

**DormCon Meeting
October 10, 2014
Location: Senior House**

Agenda:

1. **COD-Kevin Kraft**
2. **Funding Allocations (Apple picking, Next Haunt, Formal)**
3. **CPW meeting w/Katie Kelley**

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	Proxy: Adrianna Rodriguez
Simmons Hall	Lars Johnson	
Secretary	Jasmeet Arora	
Treasurer	Caitlin Heber	

Start time: 19:35

1. Changes to COD Policy: Kevin Kraft and Suzanne Flynn:

- Kevin: There are two driving factors that led us to where we are.
 - The first is a feeling that, particularly from various groups, that people were not being handled in a certain process by the administration and that they were dealing with disciplinary issues with groups randomly/making it up as they go along. So we wanted to have a fair process that's agreed on by everyone and up front and laid out for everyone.
 - The other driver was that about a year ago, IFC approached COD... A few years ago IFC had a case in which they felt like the Institute didn't back up their Juddcomm's decision. Institute's reason was that they didn't have a good enough process, so they talked about changing it so it would be supported by Institute leadership, and ended up making the decision that they didn't want to be in the business of serious stuff like that. They asked COD if they'd be willing to take it, COD said yes.
- So there's the charter of the COD, that didn't explicitly include disciplining student groups. There actually isn't any sort of explicitly written document indicating how student groups will be disciplined. Last year we went around to student groups and got feedback to the new addition to COD's charter in which we would also deal with student groups also. Faculty reviewed/approved this change and voted on it. So the law's been passed, and the question is what regulations will be put in place. It is resolved that COD will deal with student group discipline, but *how* we're going to implement it isn't in place yet.
- We want to establish a threshold in which beyond the threshold cases will go to COD, but below the threshold they will go to the internal Juddcomm. (stemmed from the IFC case)
- This isn't to take away self-governance options, just so that there's consistency and fairness. We want to keep self-governance to the biggest extent. We want your feedback on this.
- Gaurav: It's nice that it's all written down, but I'm concerned about the wording. There is no "hall" chair or representative, and a hall is being considered its own entity.
 - Suzanne: You don't have to worry about that, people aren't going to just put responsibility on an entire floor. There will be a lot of fact-finding going into this.
 - Kevin: First we're trying to figure out if this was even an organizational case, or if it was just a number of individuals. (fact finding) Student org. misconduct is distinct from individual misconduct. The individuals won't be affected

(won't go on their disciplinary record, etc.) the sanctions will be directly to organizations only.

- Gaurav: I don't know how meaningful it is to suspend a dorm, and to a lesser extent, a floor.
 - Suzanne: Yeah, it's meaningless in some sense. If something major happened in a dorm (like hazing) we would want to find out what happened. It's the same thing that would go on now, but it'll be more formalized.
 - Kevin: It brings more consistency and fairness to the dorms. There will be more structure. It won't change your day-to-day operations.
- Ryan: How will it affect dorm GRT-Housemaster-House Team system?
 - Suzanne: So things can be handled internally, but if it goes past the threshold then it should come to COD.
 - Adrianna: Example of incident that will go past threshold?
 - Suzanne: Hazing, for example, but can't say for sure. That's why we're here for your feedback. It depends though, we will have to do fact-finding.
- Sean: When you say take away money from organizations, how does this work with dorms where the money comes from residents?
 - Kevin: We're not sure what will happen to the money if we suspend an organization and they already have money in their account. It's hard to think of every possibility.
- Sean: Did you approach the UA about this?
 - Matt: The UA was not approached.
 - Sean: one of the biggest problems is the lack of interface between students and administration
 - --some sort of consensus that UA isn't a student org so they didn't really need to be approached--
- Victoria: I don't know why it's appropriate to be charging a hall where only like 7/10 people were involved in hazing, where the 3 other people were guaranteed to live there since MIT guarantees housing. I don't get why the whole hall has to be punished when previously there have been cases against only a few people. In all other cases of student groups, it's in terms of active membership, but it's inappropriate for dorms because dorms don't involve active membership. People who live on that hall should not go through the stress of feeling like they're involved in this fact-finding issue when they didn't have anything to do with it.
 - Kevin: If we say we should take some action on a floor, those people might be negatively impacted by the outcome. But if they didn't have anything to do with it, they shouldn't be inquired or have to do with the process. There won't be much inconvenience on people who didn't have anything to do with it.

