

DormCon Meeting
May 15, 2014
Location: Next House

Agenda:

- 1) Mural Policy**
- 2) Senior House RLAD**
- 3) REX updates**
- 4) REX Funding**

Attendance

Dorm	Representative	Absent
Baker	Sean Corcoran	
Burton-Conner	Victoria Stivanello	
East Campus	Jessica Parker	
MacGregor	Walter Menendez	
McCormick	Chloe Orphanides	
New House	Matthew Davis	
Next House	Ryan McDermott	
Random Hall	Guarav Singh	
Senior House	Rodrigo Lopez Uricoechea	
Simmons Hall	Lars Johnson	
Secretary	Jasmeet Arora	
Treasurer	Caitlin Heber	

Mural Policy:

- Chloe and Walter go to HSG meeting and give Dormcon feedback: Colombo had no objections, committee talked out the few objections that there were in a short amount of time.
 - Mural policy now only applies to painted murals; Simmons chalks their walls a lot and they wanted to make sure that it didn't apply to that.
 - Only applies to public spaces; this DOES include suites in BC, but otherwise in individual rooms everything is allowed.
 - In SH, suites are considered "private" says Rodrigo, so for Senior House the painting policy would not (?) be applied.
- Updated document has been given to Chloe and Walter and overall mural policy stuff went well. Dormcon cannot get updated copy yet.

REX Plans:

- Antonio had a few meetings about early returns (everyone got all early returns that were initially requested) –will get a breakdown of dates by tomorrow and then before semester ends will ask for names per date.
- Met with Rother and Young about orientation events so they can figure out scheduling in terms of REX and orientation events. Water war will probably happen at the same time/place as last year. Meeting tomorrow with REX chairs tomorrow at 5:30. REX chairs have a mailing list that they communicate through.
- We need money for REX booklets since admissions doesn't provide money for that. Last year the booklets were about \$1260 for 700 booklets –they were given this with the orientation booklets. The GRTs also got REX booklets and then there were about 20 given to each dorm—that wasn't enough, we want about 40 to each dorm so we're looking at a budget of about \$1500. This is through Copytech.
 - *Held a vote, this was unanimous*

REX Funding:

- Phoebe said we're still looking for itemized budget from CPW chairs, need it by next Friday (25th). Also due next Friday is information from anything that needed event funding within dorms so everyone can get reimbursed.
- We have a little over \$9000 in the account, will get about \$1500 for dorm taxes. Allocate \$5000 for REX funding divided the same way it was during CPW (based on what percent of money each dorm spent on CPW)
 - Random would prefer that funding was divided equally—other presidents seem to also like this idea. The dorms were already receiving around the same amount each so we might as well split it equally.

- Matt brings up that this also makes it hard to plan for CPW because it makes the dorm less sure about how much they're gonna get so it's hard to budget.
- Last year for REX we had it distributed evenly.
- Most dorms last year for CPW were around \$3000 but some were more (New) and some were significantly less (SH \$1000)
- We can't be sure that we'll def have that extra thousand to allocate for REX next year, this is something specific to this year. Also there seems to be no strong opposition to splitting equally.
 - *Vote for \$5000 for REX: unanimous*
 - *Vote for way that we're funding (equally vs proportional): also unanimous*

More REX discussions:

- Chloe asks if we want to have something similar to Dormcon picnic during REX (since during REX we're also trying to promote our own dorms)
- Antonio says that the main issue here is timing. Most of the orientation/admissions events are during the day. They also want to give the dorms their own chance to have the spotlight; not Dormcon.
- Walter brings up "communities who care" event that Housing sponsors which is a dinner to help freshmen feel comfortable in their community and become familiar with the support systems there. (more serious side of REX)
- Walter says REX was more about figuring out if you wanted to stay where you want to stay, not going out and trying to find somewhere else you'd like to live.
 - Should communities who care be before or after REX? After REX is kind of competing with rush—unless we use the day right before hall rush since the lottery closes at 2AM that morning. So there isn't much to do that day, this seems like a good time to do this event. At around like noon or 1PM. Results come out at around 6PM, hall rush starts at around 7.
 - Does it matter if it's right before people move to another dorm? Seems to be okay, since most dorms have similar support structures.
- Will bring this up at housing meeting and to REX chairs to figure out if this is an event that we want to fund.

