

**DormCon Meeting  
December 4, 2014  
Location: MacGregor**

**Agenda:**

1. Security Survey
2. Move Out Date
3. i3 + REX/CPW Chairs
4. Gender Inclusive Housing
5. Treasurer Update
6. Bad Ideas Funding Request
7. New House Metal Detector Policy

**Attendance**

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

**Start time: 19:35**

## 1. Treasurer Update:

### \*Budget Report Passed Out\*

- Caitlin: Assuming Bad Ideas is approved for what they requested, we've spent basically our entire event budget. Every dorm was reimbursed for REX. Operations have not been fully spent; if you bought food for a meeting please give me an itemized receipt or if you can't, then a bank statement. Taxes expected to be \$13,900 for next semester (not including Maseeh).

## 2. REX/CPW Chair & i3 Coordinator Elections

- Allen's description:  
**For CPW:** Your job is essentially to coordinate between Admissions and the dorms. Specifically, your biggest tasks are to allocate events to the dorms (since Admissions gives us only a certain number of entries), to deal with dorms being unhappy about the number of events they get and try to obtain events from other dorms/plead with Admissions, and to ensure that dorms follow procedures with events, such as submitting event descriptions/times on schedule, getting approval from EHS, and ensuring that events actually do happen so that prefrish aren't disappointed.  
**For REX:** Similarly, your job is essentially to coordinate between DSL and the dorms. For REX, students organize and print the booklets, so you need to spearhead collecting events and printing out booklets in a timely manner. In addition to that, you have to consider booklet distribution (will have to figure out how to do this because of problems from last year), Water War organization, and possibly a Dormcon picnic again.  
Of course, the job is dependent on how much effort you want to put into it. The administration starts planning these things months in advance (REX planning is starting to roll up now), so you can try to get involved with that if you want to go way above and beyond the call of duty. Normal duties for this start slightly before normal planning for REX/CPW begins, so maybe three months beforehand (is that right, Yo/Antonio?), and take like an hour or three every week. I'm honestly pulling these numbers out of nowhere, but whatever.
- Yo: Agree with Allen, but I would emphasize that there's a lot of non-administrative stuff that you get to do too, if you want. For example, if you wanted to try to get more time for REX, or to allow for a greatly-expanded early return policy, then this is the job to do it.  
If you want to push for FYRE to be a bigger thing so that people move dorms more, or alternatively if you don't care about FYRE but want to encourage freshman from around campus to get to know the different dorms at MIT, REX/CPW are the major ways that people learn these things. It's a cool job. You definitely need to do admin-y stuff, but you can certainly think bigger.
- Antonio: We'll be around for another semester if you need help, it's not super stressful.
- Allen: For the three months before REX/CPW it's like an hour a week, but then it builds up as CPW gets here.

Yuge from Simmons, Yo, and Sadun are candidates for REX/CPW chair.

- Yuge from Simmons: I'm a freshman, and will be one of the frosh chairs at Simmons.
- Gaurav: There can be up to 2 people holding the office. Last year there was one official chair and two people helping out. For now we should take candidates, ask them questions, hear them talk, and then vote.
- Yuge: When I came for CPW and REX, personally I didn't find CPW a very convincing time at MIT. REX was a lot more enjoyable. Personally I would like to see that CPW is a little more run from the prefrosh perspective... when I got here I was very lost as I think a lot of prefrosh are, and I don't think CPW gives the most accurate impression of MIT. Anyway, that's my personal opinion. I think REX was very well run, I don't have any personal opinions on that.
- Sadun: Hi, I'm Sadun. I've been involved for a semester as the risk manager. In terms of what things I'd be interested in doing beyond the standard role... I'm confused as to why we have an early returns policy and I'd like to know if housing would just let everyone come back. When the freshmen show up early they get the feeling they're living in ghost towns, and that's something I'd like to at least poke about. As for why I'd be a good chair, I have experience talking & meeting with administrators and consider myself a thoughtful person.
- Yo: I had a lot of fun doing this last year, I don't have much of a new perspective to bring to this so I'm glad there are people who will.
- Cosmos: Do you think you'd be able to run the committee that we're potentially setting up?
- Gaurav: We haven't decided if we're electing 1, 2, or 3 people. We'll decide that when we talk and they leave the room.
- Yo: Antonio was the chair last year, and then Allen and I tagged along.
- Walter: Are you aware that the position starts effectively immediately, coordinating over IAP and collecting events in February?

