts during Tuesday's meeting.

"This is not the place for you," Mance said to students who would consider "laying a hand on their brother."

Mance moderated discussion as attendees offered a variety of solutions to the problem of campus violence. Those present also discussed varying theories about why the violence occurs in the first place.

Some students raised the issue of Morehouse's "fractitious" nature, saying that students quickly divide and compete based on organizational, fraternal, or dorm allegiances following New Student Orientation. Such students suggested an increased emphasis on campus brotherhood as a solution.

Others said that the problem of campus violence originated with which students Morehouse admissions allows into the school, and that therefore, admissions standards should be raised.

Different departments also offered various solutions. Campus police, represented by Chief Vernon Worthy and other officers, emphasized the need for advisors to be present and vigilant at campus events.

Eventually, student leaders were asked to compile the different theories and suggestions into a workable, written plan to address student-on-student violence.

Although the plan was still being formulated as of press time, President Mance said that student leaders had agreed on the proposal's broad points.

First, in an effort to increase greater cooperation among fraternities, the plan would suggest the separation of the existing Greek Council from the President's Council, placing it under Raphael Moffett, and strengthening its presence and engagement on campus.

Another plan, Mance said, is to hold a Brotherhood Day for Hump Wednesday. The event, originally developed by student Ethan Brisby, would involve all campus organizations—from the SGA and CASA to campus fraternities—coming together in a public show of unity.

The SGA also hopes to hold a town hall meeting on the subject of campus violence in the coming weeks.

Visit The Maroon Tiger to see the actual plan when it becomes available.

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Edward Mitchell is editor-in-chief of The Maroon Tiger, the Morehouse College student newspaper, which originally published this article.