

Civility campaign sweeps the campus

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With texting rampant and anonymous, mean-spirited web postings common, society today seems to engender a culture of rudeness. Tulane University administrators are trying to counteract that trend by setting a tone of cooperation through the “One Wave” campaign on the uptown campus.



A “One Wave” banner flies on the uptown campus during move-in weekend. The campaign tries to counteract a culture of rudeness by setting a tone of cooperation. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

As part of the campaign, banners, bulletin boards and stickers proclaiming the Tulane University motto: “Non sibi, sed suis,” translated as “not for one's self, but for one's own,” are appearing on campus in an effort to combat the “me” mentality.

Last spring, administrators met with students to assess attitudes about civility and get ideas for the campaign. Chris Redwine, a senior in the A. B. Freeman School of Business who participated in a focus group, pointed out that the long-standing Tulane motto had the appropriate message, but that students needed to be reminded of it.

Assistant student affairs vice presidents Ross Bryan ([housing and residential life](#)) and Missie McGuire ([campus recreation and student centers](#)) have combined forces to foster the goal of encouraging civility on campus, which they say is also being promoted on other college campuses nationwide.

Bryan, who came to Tulane in April, says the campaign is meant to encourage open, honest ? and polite ? discourse. “I think this will help us define what it means to be part of the community, maybe hold all of us accountable and give us something to look to as a model.”

For students, it might mean being a considerate roommate or a good sport on the intramural playing field. Likewise, the “One Wave” campaign asks professors and staff members to take an extra five minutes to listen meaningfully to a student's concern.

“Because of the diversity of the Tulane student community, I think that's one of the primary reasons we want to engage students in this discussion,” says McGuire. “As a diverse community, we have an obligation to understand those members of our community who are different, reflect different cultures, different values, different traditions. If people were more thoughtful, wouldn't this be a nicer place to be?”

McGuire and Bryan are working with various student organizations to line up “One Wave” events throughout the academic year. They say the civility campaign is catching on uptown, and they hope it spreads to all of the Tulane campuses.