--All candidates will be here over IAP--

- Ryan: One of the bigger issues was distributing events during CPW, dorms asked for CPW events and it's tough to hand them out. Do you guys have any strategies in mind about how that can be done better?
- Allen: Admissions gives Dormcon 175 events, and the Dormcon CPW/REX chairs have to allocate the events to all the dorms. What happened last year was we allocated and admittedly messed up a little so dorms were upset with the way they were allocated. We asked for 10 more events from admissions and asked some dorms to give 1 or 2 events up so other dorms could have more events. Basically a lot of anxiety was caused because our allocation method wasn't good. We asked each CPW chair for a preliminary list of events. Most gave us around 30 events. Based on those and previous numbers we pruned that down and some dorms got less events than others. I thought we did it fairly but looking back I don't think we did. That's something we're trying to improve upon. Yo came up with a good list of ideas of how we can make that process better/more transparent, so we'll pass that down to you guys. But if

you guys have any better ideas to allocate events to 10 dorms where each wants a different share of that number.. how can you make that more fair while still maintaining the spirit of CPW?

- Sadun: I'm not going to make a statement on that because I have no idea how you guys went through that process.
- Chloe: How do you feel about the process and the transparency?
- Yo: Baker asks for 4, so giving them an equal number (like 17) would be too much
- Yuge: Doesn't that rely on looking at previous events for each dorm and then talking to the dorms about the event allocations?
- Yo: There's no perfect solution, I don't actually have a plan. Whatever we're going to do, we'll be transparent about it.
- Antonio: One thing we had to work on a lot was talking to admin, hearing their side of the story, and then conversely hearing the students' side of the story. So at the beginning of this year we were told the REX booklet had a Title IX complaint, and they said we should have some guidelines so that our events don't violate Title IX. They gave us a list of events that violated Title IX. But students are also upset about censorship of the booklet. How would you go about making a decision based on these two different sides?
- Sadun: I think it's important to demonstrate to the Title IX office that we do care about making sure the events aren't hostile to people and are friendly/non-discriminatory, but it seems like what DSL is trying to do is put a lot of words in a large written document explaining yes/no guidelines for events. I think that's the wrong way to do it. I think what should be done is the REX chairs should work to say "this is how we'll do it better this year", meet with Sarah Rankin to get on her side, then leave it at that with regards to DSL.
- Yo: We're gonna talk to Sarah Rankin to figure out what the issues were and then come up with our own policy. The Dormcon REX chairs represent Dormcon, so if the presidents feel some way we should do that no matter what our own opinions.
- Yuge: I think generally you can talk to administration, though that's not a common opinion. I think a compromise is possible, we should work with the presidents.

--Candidates leave the room--

~\*secret discussion\*~

***Yo is elected as official REX/CPW Chair, and Yuge, Sadun, and Yo will form the REX/CPW committee.***

i3 Chair: i3 chair is supposed to be the point person for ResLife to talk to the i3 chairs from individual dorms. The i3 chair meets with ResLife to go over the project, talk about due dates etc. and then is present for the following meetings with all the i3 people from every dorm. From that point, the i3 chair serves as a technical and artistic resource for those working on the videos. It requires being on top of e-mails, sending reminders, and viewing and approving the i3 videos before being passed down the chain. An inevitable task of the i3 chair is to have

a clear head and speak up to ResLife when requested edits are bullshit, or to tell the student cinematographers that the request makes sense. Example: I had to convince ResLife that having the acronym "IDGAF" should not be censored. Other example: I had to tell the Bexley kids a few years ago that they had to remove a scene with a dude pretending to slit his wrists/neck with a large knife. Timewise it doesn't take much during fall semester, but requires a bit of planning in IAP and being on top of ResLife to get the deadlines set before the start of spring term. In the spring it takes however much time you want to put into it.

