

DormCon Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2013
Location: Random Hall

Agenda

- 1) Housing Topics
- 2) Gender Inclusive Housing (Other things discussed with Dean Humphreys)
- 3) Event Recaps/Feedback
 - Piano Drop
 - EC/SH Fall Party
- 4) External Committee Updates
- 5) Quality of Life Survey Data
- 6) Policy Discussion Feedback/Updates
- 7) Chancellor Letter Updates

Attendance

Dorm	Representative	Absent
Baker	Andrea Gutierrez Marty	
Burton-Conner	Akhil Raju	
East Campus	Kelly Snyder	
MacGregor	Walter Menendez	
McCormick	Henna Jethani	
New House	Anna Ho	
Next House	Linda Seymour	
Random Hall	Jacob Hurwitz	
Senior Haus	Alina Kononov	
Simmons Hall	Cosmos Darwin	
President	Eli Ross	
Vice President	Katherine Silvestre	Absent
Secretary	Caitlin Heber	
Treasurer	Phoebe Whitwell	

Begin: 6:10
End: 7:25

1) Housing Topics [Alina & Matthew]

- They have met with Dean Humphreys twice now about security, crowding, Bexley, RLADs and murals.
- Security Updates: student focus groups were supposed to start in dorms that currently have security. However, Alina and Matthew convinced Dean Humphreys to incorporate other dorms' feedback so that all dorms will be able to participate in these groups. The groups will be comprised of randomly chosen average residents (not dorm leadership), some international students, and an equal number of male and female students. These focus groups, and a separate mechanism for dorm leadership teams' feedback, should be starting soon. Additionally, Dean Humphreys will be meeting with Phase 1 dorms' house masters next week to discuss the pros and cons of security implementation.
- The dorm wild cards for security are EC, New House, and MacGregor. The institute is still deciding when to update technology and security at these dorms. EC will have a few updates (i.e. new card readers). Graduate dorms are also getting technology updates. Consultants would have to be brought to take a look at the other two dorms to see what security upgrades are feasible.
- Crowding: students that are currently in crowded triples have opted to not move out of their rooms. Alina will be sending out a survey about crowding, particularly to those in forced triples. We want to know if people like living in their dorms and dealing with crowding or if they would prefer a different dorm and less crowding.
- Bexley: Dean Humphreys would like a new dorm on campus. We don't know if this will happen and everything at this point is just speculation.
- RLADs: we cannot ask residents directly about them. Instead, we are going to be sending out a survey about the entire house team to find areas for improvement for student life and student government. Dean Humphreys will bring this survey to Human Resources for approval of its distribution.
- Murals: Dean Humphreys asked house masters about murals and sent Dan Roderick to look at the murals. They looked at murals and tagged certain murals potentially objectionable. The general view is that murals should be handled on a community level. Dorms should have community conversations about murals and can bring in Title IX folks if they so desire. Matthew clarified that murals that attack or harass a group or person violate Title IX; however, Title IX does not take a mural down if it's "distasteful." The Mind and Handbook violations are the ones that do this. The murals that can be construed as "distasteful" should be discussed in communities. The Title IX people will be coming to the DormCon meeting on the November 21st.
- Kelly: when the house masters were approached, were they checking for Title IX violations or both Title IX and Mind and Handbook violations? Alina: my understanding is that they were looking for anything possibly offensive.
- Jacob: when Title IX came to Random they were very informative. Anyone can bring up a mural for review, but it's the Title IX person's job to evaluate if a "reasonable person" would consider it attacking or harassing a group or person. Random asked tons of direct questions and learned a lot. We should have questions ready for when we meet with them.

- Eli: the house masters have been instructed to give talks on murals. House master communication is very important in general, and we should work on communicating with them.
- Case and Point: where does Title IX end and the Mind and Handbook begin? Should murals be approved before being put up? How should community discussions work? If a mural is damaged, who takes care of it?

2) Gender Inclusive Housing (Other things discussed with Dean Humphreys)

- Dean Humphreys would like this offered in all communities. Senior Haus and Random currently have gender inclusive housing. In Senior Haus, anyone can live together regardless of gender. Cosmos: are there many people who take this option? Alina: I'm only aware of a few. In Random, floors decide genders. Co-ed floors that have doubles with walls down the middle can have people of different genders living there. Housing varies greatly per dorm, but this option would be another option for rooming; it would not be the default. In other words, no one would be forced to live with a gender they are uncomfortable with.
- We need to know what dorms **do not** want this. Please let us know what your dorm wants. Policy is drifting to cross campus implementation.
- Cosmos: how does this work with couples? Akhil & Walter: this is a legitimate concern, and it happens other places. All we could really do is discourage couples from rooming together. Dean Humphreys is looking at this and getting feedback from other institutions.

3) Event Recaps/Feedback

a) Piano Drop [Andrea]

- Piano drop went really well; the piano had to be dropped early because of the large crowd that had gathered. If you ever need to rent things, do not rent them from Empire Party Rentals. They showed up late, left early, and were difficult to work with. Jacob: Peterson Party Rentals is great, try using them in the future.

b) EC/SH Fall Party [Alina & Kelly]

- Kelly: Events were separate, but both went well. EC's Haunted House was popular and had a long line the entire time.

4) External Committee Updates [Jacob]

- Jacob is on the IST and CAC committees. These committees have been discussing Building 12's impending demolition and the removal of some Athena clusters. Because many of Athena clusters will be going away, IST is looking into making the remaining clusters better. Please let Jacob know about improvements you would like see in the remaining clusters (better chairs, color printers, laptop docking stations, etc.). CAC committee is looking into small scale renovations of W20 and allowing for certain events to go past 1am. Current thinking is to allow for events with an academic component to go past 1 am; events will still be evaluated on a case by case basis.

5) Quality of Life Survey Data [Eli on behalf of Katherine]

- DSL had a dinner for student leaders about two weeks ago. At the dinner, the aggregate data of the Student Quality of Life Survey was shared. The results of the survey are broken down into only "graduate," "undergraduate" and "overall" categories (the data is available at web.mit.edu/ir/surveys/). We will be having a meeting with Dean Colombo to ask for data breakdowns that we would like to

see (by dorm, class year, major, etc.). Please brainstorm things you want to know and send them to Katherine.

6) Policy Discussion Feedback/Updates

- DormCon met with Dean Robinson and her associates on October 10th. We gave them lots of feedback on the proposed new policies, which we hope they'll take into account during their revision process. They are working on updating their draft and making it available once fixed. Mathew and Katherine will continue to follow up with Dean Robinson and keep DormCon updated.

7) Chancellor Letter Updates [Kelly]

- The meeting to draft a letter about the qualities DormCon would like to see in the new chancellor was cancelled last minute because many people couldn't make it. Kelly, Jacob, and Leonid met and talked about what they wanted. The main qualities they would like to see in the new chancellor are willingness to have more student engagement and input, and awareness of what students' opinions. The process of writing the actual letter will begin soon; if you want to be a part of the letter writing, please email Kelly and she'll add you to the google doc.
- Eli: did the three of you discuss faculty members you would like to see as chancellor? Kelly: no, we didn't have anyone in mind, we only discussed qualities we wish to see in the new chancellor. Additionally, since we are writing on behalf of DormCon, we plan on only addressing the student life aspect of the chancellor's job while ignoring the other aspects of the position.