- Cosmos: Dorms are huge, even floors are huge. Is it ever going to be the case that you conclude that it was an entirely “Simmons Hall” issue? I can’t think of any scenario where an entire dorm is going to be on the receiving end of this, and so why does this even exist?
 - Suzanne: We aren’t talking about those cases, we’re talking about cases that go beyond a threshold and your input on that. We’re trying to implement a standardized process that’s fair to you, and nothing is going to really change for you guys besides that.
 - Matt: I found it’s very difficult to define a threshold of offenses which would come up to your level. I’m wondering if there has been any objection to a three-fold mechanism:
 1. everyone has the initial option of going to COD (as a student I wouldn’t want to go, but if you’re a Juddcomm you might want to
 2. student governments can refer cases to you
 3. students have the option to appeal to COD
 - Kevin: I don’t think that’s much different than what’s being proposed. I think that’s the threshold question. The COD does have the ability to delegate cases to outside groups. They can say no, this is going to the Juddcomm of this house, or whatever.
 - Sadun: I’m confused as to what you mean by threshold then. If the cases that come to COD are only those that have been referred to COD by a student or Juddcomm--
 - Suzanne: Not only those.
 - Sadun: Not only those. So it’s hard to come up with a threshold because it’s hard to come up with examples of cases that would happen.
 - Kevin: There are some examples. Hazing happening during REX. It’s not impossible to figure out that yes this was hazing, and during a house-sponsored activity, and not just a few individuals.
 - Sadun: This would come to your attention if someone would reported it. Where does the threshold come in?
 - Kevin: Case comes to COD, if it’s past the threshold then we give it back to the house juddcomm.
 - Jess: Then the threshold is kind of self-regulated already, since it’s up to them if they report it to COD.
 - Kevin: We could get reports from elsewhere other than the juddcomm of the house.
- Caitlin: I don’t see the necessity of charging a group instead of the individuals who committed the act?

- Kevin: We aren't charging a whole bunch of people, we're charging an organization. Consequences won't be on the people, they will be on the organization. We've had some situations where individuals and groups were charged. There are also situations in which the situation is created by the organization. Hazing is a perfect example... these three people took the lead, everyone else was there and didn't do anything about it so that means the environment isn't okay, etc.
- Caitlin: When people report cases to COD, are they typically bystanders, victims, etc.?
- Kevin: It could be anyone.
- Cosmos: For example, if it was some coordinated situation by a group of people rather than a few individuals, like hazing during REX? I think something to consider is that dorms vary a lot in terms of how much top-down control they have. You aren't going to find an official REX policy for a dorm in which they're going to haze the kids. How do you go about demonstrating that it's organized?
- Ryan: It makes sense for a student group, but with dorms I have the same thoughts as Cosmos.
- Suzanne: We want to hear what your concerns are. What is the fear that everyone has?
 - Adri: We don't want bad repercussions for our dorms/segments of dorms as a result of something that was not the fault of everyone in the dorm.
 - Sadun: Also concerned about a reverse problem, in which dorms throw a resident under the bus.
- Kevin: So what's the defense against this? It's having some degree of internal governance/having a functioning Juddcomm in the house. You should show that as a house government you are taking care of things and keeping things together, it's a compelling defense.
 - Phoebe: What's the metric for a functioning Juddcomm? Is it going to be standardized?
 - Kevin: I think most everyone here has it written down that they have a Juddcomm, but not everyone's really does anything/have a functioning Juddcomm with trained members, etc. For example Sid-Pac (grad dorm) has a very trained Juddcomm, so we know they're reliable.
 - Caitlin: Who has a Juddcomm?
 - --Many dorms do, that are functioning, but not many are trained--
 - Random: What our Juddcomm does, they don't report to anyone else.
- Suzanne: What are your other fears/concerns about this?
 - Matt: Two things.

1. Going back to residents in New House, we have 200 residents and people have to live in New House. Having a student gov in a dorm is an essential part of college experience. I would hate to think that this experience at MIT for those students would be lessened by getting money taken away.

2. If a student ever came up to me and was concerned about the process of New House/any concerns at all, I would urge them to go to the COD if they didn't think they'd get a fair process at my dorm.

- Kevin: The COD is also the group that is involved in serious cases with people getting suspended/expelled. These are thoughtful people who are making important decisions all the time, have training and understanding of how to do this.
 - Lars: It sounds like the extension to dorms comes from these fraternity cases. Where does it cross the line from something individual to the whole house?
 - Adrianna: Similarly, not every single member of a frat actively participated in whatever happened.
 - Lars: Where does the logic come in to shutting down the entire frat as opposed to just punishing the individuals?
 - Kevin: In cases like this there are occasionally things where it isn't clear who did exactly the thing we're talking about. For example, there was a chapter president in a 1990 case, was arrested for manslaughter even though he was not personally responsible for the death. In the more practical case: There is sometimes a culture problem. Everyone comes in and admits the behavior. COD has to decide when to apply educational sanctions (which happens 96% of the time) and when it crosses the threshold to the point where they need to be shut down (this is the rarity).
 - Lars: We're afraid of this being extended to a residence and having a residence shut down.
 - Suzanne: That's not going to happen.
- Gaurav: It seems reasonable that COD should have some kind of authority over dorms, it's possible that a dorm could have a situation in which the entire dorm could be punished, though unlikely. We want to know what these punishments are, since these are places in which people will be living.
 - Suzanne: We don't know, depends on the case.
 - Gaurav: We know it's case by case, but we just want to know more about what these possible punishments could be.
 - Suzanne: Each case is deliberated very thoughtfully, and COD is a very thoughtful process. 96% ends up being educational programs in which we can help people understand the consequences of this behavior. Rarely do we just kick students out of MIT. We're interested

in moving this individual/group from point x to point y in a very constructive and positive way.