*Holly Haney is running for i3 chair with Adrianna Rodriguez.*

Holly: I'm a freshman Adri asked me to run with her for i3 chair. I'm interested in film, I'm experienced with film programs. I did student government in high school which I really enjoyed, so I'd like to be part of that again. I think it's an exciting time where everyone's getting admitted and I'm not entirely over the excitement from getting into MIT, so I'd like to be a part of that. Adri and I can split up the work this year, and then I can pick it up next year. I feel comfortable working with the administration.

--Holly leaves the room--

*Holly Haney and Adrianna are elected as i3 Coordinators*

### **3. Bad Ideas Funding Request**

- Matt: When I was a prefrash looking into MIT, the first thing that swayed me from going to CalTech is the Bad Ideas event. It allows people, over IAP, to come up with crazy ideas and get funding to build them. I highly approve of this event. Bad Ideas is requesting \$2500, it's less than 50% of the funding request (approx 1/3). I would like to request \$2500 for Bad Ideas.
- Chloe: Projects and events is TBD, does that concern us at all? It concerns me because in the past we've asked for a detailed budget for everything they're gonna spend for Dormcon events, so I think it's kind of wrong to not ask for that from this event as well.
- Gaurav: The way Bad Ideas usually works is that they ask for people to give them ideas, so this is planned to be allocated to that pool.
- Matt: This is a recurring question when Bad Ideas has come to us in the past for events. For Bad Ideas I think it's okay to bend the way we deal with other events because they ask for project submissions. One thing we've done in the past is scale down our contribution if they don't end up funding events with \*all\* of the money.
- Allen: If they spend more than \$5000, it's fine. If they spend less, we can take appropriate action.
- Chloe: We're only able to fund half of whatever they spend, right, not what they requested?
- Caitlin & Phoebe: Yes

*Vote passes to fund Bad Ideas*

- Caitlin: Are we scaling down by percentage of what they spent, or are we funding up to \$2500?
- Chloe: we voted up to \$2500. If they spend less than \$5000 we give them half of whatever they spent.

#### 4. Gender Inclusive Housing

- Phoebe: So on the first page is the background, this is what we showed the housemasters. Chloe & Walter and I went to the housemasters breakfast and talked to the housemasters/Humphreys/Columbo. They had various concerns ranging from not understanding... lots of things.
- Chloe: They had a lot of concerns, but they were not about the fact that this is GIH but more about how we're going to do housing. They had more problems with the actual implementation of the policy rather than the idea of the policy.
- Phoebe: They're talking to the chancellor and each other about this so we'll have results pretty soon. The general feel is positive.
- Chloe: It'll probably be brought up Tuesday at the next HSG meeting.
- Phoebe: Both Senior House and East Campus have this pilot program, and you can see the results of surveys to the residents about Gender Inclusive Housing. For us it didn't mean that much because most people requested singles, but they knew they could end up in a double with someone of not the same gender of their own.
- Allen: Was there any administrative pushback for EC and SH?
- Phoebe & Hansa: There didn't seem to be any.
- Chloe: seems like this could be an informal policy in any dorm, and we're just trying to formalize it.
- Phoebe: Their concerns is that alums, corporation members have will have issues with the process and try to shut it down.
- Chloe: That's why they want to go through this formal approval, in case there's pushback.
- Phoebe: Humphreys said it should be implemented for the April lottery. You should all continue talking to your housemasters about this. If Dormcon, dorm execs, and RACs figure this out then it should be fine for April lottery. We've received four logistical plans from dorms (Simmons, Burton Conner, Random, EC)
- Lars: One of the main questions was how to assign people roommates who opt into this program.
- Hansa: We don't have that many doubles. We have two housing chairs who go through and match people to rooms. We ask residents if they're comfortable with it, and if they're not then they're not put in a room with someone of another gender. If you have GIH, if everyone opted into it, more people could be matched with more people. If people don't opt into it, then you could just match people as you would. It wouldn't change the process, it's just another factor.
- Phoebe: We had this question with EC and didn't think about it enough before we did it so we used the same process. We think we should allow people three options: No

GIH, Indifferent, or Yes I would definitely like to be paired with someone who's opted into GIH.

