

Attendance:

Alexa Martin
Daysi Gomez
Kyle Archer
Sophia Liu
Yuge Ji (Simmons)
Elizabeth Cox (Baker)
Makenzie Patarine (Baker)
Isaac Grosf (Random)
Jacqueline Liu (Simmons)
Sean Parks (IFC)
Jack Gordon (IFC)
Courtney Diamond (Panhel)
John Peurifoy (IFC)
Colin Godwin (New)
Meredith Benson (Panhel)
Emily Crandall Fleischman (LGC)
Allie Stanton (EC)
Jane Maunsell (Senior Haus)
Sarah Melvin (Senior Haus)
Sabrina Madera (Senior Haus)
William Moses (Maseeh)

Minutes:

Vote: Motion to approve minutes from last week: 3 abstaining, passed

State of the UA:

- Saferide: Moriel Levy has been working on collecting responses on saferide. We have gotten about 100 responses from sorority women and one man. A lot of responses say it is unreliable and sometimes leaves people on the saferide. We have discussed this multiple times over the semester, we are already working on an uber code for students to use outside of saferide times. Plan to meet again at the end of the semester to continue discussing saferide.
- Diversity and community spaces: Wanted to meet with all 60+ affinity groups on campus, still working on that and will hopefully have something out on that next semester.
- Student Support Evaluations: Tamar has emailed out results of S³ evaluations and we are in the process of determining a framework for evaluations.

- Need for administrative assistants for UA and ASA. ASA is understaffed. ASA moratorium will be lifted next year. Peter and Suzy have agreed to find a temp admin for the UA and ASA and then will find an official. We are hoping they will be working somewhere in the UA office.
- Student Life Fee: We have a timeline, will meet at the end of the year to create a group and then next May will make recommendations for 2018. Suzy has promised to make us whole for next year.
- UA is doing pretty well, sense of community is on an uptake from last year. We are currently working on the issue of communication: very few people know what the UA is doing, we are thinking of new ways to share this information with all undergrads.

Chancellor Discussion

- Chancellor is thinking about instituting new vice chancellor position which would take all academic things that currently fall under the chancellor role.
- What setup should we have to discuss what this person should do?
- What is the best way to find this person and inform them of what they should be doing?
- There are issues overlapping but not quite specific to any other department to MIT. These issues also currently do not fall under any specific person. This person will think about the future of MIT broadly and make a push to make these changes.
- Split up into groups and discuss:
 - We just approved another master's program that allows you to be off campus and take classes online. MIT is moving towards having a mixed academic experience: taking some classes online and some in person. We need to consider how this impacts the whole experience.
 - Interested in seeing: changes to advising (making it more helpful), changes to GIRS (too large and not always helpful), more department specific problems (scheduling, grade transparency). This person should be able to talk to all the different departments and push these ideas.
 - Having advising evaluations could go along with switching advisors. Giving more training to specifically freshmen advisors. Help students find research opportunities and navigate the UROP process. Hands on learning, where it is beneficial and how it has an impact on how you remember the class. Class units aligning with hours spent- there is always push back from departments when trying to change this. Discuss major choice, lack of exploration and GIRs taking up a lot of time: thought about a major mixer class where you are introduced to a lot of different subjects.
 - More honest and specific course evaluations

- Talked about issue with major choice- students need a better system to actually explore. Need to better integrate the extern experience, taking a semester off, and making this an opportunity one that you can actually explore.
- This person will be a connection between grads and undergrads.
- Online ASEs would be a bad idea: unleashes the try hard of MIT students way too much, people may try to graduate too early.
- Yuge: I wonder if it's necessary for us to think about that academically because a lot of people find the unique experience in the environment of MIT.
- Jack: With these mixed degree programs it makes more sense for graduate programs. My concern is pushing this for undergraduates- the community here is what makes MIT, MIT. This would weaken the experience for everyone.
- Sophia: The plus to having this model is that you don't have students who know let's say all of coding then have to take 6.0001 or 6.0002.
- Colin: The teach each other, learn from each other mind set will be lost if we allow a lot of people to take classes online.
- Billy: I agree with the non credit course 6 system, you can get out a requirement if you can show you understand the material. But instead of completely getting out of the class they can take a different class instead.
- Jack: It would be interesting to study which majors currently do that system and which do not.
- Sophia: I don't necessarily subscribe to this, but someone came to me and suggested that we should have a volunteering requirement at MIT. We used to have city days which had freshmen go out into cambridge and do volunteer work. If you look at the entry and exit surveys, students now leave MIT valuing community service and community less than when they came here. It is dangerous for us to put people out in the world without the mindset of thinking of other people.
- Sarah: The engine for instance is being worked on by people who aren't specialists in housing or the community in Cambridge. MIT needs to take the lead on this.
- Isaac: I want to separate these two ideas: One is community involvement in Cambridge and Boston, and the other is volunteering. These are both valuable things but not best achieved by looking at them the same way. A good first step is to make volunteering more accessible, rather than requiring it. A communication type thing could be really helpful.
- Jack: Last year we considered adding new requirements and I remember that being a particular issue, it would be better served not as a requirement but to push through IFC, Panhel, Dormcon, etc within their own groups. I hesitate to add anymore requirements.

