

April 11, 2011

Message from the Chancellor: Police Investigate Assault Tied to Sexual Orientation

Dear Carolina Students, Faculty and Staff:

Our Department of Public Safety has been investigating an aggravated assault that appears to have been motivated by the sexual orientation of a male student, who was treated at Campus Health Services for burn injuries. The incident, reported to police on April 5, occurred on the foot bridge between Craige Residence Hall and the intersection of Ridge Road and Manning Drive.

Our thoughts are with our student and with his family and friends. As a University community, we condemn this act of violence. Our Department of Public Safety will bring the strongest possible charges against the attacker.

Based on the available evidence to date, the University plans to report this incident as a hate crime to the federal government. We're also mindful of a recently adopted UNC system policy that deplores unlawful harassment leading to a hostile environment that is based upon personal characteristics including sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race, color, religion, national origin, disability or veteran status.

Everyone in our community has the right to a safe, inclusive and welcome living and learning environment. And all of us have a responsibility to stand against acts of violence, harassment, bullying and intimidation and to treat each other with civility and respect.

Campus advocates for our LGBTQ community are asking questions about the University's response to this incident. As I explained in my message to the campus last week about the incident in Morrison Residence Hall, the University is now reviewing the notification protocols and procedures we use to inform the campus about crime reports or dangerous situations.

This most recent incident will be considered in those conversations, too.

Sincerely,

Holden Thorp