

Notes from January 27, 2014 Strategic Plan meeting at Maseeh Hall

Strengths

- Numbers
 - Consistent recruitment numbers
 - Statistics and data
 - Turn out is good/percentage of participation is high
 - Describe over distributed living sites like the Ivies describe their houses.
Rush is team building
 - Clearinghouse (efficiency)
- Timing
 - Students are open to new commitments
 - Before classes start
 - Doesn't interfere with classes too much
 - Early incorporation into MIT community
 - Allow expansion of undergraduate student body
- Happy
 - Most students are happy with their living group
 - Parents of FSILG students are mostly happy and can be advocate of the benefits
 - These buildings become your home so quickly; they remain so when you bring your children there 30 years later.
- Member Experience
 - Good at showing freshmen choices
 - Mutual selection (vetting)
 - Many leadership opportunities
 - FSILG's provide positive support for new freshmen
 - Demonstrate house culture to prospective members

Weaknesses

- Kickoff
 - Losing Killian Kickoff
 - Individual group goals differ from kickoff goal
 - Kickoff is weak
- Conflict Between Groups
 - Boys/girls influencing each other
 - Fraternities get competitive
 - Girls afraid of Title IX
 - Conflict between rush and recruitment

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- Space for sorority recruitment
- Low coordination between groups
- Open fraternity events negatively impact sororities and ILG recruitment
- Can be cutthroat between groups
- IFC Inspections
 - Alcohol inspections are large burdens on chapters without actually addressing the issue
 - Clearinghouse fines
- Monetary
 - Fiscally wasteful arms race of who can speak more – fraternities only
 - Rush events are too expensive – waste of resources
 - High cost (money and effort)
 - Expensive
 - More money = better rush
- Stress
 - High stress for members and new students
 - Volunteer burnout
 - Freshmen get overwhelmed
- Time/Faculty
 - Faculty complaints of bid acceptance rituals disrupting classes
 - Recruitment numbers lower than desired
 - Potential schedule conflicts between rush events and classes
 - Conflicts with classes
 - Freshmen missing advisor meetings for rush events
 - Numbers of new members versus each freshman finding the right fit
 - Too short to get to know the real group
 - Time consuming for participants and members. Impacts advising with faculty and student energy entering the semester
- Miscellaneous
 - Alcohol issues
 - CPW influence on pledging
 - You only go where you are exposed to early
 - Not everyone understands what MIT FSILG's are like
 - Low retention
 - Freshmen not being able to live in FSILG's for a whole year – would be better if they could at least move in during the spring
 - Rush - glamour – show
 - Rush is fun, recruitment isn't

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Opportunities

- Alcohol
 - Improve monitoring
- CPW/Summer Recruitment
 - Mail ILG information before orientation
 - Restores increased exposure at CPW and rush over summer
 - Increase publicity for accepted students (pre-frosh)
- Publicity
 - Definitely target/involve parents
 - More collective
 - Ensure each russhie visits at least three sites
 - Allow for more during orientation
 - Connections with freshmen via extracurricular activities
 - Clear, concise information disseminated about membership
- Money
 - More efficient use
 - Reduce cost
 - Scholarships instead of wasteful spending
- Ideas
 - Look for ideas from each other, historic practices, other schools
 - Other campuses research on recruitment
- Values
 - Recruitment based on values and missions
 - Focus on ideals and what a group stands for
 - Emphasize daily life and values rather than big events

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Threats

- Dorms
 - Have events during rush as well
 - FSILG's are taking good people from dorms
 - Housing cancellation fee (non-freshmen)
 - Prolonging recruitment period could produce instability into FSILG housing plan
- Constraints
 - House capacity limit in Boston
 - As students settle, they are less willing to consider FSILG
 - Loss of freshmen living in house. Promotes "inflation creep" where new traditions become less considerate
- Neighbors/Location
 - Neighbors don't appreciate events nearby and file noise complaints
- Understanding
 - An accurate understanding of costs and benefits to students
 - Perception as low priority
- World Representation
 - Bad publicity around FSILG's in United States
 - Inaccurate public stereotyping of FSILG's
 - The "frat" reputation does not represent MIT
 - Unhappy parents (poor understanding of need by MIT students for an immediate surrogate home)
- Change
 - Fear of change
 - Frequent changes in rush schedule and rules makes it hard to plan
- Administrative Burden
 - Faculty/housemaster disapproval
 - A negative faculty perception of rush