ECSU hopes ‘Stumbler’ is a bumbler

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WILLIMANTIC — Town and university personnel are warning Eastern Connecticut State University students about the ramifications of participating in a university rite called the “Stumbler” this weekend.

The “Stumbler” is an unsanctioned drinking event scheduled for this weekend that will take place off campus in Willimantic.

Willimantic Police Cpl. Stanley Parizo Jr. said the event typically occurs twice per year, once in the fall and once in the spring.

He said during the event there are designated houses with drinking, including drinking games, and participants will also visit designated bars throughout the Thread City.

Parizo said the event has been going on for more than 15 years. “It’s usually fairly organized,” he said.

Parizo said Willimantic police “keep an eye” on the event and “if we’re not involved, we’re not involved.”

“We’re not here to interfere with your college experience,” he said. “We want you to enjoy being at Eastern, but we want you to do it safely and responsibly.”

In light of the “Stumbler,” Eastern Vice President for Student Affairs Kenneth Bedini, Eastern Dean of Students Walter Diaz and Eastern Director of Judicial Affairs and University Judicial Officer Angelo Simoni sent an e-mail to students this week.

In the e-mail, personnel reminded Eastern students about the university’s expectations regarding off-campus behavior that is prohibited under the student code of conduct.

“It’s the kind of event that would put students at risk of violating their code of conduct,” ECSU Director of University Re-

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In September, six Eastern students were charged with breach of peace after hosting wild parties that police said led to students urinating on private property.

Earlier this month, three Eastern students were arrested in connection with two separate off-campus parties that they hosted.

“The university wants to remind all our students about the importance of being a good neighbor and following all laws and town ordinances,” the e-mail reads. “It is the university’s recommendation that our students not participate in this unsanctioned event (Stumbler) and encourage their friends to do the same.”

ECSU Police Chief Jeffrey Garewski could not be reached for comment Thursday.

Under the student code of conduct, disciplinary action can range from a warning to expulsion, depending on the severity of the violation.

“Know that any arrests or citations issued by the police will be subject to review under the student code of conduct for on-campus university judicial action,” university personnel said in the e-mail. “You can expect the police to make arrests and issue citations without first giving warnings.”

Parizo said the police department will take action if there is any “ruckus” behavior.

“The police department would like to remind those students that drinking in public is against city ordinance,” he said.

Osborn noted breach of peace, underage drinking and serving alcohol to minors are all against the law “and will not be tolerated.”

He noted the university, including police, have been working with the town over the past few years to enforce the student code of conduct applies off-campus.

Osborn said those efforts have resulted in progress “and we are certainly going to be proactive about that work.”