Dormcon During Orientation:

- Will Dormcon have any visibility during orientation? We had a midway booth apparently, but people don't really know what Dormcon is. We could get more people on a mailing list, that would get frosh to start getting involved in student governance and in dorm life. UA is also doing a big push for this.

- Is publicity actually going to help us? Once people move into dorms and presidents will talk to residents about what Dormcon is. The point of our publicity is to get students to realize that house government extends past Dormcon.
- Walter's example: a resident asked if there would be a way to build a shelter around shuttle stop near MacGregor. Walter brought this to Eli, eventually went to transportation.
- Ryan brings up BC issue: Chloe explained to residents that Dormcon could help with this issue, and then Eli was notified. (Residents that were affected did get a response from Humphreys and were reimbursed).
- When we're advertising Dormcon, we're also advertising house governance. Also this will help people know who is sponsoring Dormcon funded events.
 - ALSO these meetings ARE open to the public, all dorm residents are here. Don't specifically advertise that Dormcon meetings are open but we should let people know that Dormcon is a thing.
- Matt brings up: what is the point of publicizing Dormcon? Benefits and drawbacks?
- Chloe says next year we can talk about what the main goal is for every event, and how we will accomplish it.
- Good idea to have a midway booth. 😊 We can use our banner. We can encourage students to be involved in their own house governments.
- We could also make the "Dormcon" on the REX booklets bigger. We should also get a logo. Maybe we should write Dormitory Council instead of Dormcon. We should have another page at the front of the booklet explaining what Dormcon is.
- Any ideas, email REX chairs!

Senior house RLAD:

- Rodrigo's comments: Last Wednesday housemaster learned that SH is getting an RLAD. Since then SH conducted a survey (~120 responses) to Random and EC asking how comfortable students would be approaching housemaster/GRT/RLAD, as well as questions about selection process and RLAD qualifications.
 - Overall people would be more comfortable talking to housemaster and GRT than RLAD
 - Chancellor was not surprised by this
- Senior house is going to figure out what they want in an RLAD and write a document detailing this and give it to administration.
 - Want RLAD to be confidential
 - Want students to be a big part of hiring process
 - Chancellor seemed to be on board with these, Humphreys however thought it would be a conflict of interest for an administrator to also be confidential. Chancellor met with housemaster yesterday and told him *mysterious good

news*, but Rodrigo won't find out until tomorrow when he meets with Colombo tomorrow.

- We haven't really gotten a timeline yet about RLAD things, but Humphrey is going to give that to us tomorrow. RLAD is supposed to be here in the fall but how are students going to be part of the selection process then?
- Senior house has calmed down a little and have realized that if we say no then we'll just get an RLAD and we won't have a say. Best bet is to find a compromise that both sides are happy with.
 - *Random interviewed RLAD candidates over the summer due to Bexley's closure interfering with previous interview process.
- They shouldn't be implementing an RLAD next fall when the first senior house has heard of it is the end of spring semester. Dormcon should write something about how this isn't okay.
 - You're announcing all these stressful things right before finals, is that the kind of environment students deserve right before going into a really stressful week.
 - This has been happening for a few years.
- Matt says we should think of more permanent ways to have a say in the decisions that they make (DSL committee). They listen to us as a courtesy but actually do whatever they want. We need some way to have permanent student authority within DSL. → Chancellor will probably be receptive to this.
 - We've tried things like this before but these attempts didn't go well, so we have to be careful in how we construct it.
- What does senior house want in an RLAD?
 - Counselor position. Someone for mental health support, trained for substance abuse support/sexual abuse support, etc.
 - People would be way more comfortable if they were officially trained and had confidentiality.
 - DSL probably wants someone in haus who can tell DSL if things seem to be going wrong. People would be ok if this person brought up general trends/issues to DSL but not specific information.
 - Ryan says pick RLAD not only based on who's going to fit in but make it clear what SH wants the RLAD's goal to be. He mentions that the position of the RLAD varies with who is picked.
- Chancellor spent a month or two getting feedback from students; most (over 50%) was negative towards administration.
- Would it be good for Dormcon to send a letter?
 - Should be pretty general (stop putting things on us at the end of the school year) rather than specifically about SH
- Phoebe is the chair of SAC, we can send a complaint to them? SAC is compiling a report of things they have issues with.

