

DORMCON MINUTES – October 20th, 2011

Attendance:

Dorm	Representative	Absent
Baker	Brian Luque	
Burton-Conner	Alexander Penn	
East Campus	James Douberly	
MacGregor	Mariya Samoylova	
Masseh Hall	Virginia Nicholson	X
McCormick	Krithika Shanmugasundaram	X
New House	TyShaun Wynter	
Next House	Alec Lai	
Random Hall	Rebecca Cox	
Senior Haus	Paula Countouris	X
Simmons Hall	Zachary Hynes	
President	Ellen McIsaac	
Vice President	Virginia Nicholson	X
Secretary	Deena Wang	
Treasurer	Leonid Grinberg	

Topics Discussed:

1. Voting on DormCon representatives to FYE, ISTAB, and CAC Advisory Board

- Ellen – I'm meeting with Dean Humphrey to determine what dorms are trying to accomplish, and I'm about half way thru. To keep all the student governments on the same page, I'm meeting with IFC and Panhel presidents. Email me with any questions
- For the CAC advisory board, Leonid was the temporary representative and Sweet Tea is the permanent representative.
- Voting for FYE
 - Alec Lai's Platform: I'm interested in serving on FYE, since I've always held an interest in the academic experience at educational institutions. I've had experience working in education offices (ranging from developing curriculum for public schools to doing a full school system review), and I run my own education business that offers enrichment programs, seminars, and services to students at the middle and high school level. In addition, I am currently an RAA, and I already work much with Julie Rothhaar. I would love to help develop the scope/mission of FYE, address themes that students face freshman year, and enhance the resources provided to first year students.
 - I run a business called FLOURISH which provides educational enrichment for highschool students. There are 70 students from private schools and 100 total, in addition to tutors.
 - *Alec Lai was white-balloted.*

- Ellen – We still need another representative from east campus so it would be great if you could advertise it.
- Voting for IST advisory board
 - Jacob Horowitz – I’m a sophomore in Course 6-3 and I was elected temporary rep. I can make all the meetings. I’m interested because I’ve been giving feedback and complaining about various computer-related things. I’m Random Hall’s computer chair.
 - I’m Austin Brinson and I’m interested in technology. In freshman year, I started a business (Texas Power Tech) that does IT consulting, network installation, web design, etc. I added 10 printers to Next House. MIT used to be really epic, but now we’re trying to keep up with the other schools. I’d like to get them thinking of ways to innovate instead of just installing software.
 - Questions:
 - How familiar are you with how IST operates?
 - Jacob – I went to the meeting. I know some people in IST and I know what they do. The IST advisory board looks at services provided to students.
 - Austin – Every time they post minutes I read them because I’m interested.
 - Provide example of innovation you want to encourage
 - Austin – I’d like to encourage something about Stellar, because it’s not interesting and not innovative.
 - Jacob – Scanning. A lot of dorms have scanners, but there isn’t a way to scan on Athena. I want to see data on scanners to see if people like them. It shouldn’t be that much hassle.
 - *Austin won in a vote of 5 to 4.*

2. Proposing a budget for the remainder of the semester.

- Leonid – Here’s an update on funds. We received taxes for the fall, which brings our funds up to 29K. 3 dorms still owe me things from REX that they can get reimbursed.
- Projected expenses are \$125 for all DormCon meetings and \$75 for DormCon executive meetings. The expenses are still being processed for the Big Gay Party and Trader Joe’s Shuttle. We have 16k projected to remain by the end of the semester. Therefore, we have 5K to play with. My advice would be not to vote on the budget right now. There are various bigger things we can spend money on, for example, something like the Johnson Games. We received 15K in taxes. I will send out the spreadsheet.
- The budget was approved.

3. Request for funding a Halloween party held at Masseh (\$800)

- We’re asking for \$800 for a party on the 29th, which will be in the courtyard. We expect 150 students at any one time. It will have a fog machine, cash bar, LED lights, wristbands, students working for security. Our expenses are a DJ, LED lights, plastic sheets and tarps, candy, soda, cups and napkins. We don’t know how much money will come from Masseh. The total cost is unknown.
- Questions:
- How will the party be advertised?
- There will be a facebook group and posters. It will be advertised to everyone.