## **5. Move Out Date**

- Antonio: We met last week to form a plan to figure out who we needed to contact for approval. We're reaching out to dining and house managers to see how it would impact their end-of-year process. We found out it shouldn't conflict too much and shouldn't be that big of a problem. The question is do we extend it to later on Saturday or to Sunday? That's something we still have to talk about with house managers and everyone else. We need to talk to Metro (storage) to see if they can stay open till Sunday.
- Phoebe: We're curious if anyone here would be specifically against the move out date/someone in their dorm would be against it?
- Antonio: Humphreys brought up that he was afraid of parties happening...
- With regards to Saturday and Sunday, people would have to fend for themselves because dining is closed. Is that a worry?
- Lars: I think the quality of dining would decline if they kept it open those few days anyway.
- Antonio: Would people be okay with dining being closed?
- Walter: You could also explore reduced dining options?
- Allen: I don't think enough people are here at the time to justify having a dining hall.
- Matt: If it becomes a stumbling block, if the moving out date will not change because of whether or not we have dining open, I'm fine having dining open.
- Antonio: You can sign this form saying that you want to stay for these days but will not be guaranteed dining.
- Phoebe: This will be opt-in rather than default, handled by dorm exec boards will anyone find this difficult?
- Matt: I think that should be run by housing rather than dorm execs.

## **6. Retreat Budget:**

- Matt: motion to approve \$500 for spring retreat budget

*Passes*

## **7. Security Survey**

- Matt: Good evening – welcome to all gathered dormitory presidents, dormitory residents, and special guests. On November 14, 2014, an MIT undergraduate named David Kaufman initiated an email thread titled “Parents Weekend Security Protocol letter”, expressing discontent concerning a security measure over Parent's Weekend that allowed parents to enter the dormitory showing only their Parent's Weekend badge. Respondents to this email thread, mainly coming from the Random House and East Campus communities as well as many alumni, expressed dissatisfaction with many facets of dormitory security as a whole. To date, there are a total of 187 email

responses to this thread, each expressing to various degrees opinions about security. As a result of this thread, many students took it upon themselves to start initiatives to improve dormitory security. These initiatives are basically independent of each other, with some attempts to coordinate and organize occurring. As Dormitory Council Housing Chairs, students who already maintain frequent contact with administrators and Senior Leadership, we believe that we are in a unique positions to assist and aid these initiatives and ensure that the result is positive change for security.

One of our most pressing concerns was gathering information about security, from a wide range of MIT undergraduates. We needed to ensure that, whatever opinion and recommendations we were to present to administrators, that they properly reflected the needs and desires of dormitory residents. Therefore, we proceeded to create a survey, taking input from certain members on the security email who expressed an interest in improving security, as well as members of Dormitory Council exec. It was essential to do so in a timely manner, given the demonstrated passion, and desire for change, that many undergraduates were expressing. We publicly promised a survey to be delivered in a week; unfortunately, a week from that date was Thanksgiving Break. It was instead released this past Monday, December 1, a week and a half after the initialization of the survey's creation.

As of this moment, the survey has over 700 complete responses and over 1000 people who initiated the survey, or roughly 20% of all undergraduates completing the survey and around 30% of all dormitory residents. Moving forward, the survey will be closed on Monday, December 15, 2014, and the results will be analyzed over the period of a month, with an expected completion date in the middle of IAP. We will then share the results of this report with dormitory presidents, continue to work with Dean Humphreys and possibly Chancellor Barnhardt on the results, and then release them to the wider MIT community. While the survey has enjoyed a great response, it would be terrific to get even more participation. A common theme amongst those we have spoken to about the survey, is that they did not complete it due to either a lack of interest in security, or the number of questions.

