

UM, frat investigate student rant against Uber driver

Candice Williams, The Detroit News 4:40 p.m. ET March 28, 2016



(Photo: Youtube)

The University of Michigan said an incident involving a student whose delivered a profanity-laced rant against an Uber driver has been turned over to police.

"We find the actions depicted in this video to be reprehensible and completely inconsistent with our community's closely held values," said UM Spokesman Rick Fitzgerald in a statement. "We expect more from members of the UM community. Regardless of the circumstances, no one deserves to be treated that way."

In a 33-second video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12VeNY-QoYA>) that has gone viral, the student, Jake Croman, is seen with a group of young men crowding around the vehicle of an Uber driver who is filming them. The student repeatedly uses the F-word as he mocked the man for his job.

The Uber driver, Artur Zawada, posted the video on YouTube on March 23. As of Monday afternoon, the video had more than 350,000 views.

Croman told Buzzfeed that his rant was prompted by an anti-Semitic remark the driver made. Croman is Jewish.

"This video shows one side of an argument I had with an Uber driver two weeks ago after he refused to pick me up on the basis of my religion," Croman wrote in a statement to Buzzfeed. "I am not proud of my reaction to his discrimination and I regret my choice of words."

According to the college news network, The Tab, Zawada said he told the customer he couldn't ride with him anymore after several bad experiences during previous trips.

"I already told him I would never take him again," Zawada told the news outlet. "He knew that but he didn't cancel the trip."

"I pulled in. I didn't even say anything to the guy, and that happened," Zawada continued. "So I pulled out my cellphone and recorded him. He should just have canceled before I came over. They were looking for trouble. They were hoping I would lose my cool."

Fitzgerald said the matter was reported to the Ann Arbor Police.

"We are awaiting the police report as we consider our next steps," he said.

Fitzgerald said the university's dean of students met with the Uber driver and the students last week.

Croman's fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon, said Monday it is investigating the incident.

"Tau Kappa Epsilon has begun our investigation into the video, which allegedly contains one of our members," said Alex Baker, national spokesman for Tau Kappa Epsilon, in a statement. "We are extremely disappointed by the individual's demeaning words. As an organization founded on the personal worth and character of the individual, our members come from a wide range of diverse backgrounds of race, creed, and orientation."

Baker said that following their investigation, the fraternity will handle the situation "with appropriate action," which could include membership expulsion.

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