- We're expecting 150 people.
- What happens if more people show up?
- We'll have them wait at the door.
- There was general discussions about disorganization, police detail, advertising, time of advertisings
- Stipulations were attached to funding: advertise to all email lists, and work with Ben/Ducky.
- *There was a unanimous vote to approve funding.*
- Alicia – You get \$800 on the condition that you advertise with all dorms, and plan the party with Ben.

4. Patrick's email about dorm facilities

- Patrick - I sent out emails a while ago to dorms-prez about dorm facilities. Please respond to it.

5. UA restructuring presentation

- TyShaun – This is a presentation we've already given to senate. First of all, why restructure? Many groups are trying to represent students. We recently got a new Chancellor, Grimson, who wants to interact with students. We want a more fluid system to get a clearer picture of student opinion. In the Senior Survey for 2010, the student government was the aspect they were least satisfied with. UA made 3 committees to deal with it. The identified issues were efficiency (last year senate meetings would be very long, which lead to dropout and high turnover). There were committee meetings with stakeholders.
- The Solution has two parts: The behavioral part would be to emphasize committee work, support new members so there would be better transitions, and improve communication.
- The structural parts would be to strengthen the role of the Advisory Committee to give advice, and consolidate and bring the UA under one group that represents everyone. If the senate was full, there would be too many people to communicate effectively, so by consolidating, you can portray the whole spectrum of views. A lot of times, senators are random freshmen, or even non-human. The senators are inexperienced so we should try to bring in more experienced people.
- The timeline was pushed back a little. At the end of November, we should finish the constitution, then approve the constitution. During IAP would be the clean up and in spring semester the new plan would be put in place. It's been delayed because it's hard to have meetings with some stakeholders.
- Allan Miramonte – Questions?
- Zach - Primary issues that are of interest to DormCon is that DormCon will be subsumed into the UA. What is relationship between the proposed funding committee and dorm affairs committee to the UA? Some stakeholders were concerned about DormCon being eliminated as a body.
- Carrine – I don't know why DormCon has to be dissolved
- Allan – The idea of dissolving it is only one idea and other options exist. Hockfield said that it was good that student government was restructuring because there are too many

student leaders. What that can mean is that DormCon can answer questions in the role of “building dorm cohesion” and remove its advocacy position.

- Sweet Tea – Can we dissolve UA and put it under DormCon?
- James – No, because we are two levels below them right now.
- Alicia – 2 groups of people are going to be removed, senators and DormCon chairs. Those 2 things would be covered by committees.
- Carrine – One worry: if we don’t have authority over dorms, what happens?
- James – Bexley fought to not pay taxes.
- Karan Takhar - A number of senators don’t know what’s going on.
- Ellen – There’s no stipulation that a senator actually has to live in place they represent.
- Ellen – The person who leads the committee matters because the UA leader doesn’t have to live in a dorm. All the details need to be laid out before we can vote on it.
- Allan – Right now we’re in feedback stage and meeting with people. The biggest concern is how stakeholders react.
- Karan – The channels of communication between students and the administration are unclear. It’s better not to let selective communication appear.
- Shaun – When the final plan is proposed, what is the procedure for advocacy?
- Allan – It depends on the organization.
- Shaun – What about undergrads?
- Allan – We’re trying to get broader student input, and leaning towards focus groups.
- Zach – What is the relationship between the two committees and rest of UA? Are they independent, chaired by the president, etc.? Different committees have different relationships, and it depends on the committee. For example, the Class Council is independent.
- Alicia – I feel that the funding committee should be independent. Things big enough to affect all dorms are big enough to affect all of campus, and there should be a responsibility to report it back to council.
- Zach – We’re deciding boundaries for the committee’s topics. If you have ideas, this is the time to express them.
- Alicia – If the committees work, then DormCon will be superfluous.
- Allan – Can I get a group opinion?
- General sense that it is a step in the right direction.
- Allan – When I come back with a draft, it will be changeable.
- Novel idea: hold a meeting with all councils.
- Zach – We need to get the constitution approved before election schedules, so the new president knows what he/she is getting into.

6. Ideas about dorm governments' rights

- Punt