To improve the relevance and success of the survey, we need these people to respond. Accordingly, we would like a sum of money to be allocated from any remaining funds to go towards a monetary incentive to complete the survey. This would probably come in the form of TechCash or a general use giftcard.

Thank you very much for your time and your patience. Please feel free to ask questions or give comments about our overall process; we would like to ask that if you have any specific survey questions, that you speak with us after the meeting, or send us an email. Again, thank you.

- Chloe: You're asking for \$100, how are you planning on distributing?
- Matt: Four prizes of \$25 each will probably entice more people to take it.
- Sadun: Do the Institute have any data on whether these prizes actually work?
- Matt: I don't know, but I've seen that if there's no incentive then there's a bias because only people who are very passionate about it will take the survey. People who already took the survey are also eligible.

- After we finish and collect results, we're going to draw up a comprehensive report about the wording, methodology, and then put forward a few policy recommendations off those results. Institutional research was not involved in drafting of the survey. The one thing we should've done is contact dorms-prez asking for questions, but with the time we had we weren't able to do that.
- Chloe: The main question now is if we should give \$100 to the survey. We still have \$497 left.

## *Passes*

### **8. New House Metal Detector Policy**

- Matt: This has nothing to do with putting metal detectors in a dorm, and that's never been talked about or considered. The Chocolate City living community holds an annual/bi-annual party in the stud. They invite black alumni, chocolate city alumni, BSU community, etc.  
Back in 1996 there was a shooting that occurred outside Walker Memorial. As a result MIT instituted a metal detector policy if there are 250+ people, non-MIT people coming, and alcohol is served. The two events this applies to is this party and Springfest. This is a really bad association, and they have to pay for it themselves. So we went to community equity officer about this (Ed) and he recommended coming to Dormcon and ask whether other dorms would be on board with reviewing this policy with the admin. The policy does apply for parties that take place anywhere, and the policy was put together 20 years ago quickly and in response to one event. There's questions of whether there's still necessity for it/other ways to go about it. I'd like to draft a general letter that states that Dormcon would like to explore the revision process for the metal detector policy.
- Chloe: Don't we also want to be involved?
- Matt: yes, I'd love for us to be involved.
- Antonio: If we're not involved it might become a more strict policy.
- Matt: totally on board with Dormcon taking a bigger role in this.
- Sonia: Since we aren't really sure whether or not this policy is warranted/what kind of changes we might be pursuing, we might want to say we are going to examine the policy with potential for recommendations for revision?  
Matt: I see there's a general interest in revising, so Sadun and I can work on potential revisions and then bring them to Dormcon next meeting
- Sadun: I am with Sonia that we should examine before revising
- Phoebe: how is Roast not in this?
- Chloe: Yeah there are also alumni events at McCormick that don't have that policy
- Matt: Yeah I'm not sure why..
- Cosmos: I think it's a reasonable rule besides the money and very spotty enforcement...
- Walter: The policy applies to event that applies to all 3?

- Gaurav: Exceptions are that a function may not be considered non-MIT if each nonMIT guest is accompanied by a nonMIT student, or there's a limited number of nonMIT guests on a guest list.
- Walter: there's no alcohol at Springfest...
- Gaurav: Alcohol or a live musical performance
- Matt: Honestly for me this is what it comes down to. There's a community that is hosting a party that has metal detectors. I don't think there should be metal detectors there, I think they should be associated with needing to have metal detectors. An admin recommended that I come to Dormcon for support, and I would love to whatever form of support you guys would wish to give.
- Chloe: I think examining the policy would be a great start.
- Antonio: What's the viability of involving IFC, Panhel, UA, etc? This isn't just a dorm issue.
- Matt: They specifically mention Dormcon
- Chloe: This is def a UA issue but if Dormcon takes it on then we can at least initiate it and bring them on later.

**\*\*General agreement\*\***

Chloe: This is the last meeting of the semester and it is a transition time for all the dorms to new presidencies. Thanks for participating as much as you have, we've had a great semester. You've either elected or will be electing new presidents. Please email me and Jasmeet with the name of your new president so we know who you're transitioning to. Full name & kerberos so we can update the website.

**End: 21:06**