- John: What is the goal this is trying to solve? A greater conversation is needed about the mindset when creating innovations how it will affect others.
- Isaac: Ethics, or engineering ethics is not really taught at MIT. This is something we need to address.

Communication With Undergrads

- What do you know about the UA and what do your constituents know about the UA? Is it enough? How do you know what you know about the UA?
- Allie: Everything I know about the UA is from Dormcon. Dormcon has a dormcon announce email list, that could be a potential option for the UA. I think there is more involvement in dormcon discussions than UA discussions. It would be helpful to have more involvement.
- Sarah: I think the UA has a problem with engaging student leaders. I think part of that has to do with the way meetings are structured, there is not a lot of power for student leaders to add something to the agenda, not a lot of discussion.
- Jack: The way we are connecting MIT student leaders with students is still very hierarchical. It is a series of successive funnels where information gets lost every time.
- Isaac: Something I've done that is valuable is there is a mailing list associated with Random that I would update with what is happening with the UA, Dormcon, and Random. When I sent emails people actually read them and valued them. This level of a summary written by someone personally in dorm size or frat/sorority size would be valuable.
- Yuge: When we attend meetings and interact with student leaders the meetings are more often what's a general opinion and feeling and informative. Those updates will not engage people instead of them actually being involved in the decision making process. I would also recognize trying to engage the entire student body will not work or be effective. A better objective is to engage as many people who are interested in that specific topic. Education, for example, there are a ton of people interested in advising but wouldn't think to join this committee.
- Colin: Potential solutions- people have tried to randomize meetings with those who are interested. Directed fashion with random ID sorting or where various members of MIT administration meet on a set day at a set time to discuss the biggest issues on campus.
- Sophia: Back tracking to the council environment, in Shruti's day it was very presentation based, Matthew made it very voting heavy, I've tried to get a middle ground. On the point on how to engage more student leaders, not everyone responded to invitations one on one. What more can we do to engage the student leaders? Are student leaders prepared when they enter positions?

- Isaac: On the subject of student leaders being prepared, there is something more important than knowing who people are and an org chart. It is important to think of what manors are appropriate for presenting yourself and getting your ideas across to admins.
- Sophia: There are some guidelines we try to impart to our exec teams in our UA retreat. I don't know if every dorm president has this going into their role.
- Billy: When I first became dorm president I was given no information. I learned over time. Having some mechanism to allow people to ensure they got that training in would be good.
- Sarah: The UA isn't a place where people think they can bring up ideas and have UA leaders present them to admins. There isn't a good channel for students to bring up broad issues. A lot of it is legacy, there is this perception that people can't come to the UA.
- Billy: It would be really useful to have everyone to go around and say an issue each group is facing. This would encourage people to bring up and talk about their problems.
- Yuge: The things the UA works on is determined primarily by committee members and not Sophia. This lowers our engagement since we don't perceive that the issues we bring up are being addressed.
- Sophia: When we select our chairs we select them based on their alignment with our platform we are elected on. If you ever think something is more important than what we are already working on, let me know and we will turn things around.
- Isaac: Here's an example- there was a problem recently that people wanted to hold parties but the training mechanism wasn't working. Dorm presidents went to risk management within dormcon exec and talked to them directly and those talked to the admins. There were no layers. When I talked to the UA Committee Chair it was not through the UA. Putting people directly in contact with those who can address their problem is really valuable.
- Billy: I feel like the problem comes from a perception of how the organization is supposed to run. What one perceives of UA they think I am here to get information for me to distill to my constituents
- Liz: There is something to be said that at every dorm conn meeting there are the officers and they give updates on what they are doing. We see committee chairs once in awhile but if they came to every meeting it could be easier for me to reach out to them. In order for them to do their job better it could be important to have the chairs here.

Vote: to adjourn meeting: 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, passed