

Q: Why did The Daily Illini suspend its editor in chief and opinions editor?

A: The suspensions were initiated at the request of the student newsroom staff because Acton Gorton and Chuck Prochaska failed to consult key student leaders in The Daily Illini newsroom. Gorton and Prochaska did not allow meaningful input to occur from the other student members of The Daily Illini editorial board and executive team.

Q: Did the staff of the newspaper only react the way they did after seeing the reaction from the Muslim community?

A: No. The student staff of The Daily Illini reacted the way they did because of the way this decision was reached.

Q: What is The Daily Illini doing to resolve the internal situation?

A: A task force made up of student staff members of the newspaper will be exploring how this situation was allowed to happen and will be making a recommendation to the Illini Media Co. Board of Directors and the remaining student members of the paper's executive team as to what should happen to both Gorton and Prochaska. Gorton and Prochaska will still be paid during the suspension, and are thereby still employees of the Illini Media Co.

Q: How exactly did these cartoons run in The Daily Illini?

A: Gorton and Prochaska began planning for these cartoons, without the knowledge of the editorial board and executive team, at least two nights before their publication. At 5 p.m. the night of publication, the completed opinions page was shown to only a few other members of the editorial board and executive team, and it was made clear that the decision had been made and that there would be no changes.

Q: What is the attitude of The Daily Illini newsroom about the publication of these cartoons and the events that followed their publication?

A: Students in the newsroom question how a dialogue with the community can occur without first having an open dialogue with the staff of the newspaper.

Q: What role did the Publisher and Board of Directors have in suspending Gorton and Prochaska?

A: According to company policy, student members of the newspaper staff are not allowed to suspend the editor in chief. However, the student staff went to the publisher and demanded action. Publisher Mary Cory's decision was made only after it was requested by other student members of this newspaper and a newsroom-wide staff meeting about the issue.

Q: Will The Daily Illini actually have an open dialogue with the community?

A: Yes. Once the internal situation is resolved, The Daily Illini will hold an open dialogue with the community. More information will be released at a later date.

Q: Why hasn't The Daily Illini apologized to the Muslim community?

A: The remaining members of the editorial board believe that the University community needed to be informed about the worldwide conflict. Had the decision been brought to the editorial board, a collective decision could have been reached about the manner in which these cartoons would run. We would have potentially packaged the cartoons with complete explanation of the context of the cartoons including a timeline of the major developments connected to them; information from the Muslim community explaining why the cartoons were offensive; and guest columns from members of the Muslim community. We believe this was an issue that our readers needed to be informed about; however, it would have happened in a much more sensitive and tactful manner. The editors of this paper recognize the hurt that is caused by the reprinting of these cartoons, the beliefs held by many Muslims against any portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad, and the hostility felt by many Muslims in the community. The Daily Illini is working on a package to inform the community about these cartoons.

Q: Why should the editor in chief consult others?

A: It is a time-honored tradition that the editor in chief has the final say on content. However, the position of editor in chief holds great responsibility, and in this instance Gorton did not act responsibly. Something of this magnitude takes careful planning to handle in a sensitive and tactful manner while still getting the point across.