

DORM VOLUME

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[Assignment: Write a causal analysis of an issue important to you. Be sure to choose a subject you know about in order that you may correctly identify causes and/or effects. In other words be sure to avoid the post hoc fallacy.]

(1) It's the day before a big exam. You plan to hibernate in your room for the day and do some serious studying. As you start to engage your concentration on the material, you struggle to block out your neighbor's blasting stereo and ignore the rowdy party going on right outside your door. On the verge of tearing your hair out, you are forced to leave your own room and search for a quieter place to study.

(2) Situations like this are what led Valparaiso University to establish the dormitory quiet/noisy hour policy. It is enforced in order to prevent such disturbances and inconveniences to the student from occurring. The University recognized the need for quiet many students require in order to study or fall asleep at night. While not ignoring the need of the student to also let loose, once in awhile, and blast a favorite song or scream out his frustrations, the University decided on the following policy for campus dorms: quiet hours from 7 PM-7 AM (during which one should be able to study with his door open), courtesy hours from 7 AM - 5 PM (in which one should be able to study with his door closed), and noisy or social hours from 5 PM - 7 PM. The effects of such a policy are positive and necessary for student life in campus residences. They include needed quiet time and social breaks, respect for others, and an orderly, liveable atmosphere.

(3) First of all, the enforcement of this policy assures students quiet time for the majority of the day and night to study and catch up on sleep. A sample of students I questioned responded positively to the V.U. quiet/noisy hour policy. They felt that it is definitely a necessary policy with appropriate times, and that in the absence of such a policy dorm life would turn to chaos, grades would decline, and many students would be deprived of important sleep. In addition, they stated that, overall, the policy was regularly enforced by R.A.'s, and that the occasions that it isn't further convince them of what dorm life would be like with no policy at all. However, half of these students felt that the noisy hour time should be extended on weekends, when there is more time for social activities.

(4) Respect for others at all times is essential to the maintenance of harmony in group living. The

quiet/noisy hour policy not only regulates dorm life, but also promotes respect for others and the use of common courtesies among students. Initially motivated solely by the policy and the threat of pink slips, students will obey the rules. Eventually, however, the students come to appreciate the courtesies others show them and return this courtesy merely out of respect for their fellow students. Over half the students I questioned living in dorms said they abided by the hours because they realized that it would be virtually impossible to accomplish any work or get sleep if students were free to make as much noise as they wanted, whenever they wanted.

(5) Finally, as a result of this policy, an atmosphere is created that has order and is conducive to comfortable living. The dorm is a student's home for the duration of the school year. This effect of the quiet/noisy hour policy keeps living on campus comparable to living at home. Allowing certain times for study and certain times for socializing give order to the student's daily life and prevents a dorm from turning into a "zoo."

(6) In conclusion, it is vital that a university creates a homey atmosphere suitable for the life and success of a student within its dormitories. The effects of having regulated quiet hours and noisy hours show how this V.U. policy contributes to meeting that need. Its enforcement and support from the student body make resident life on V.U.'s campus a success.