

Eye on Campus

Where's Christmas?

The holiday season's here, and again Delco is undecorated

By ANYA TAKOS and KATIE NEWS
Of *The Lion's Eye*
ATT128@psu.edu, KMN151@psu.edu

As the holiday season approaches, Penn State Delaware County students want to know: Where are all the decorations?

Although no specific written guidelines seem to exist within Penn State's General University Reference Utility (GURU), confusion remains as to whether holiday decorations are allowed on campus.

Student clubs interested in sponsoring holiday events have considered placing Christmas, Hanukkah or other religious decorations throughout PSU Delco's four buildings, but their bedecking remains on hold until someone can find a definitive answer from administration regarding what is permitted.

"I think holiday decorations on campus would be amazing if they were evenly spread out among religions and cultures," says Tayeba Malik. "If the decorations are not biased in any way, and if they don't cause anyone to be offended, then it's absolutely amazing. It's a good idea."

Still, some are of the belief decorations connected to any specific religion would be a problem for a public institution the job of which is to represent so many various cultural groups. The solution, it seems, is to accommodate this concern by not allowing any form of holiday decoration.

While Penn State Delaware County lingers unadorned, other campuses, such as Penn State York, have gone ahead and garnished their campus for the upcoming holiday season.

"We have a Christmas tree," says Tom Iwancio, York campus' student government treasurer. "We've had one each season for at least the past two years, and have never received a complaint about it."

So what's the holiday decoration hold-up at Delaware County? Administrators are awaiting an answer from University Park about the university's written and/or unspoken decoration's policy.

A telephone call attempting to quell the confusion from the *Lion's Eye* to the Student Activities Department at University Park was returned with a promise to call again with the answer. But a second phone call never was received.

Indefinitely, PSU Delco students and the clubs they belong to — and, for that matter, any campus administrator who might want to, say, decorate the quad with festive lights — will wait for an answer as the holidays rapidly come upon us, sans the familiar glow of the season.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with decorating for the holiday season on campus," said Michele Tessmer. "Yes, there are many different cultures and many different religions that are celebrated by students who attend this campus, but if they want to be open and make their religious and cultural backgrounds known, by all means, they should be willing and open to. However, they should not impose those upon other people."

"As long as they are not forcing people to wear Santa hats, or forcing people to bring Hanukkah items and so on and so forth to school, there should be no problem. It's part of your freedom of speech. This is a free country, freedom of religion, freedom of belief."

