

Neither F & M Woman's Lacrosse Head Coach Lauren Paul, nor her Assistant Coaches, Caitlin Powderly and Lidia Sanza, had knowledge of or involvement in the March 11, 2011 incident giving rise to their present circumstances, and do not condone hazing in any form. If they had known that hazing occurred in March 2011, if it occurred, they would have taken corrective action.

The facts of this matter are important for the public to understand.

In early February 2012, Coach Paul made cuts from her team in the ordinary course. Soon after, the parents of one of the cut players registered a complaint about a student-led event in March 2011, eleven months prior. This incident, about which no details have been released to Ms. Paul or her assistants, has since been categorized as "hazing." It is unknown whether the parents in question made any sort of threats to the college.

After hearing of the March 2011 event in mid-February 2012, the administration took virtually no steps to investigate same until April 6th, 2012. It is unknown what action the complaining parents, or their lawyer, took during this period of inactivity.

F&M thereafter began an "investigation" wherein the student-athletes were instructed not to speak with their parents, and told they did not need to seek representation of any kind. This investigation was procedurally flawed in many significant respects.

Although F&M fired Ms. Paul, placed her assistants on leave of absence (a particularly curious decision where Ms. Sanza is concerned, since she wasn't even coaching F & M in March 2011) and suspended 11 student athletes from the team on April 17, *the investigation was on that date still ongoing.*

It appears that F & M elected to release news of these sanctions to the public on April 18, 2012. It is unknown if this release was made solely at the election of F & M, or to satisfy the demands of third-parties. The initial press releases were accompanied by statements from F & M that sought to blame Ms. Paul, and her assistants, for the March 2011 events.

The college acknowledged in writing that, as of Friday, April 20, 2012, the investigation was still ongoing. Why F & M chose to fire Ms. Paul, and to zealously publish the news of such firing, while its investigation was still ongoing, is a matter that only F & M and its lawyers can answer.

Earlier this week, and having completed its investigation, F & M decided to invite the 11 suspended players back on to the team. None of the suspended players were suspended or expelled from the college. Interestingly, the suspended players have rejected the college's invitation to rejoin the team.

Ms. Paul understands that F & M takes its Student Code of Conduct very seriously, and that it enforces same vigorously when students have engaged in violations that threaten the mental or physical safety of its students. The decision to reinstate the suspended players, coupled with the absence of any meaningful student discipline being pursued or carried out, particularly when viewed through

the prism of F & M's stated principles where student well-being is concerned, clearly suggest that whatever occurred in March 2011 did not constitute "hazing."

Ms. Paul's goal moving forward is to have a fulfilling and rewarding career. Ms. Powderly and Ms. Sanza share that ideal. While the coaches believe their terminations were rash and wholly unwarranted, they understand that F & M, having published the reports concerning same, is unlikely to change its mind at this time. Consequently, they are presently considering their vocational and legal options.