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UNH fraternity charged with hazing

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DURHAM – A University of New Hampshire fraternity where two frat brothers were rushed to the hospital with possible alcohol poisoning last month has been charged with hazing and facilitating an underage drinking party, officials said this morning.

The national organization overseeing Phi Mu Delta has also revoked the UNH chapter's charter, effectively shuttering the local frat for at least three years.

"We felt that the actions of the chapter were incongruent with the values of the organization," Phi Mu Delta Executive Director Tom Murphy said this morning from the fraternity's headquarters in New Jersey.

Murphy said he expects the UNH chapter to reopen in three to five years after all the current members have moved on. Each of the frat's current 35 brothers are now considered alumnae, he said, noting that many are expected to continue living in the frat's house because it is a rental and not owned or operated by the national fraternity.

Two frat brothers were found unresponsive with possible alcohol poisoning at Phi Mu Delta's house at 21 Madbury Road early last month and had to be taken to the hospital.

Eventually seven frat brothers — including the two that were hospitalized — were arrested and charged with unlawful/internal possession of alcohol, a misdemeanor.

The frat brothers — all UNH students — were offered bids to join the fraternity and were allegedly drinking at some sort of house party just before the arrests.

The most recent charges are filed against the fraternity itself, while the older charges are against individuals. The frat brothers who were charged last month may also face administrative charges from the university.

UNH was one of Phi Mu Delta's founding chapters when it was established in 1918.

"We were there for 90 years and unfortunately we had a group that threw away a lot of good years there," Murphy said of the recent closure.

This is not the first time Phi Mu Delta has had disciplinary problems. The fraternity was on probation for alcohol issues as recently as the spring semester and Murphy said the UNH chapter was also shuttered in the early 1980s for reasons he refused to talk about.

The chapter reopened in 1995 and has remained in operation until losing its charter on Friday.