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Controversial. According to Radford University students, if one word could describe the first year under the new “Dry Campus” rule at RU, this is it. With the academic year coming to a close, the RU faculty seem to be pleased with the way the new implementation has gone, while students are left with a headache.

Many students are outraged at the addendum to the 2009-2010 Standards of Student Conduct, voted on by the Student Affairs Executive Council in fall of 2008.

The new rule states that the following is prohibited: “Possession of alcohol in any residence hall regardless of age. Alcoholic beverages are only permitted in University-operated apartments whose assigned resident(s) are at least 21 years of age.”

The clarity of this rule was under speculation recently when the faculty lounge in the Muse residence hall basement contained a cash bar for the grand opening. While the Standards of Student Conduct does state clearly that those actions are prohibited by all “students,” without mention of faculty, many on-campus residents, including 21-year-old RU junior Justin Dillon, found the grand opening offensive.

“I feel that the same rules should apply to everyone,” Dillon said. “If alcohol isn’t allowed to those 21 and older, then faculty shouldn’t receive those benefits either.”

The implementation was put into effect to help stabilize and lift RU’s image as a university. Many students feel that this is not the way to go about doing this. RU freshman Laura Enderson is one of these students. She is in favor of the rule is not so sure of its success.

“It hasn’t changed the way I look at campus that much,” she said. “I think that it has caused the cops to be stricter though, because they have more they can pin people with more strikes than before.”

One RU residential assistant, who wished to remain anonymous, believes that the new rule is simply a nameplate for the university and actually causes the campus to lose money.

“Students are still drinking in their rooms as well as returning to campus after drinking. I also think it discourages juniors and seniors fro mliving on campus,” she said. She also added that if the rule still applied when she was a senior, she would be moving off-campus, too.

One concern among students about the policy was how the RU Police Department would handle it. Many students believe there is a bigger police presence on campus, but the RUPD begs to differ.

According to Chief of Police Colleen Roberts, statistics reflecting the new policy are still incomplete. She said the new policy is strictly administrative and it has had no effect on policy and procedure.

“RUPD is not generally involved in purely administrative violations unless coupled with some form of illegal activity,” Roberts said.

Arguably the most important opinion comes from those who must remain in the dorms their entire academic tenure, due to residential assistant duties or scholarship requirements. For one RA, who wished to remain anonymous, the rule is bittersweet.

“It makes my life easier that residents don’t drink,” the RA said. “However, I feel that I should be able to drink when I turn 21.”

Another issue that may concern students is how a select few students who must live on campus are bypassing the dry campus rule.

According to several residential assistants who also wished to remain anonymous, both residential directors and area directors are permitted to possess alcohol in their rooms. Most residential directors are graduate students and the dry campus policy states students may not possess alcohol in their room.

Nearly every RD and AD spoken to did not want to comment on the subject when asked. Director of Residential Life Katherine W. Lavinder confirmed that RDs and ADs may possess alcohol in their rooms.

“They live in university apartments, and not the general residence hall setting,” Lavinder said.

Since the university determined the living areas the directors occupy are classified as  “University-operated apartments”, there is no violation of the student code of conduct. But these “University-operated apartments” are in residence halls where it is a violation to possess alcohol.

For some, the issue appears to be a loophole used by the university to allow those who they believe have “sound judgment” when drinking on campus. Many students are outraged at the way the issue was handled by the university.  RU sophomore Bethany Stuck is one of them.

“They can’t honestly think that being hypocritical is acceptable,” Stuck said.

How does she feel the student body has interpreted their actions?

“I think it’s simply rude and most importantly, it’s disrespectful to the students.”