- Matt agrees that we do need to send a letter and send a copy to SAC. Dormcon wants to write their own letter rather than being included in UA SAC.
- Dormcon should write a specific letter about how announcements at the end of the semester are not good; also reference previous, more general letter we sent to administration last year.
 - We want more involvement earlier in the process.
- Dormcon does not have a good position in terms of working with administration. We are told things and it is a courtesy that admin takes our suggestions and whatnot. There have been many times where Dormcon was completely uninvolved in decisions made by admins.
 - One reason for this is because chancellor position changes so often. Humphreys and Colombo have been here for a long time, so new chancellor talks to them in order to get perspective and information.
 - We are not involved with planning. We get told that things are happening but not asked for input. We have committees on all these other aspects of MIT, but housing seems to run independently of student input. We need to have student involvement in planning with housing, need to have an authority established other than Colombo.
- Dormcon is independent of UA so we can have a statement from us and then give the statement to SAC and they can also include it in their report.
- Dormcon already has established relationship with admins, whereas UA is also FSILGs (and dorms) and FSILGs seem to not want to take the initiative on residences since it does not affect them. So it would be to our benefit to send our own letter.
- UA is not the venue for this because there will be those people that just don't care.
- But Phoebe is on Dormcon and on the SAC committee. SAC committee recruits over the summer and during fall—chairs are Phoebe and someone on IFC.
- Dormcon should send a letter saying they're unhappy with what happened with SH and also these end-of-semester decisions.
- We should get them to come to a Dormcon meeting and have them talk with all of us.
- Matt says Dormcon and an exec should come up with a plan/policy for communications.
- We should give exec the letter with the intent that we want to continue investigating this issue over the summer.

Burton Connor:

- Found out a little after spring break that floor GRTs were leaving, weren't given an explanation at first. Then they decided to tell them they were leaving because contracts were revamped and these new contracts included things that these GRTs didn't follow (reporting students for things). However the new things in this contract were not in the previous contracts that the GRTs didn't sign. The GRTs were told this over spring break,

but were told that they were not allowed to tell anyone otherwise they would be evicted. (They told students anyway because they now have a place to live)

- We need to protect our GRTs... should Dormcon do something?
- New contract says that GRTs should hold students accountable for choices they make.
- RLP employs GRTs, not housing... This seems like a decision that would be made by more than one person (but we aren't sure if it was).
- They're paid employees so not sure if it's Dormcon's place or helpful for us to step in.
- It is also concerning that GRTs are required to report students, since they're supposed to be there to protect and help us.
- *Dormcon might be able to talk about how GRTs shouldn't necessarily be reporting students.*
- *They should also let us know when policies such as the GRT one is updated.*
- Students seem to feel very "parented" with all the reporting behavior, RLADs, etc.
- Administration should definitely tell us when policies are updated or roles are changed; also the fact that they weren't allowed to tell their students is another example of how they keep not telling students things.
- Matt says this is another reason we should be involved in housing so that we can get a general idea of what is going on.
- We can reach out to GSC and let them know this is an issue.
- Dormcon housing chairs should look into getting a copy of GRT contracts. → important for us to know what GRT roles are.