

Duke prosecutor to resign

by UPI

RALEIGH, N.C. - Durham County, N.C., District Attorney Mike Nifong Friday admitted violating professional conduct rules and told an ethics hearing he would resign.

Nifong made the announcement during his hearing on ethics charges. He said, however, accusations that he lied about evidence were "not justified."

Nifong is under his investigation for alleged ethics violations for his handling of rape allegations against Duke University lacrosse players.

The athletes were cleared of the alleged March 2006 crime.

"My presence as the district attorney in Durham is not furthering the cause of justice," said Nifong.

"It is not fair for the people in my community to be represented by someone who is not held in high esteem by either the members of the community or the members of the profession," he said.

The announcement came as the North Carolina Bar Association was considering whether to yank Nifong's law license.

The prosecutor said he never intentionally lied, but he testified some statements he made to media during the investigation -- which coincided with his campaign for re-election -- "clearly were" violations of the rules of professional conduct.

Nifong rationalized one comment he made -- complaining about the team's "stone wall of silence" -- as an effort to get witnesses to come forward.

Duke prosecutor to resign by UPI