- Gaurav: Suppose we do find that a dorm has a serious issue. It would just be helpful to know what the possibilities are.
 - Kevin: Create a risk management policy & follow it, sometimes people can't have parties for a period of time, restrictions on alcohol parties or large events (these are the kinds of punishments we have for fraternities)
 - Gaurav: I would like to see the policy specifically mention some of these things.
 - Kevin: It does say something about educational sanctions...
- Suzanne: Kevin and I are both available through email for comments, we want to know your fears and how we can make this work for you.
 - Victoria: Frats have an IFC to kind of catch these things before they blow up, but we don't really have one of these bodies. What kind of function does the Sid-Pac government have to discipline these cases before they go to COD?
 - Kevin: They have the authority that COD delegates to it. There's a limit to how severe a sanction the COD can delegate. But other than that, the juddcomm acts with COD authority to sanction these cases.
 - Victoria: In the case of the IFC they can kick them out of IFC, and frats need IFC in order to exist. But all residents have the right to live on campus until they move off/disciplined by COD. How can we catch and discipline these incidents before they blow up and have to move to COD? What power would the dorm juddcomm have to give out punishments?
 - Kevin: What I mean is that if Juddcomm decides that someone in the dorm has to have an educational sanction, the COD will require it for them. Yes, we can make someone do it.
- Sadun: You asked, what are our fears? These policies seem fairly reasonable, confusingly worded but mostly reasonable. Seems like if there's a serious issue, COD will spend a long time deliberating and get it correct. Because there's now an infrastructure where cases can be brought against student groups, there's a more of "because we can"--cases normally handled by housemaster will be brought to COD. My fear is that COD will start acting more because of these policies.
 - Suzanne: We aren't bottom fishing for these kinds of things. COD faces an awful lot, and these kinds of issues are ones that COD would prefer to have resolved at the house levels.
 - Kevin: In the past year people have raised concerns about 4-5 student organizations, but there wasn't any way to handle this. You have to think about the reverse where there is no option to handle these kinds of cases.

- I really appreciate this conversation, and also, we have to actually write something down into this to make the rules. So if you have wording suggestions/changes to what we're talking about here, we're going to take this to the COD again and have another discussion with the feedback from here and everyone else. We'd be happy to take more concrete suggestions via email/meetings.
- Suzanne: Thank you.

2. Apple Picking:

- Phoebe: ResLife is covering \$1000
 - \$3500 from Dormcon, \$500 from Maseeh

Vote passes unanimously to fund apple picking

- Now we have \$4,750 for the semester.

3. Next Haunt:

- Hunter is here from Next Haunt. They want a Halloween celebration: Small Haunted House in Next House. There will be room-escape activities.
- They established a budget of \$2200, requesting that Dormcon fund half of it.
- Open to whole MIT community, and involving lots of different student groups within Next House. Will be dorm-wide and campus-wide Halloween event.
- Cosmos: How will you make the rest of campus aware?
 - Hunter: We have a publicity person who is taking care of this.

Vote passes unanimously to fund Next Haunt

4. Simmons/Next/McCormick Formal:

- Caroline from Simmons: Next and MCC have been running this formal for many years, they invited us this time. We're requesting \$1000 which is 12% of our budget. Will be at MIT Media Lab, theme Fire and Ice. 350 tickets. Dessert bar, food, etc.
- Matt: When Steer Roast happens every year, we always ask if the courtyard is open for everyone? Only 350 people event cap, a little hesitant about that.
 - Phoebe: I think it allows for interdorm events that aren't open to all of campus are still allowed in funding guidelines.
- Caroline: We are not going to turn down anyone from any other dorm. We're advertising only to our dorms though.
- Victoria: How is it being advertised to residents?
 - Caroline: Emails and posters. Everyone's allowed to come but we aren't advertising to everyone.

- Cosmos: Each individual dorm in the trio is contributing A LOT of money, so it makes sense that they aren't advertising to everyone on campus. Tickets will be sold in dining halls through a Google doc.
- Walter: Does each individual resident get a ticket?
- Caroline: Tickets are \$10 for residents, and they can also get one for a guest.

Vote passes unanimously to fund Simmons/Next/McCormick Formal

- Caitlin: we have \$2650 left for the fall

3. CPW Meeting w/Katie Kelley

- Antonio: CPW meeting with Katie Kelley next Wednesday at 5pm. Possibly the beginnings of trying to form a more coherent advisory board for CPW so we can avoid last minute troubles. Meeting is to see how we can create this board and how students can be involved in this process.
- Chloe: Does anyone have concerns about CPW that they really want to be discussed at that meeting?
 - Matt: 1AM Rule
 - Walter: Figure out what "cooling down" after 1AM event actually means
 - Antonio: we want to get that all ironed out way before CPW this time
 - Cosmos: I would love for them to pay for CPW
 - Antonio: They gave us 5K last year
 - Cosmos: Dorms spend a lot of the money.
 - Antonio: Yeah I'll bring that up
- Gaurav: Our constitution says only dormcon dorm members can be in meetings unless someone invites a non-dormcon dorm representative. So technically we can't have "listeners"... something we may want to talk about in the future.

End: 20:43