

UA Senate: Monday, March 9, 2009

7pm: Donna Denoncourt and Suzanne Flynn as guest speakers

- Donna Denoncourt: I want to talk about the process to date of the Blue Ribbon Dining Committee (BRDC).
 - Larry Benedict charged the committee to look at dining holistically in Oct. 2007 and recommended members. We had our first official meeting in November, and our first focus groups in the end of November.
 - We collated the focus group information and created the survey over January, February, and March. The survey was launched in April.
 - Lost some members to graduation, and the members who replaced them did so based on position, eg. James Torres replacing former DormCon president.
 - This year, we've been really looking at the data and looked for key themes. In November, we had back to back meetings to really visualize what we want with dining.
 - We met in the middle of February, and then the report leaked. Dean Colombo recharged the committee and told us to continue forward on our initial plan.
 - We've had one other meeting since then and that was last week. Noah and Mike presented ideas for what you think would make for a better committee—looked into voting procedures, reviewed membership, and transparency.
 - We've created a website with meeting summaries up to date.
 - Colombo still wants the report to be done by the end of April, and we will be seeking your feedback 2 weeks before and will review that before a final report is given to the Dean.
 - There will be questions I will be uncomfortable answering because they're still at the committee level, but I will share things that the committee agrees on as principles:
 - It's about choice: The data, focus groups, and our discussions all agree on this.
 - Affordability: We need good food at a reasonable price.
 - Location: Access is easy for all meals, and locations are accessible.
 - Program structure: There is a need for breakfast, late-night options, and population specific needs.
 - Community: Creating opportunities for it to grow, while honoring those which exist.
 - Sustainability: Both financially and environmentally
 - Education: On proper nutrition, good meal habits
 - Reactionary to your input and feedback would be incorporated once the recommendations were put in place.
 - Some things which are off the table:
 - Nutritional fee
 - Removing kitchens—it was never even on the table

- Not requiring a meal plan for those dorms without dining halls
 - We really want to hear your concerns so that we can bring them back to the committee at the next meeting this Thursday, and then provide you with feedback.
- Vrajesh Modi: Can you rephrase not requiring a meal plan for those dorms without dining halls?
- Donna Denoncourt: There is not a recommendation put forward to require a dorm without dining halls to buy into a meal plan.
- Noah Jessop: Students will not be required to buy into a plan which would require them to leave their living group to use.
- Keone Hon: It will absolutely not be in the recommendation?
- Donna Denoncourt: At this phase in the committee, it will not be in the recommendation.
- Catherine Olsson: Is the gift card/dining dollars which could be spend out at Star off the table?
- Mike Bennie: Yes. There will be no minimum nutritional fee.
- Paul Baranay: In April, the committee will give the final recommendations. What will then happen with the administrators? Will they publicly accept it or reject it?
- Donna Denoncourt: I really don't know. I don't think that the powers that be plan on doing.
- Vinay Tripuraneni: Was there initially a plan to release the survey data?
- Donna Denoncourt: There was a plan to release the survey data as part of the report.
- Vrajesh Modi: Which data would be released and in what form?
- Donna Denoncourt: I'm not sure yet: I'd have to talk to the consultant.
- Vrajesh Modi: It would be extremely helpful to put the data out publicly.
- Donna Denoncourt: I'll bring that sentiment back to the committee.
- Eleni Orphanides: Would these recommendations be implemented next year?
- Suzanne Flynn: It would likely not be until the year after.
- Noah Jessop: We can ask Colombo at the next meeting.
- Sammi Wyman: Do you think that two weeks is enough time to incorporate the feedback from the entire student body?
- Donna Denoncourt: I'm hoping so, and if not, I'll have to ask for an extension from Dean Colombo.
- Iman Fayyad: What will happen to MacGregor? There were things in the report about MacCon that MacGregor residents aren't very happy with.
- Donna Denoncourt: I can't talk about this just yet because as a committee, we haven't gone through that part of the report. Anything you and your constituents want to share with me?
- Iman Fayyad: A lot of the pilot dining programs in MacGregor haven't been very successful. MacGregor does not seem to want a dining program within the dorm.
- Noah Jessop: Part of what's really difficult in BRDC is the need to walk the fine line of renovating dorms which could support a dining facility and supporting the autonomy of

student culture there. It's difficult sometimes to blend individual wishes with the bigger picture.

- Andrew Lukmann: For financial sustainability, has the Dean communicated with you that dining already receives a significant subsidy of hundreds of thousands of dollars. In the future what kind of subsidy is the committee looking at pairing with the system it recommends?
- Donna Denoncourt: We aren't focusing so much on the financial piece, but we know it's an element of it.
- Andrew Lukmann: So the discussions the BRDC is having does not take money into consideration?
- Donna Denoncourt: Not really. We're looking at what it could look like not what it would cost.
- Andrew Lukmann: Money is often what drives the issue for reform. Without looking into this, we might have to reevaluate dining again five years from now. The institute needs to state that they will provide the necessary subsidy and commit to it so that we don't have to sacrifice later.
- Tim Stumbaugh: I was looking at the current and previous members of the committee. There had previously been representatives from dorms with dining halls, will more members be added to represent these places? If not, why won't there be?
- Donna Denoncourt: The membership is closed now. There are still representatives from W1, McCormick, and Simmons.
- Vrajesh Modi: There's nobody specifically representing fraternities, sororities, ILGs, and dorms without dining halls. With that input, it might be easier to come up with a system that might be broader.
- Donna Denoncourt: With the FSILG piece, we asked if Martin and Mike were comfortable serving a dual role. Some of the members from the dorms without dining halls chose not to come to the meetings, even after prodding.
- Vrajesh Modi: What if there were more interested students in dorms from dining halls, could they be added to the committee?
- Donna Denoncourt: Because of where we are in this process, we decided not to add more members.
- Suzanne Flynn: With six weeks left, any new students would have to catch up with too much.
- Vrajesh Modi: There is a very short timeline, but the campus community had major concerns with the draft. The draft wasn't something that most people seemed to like. The timeline would be more reasonable if it was a draft that was mostly agreeable. Maybe it would be good to get more time.
- Donna Denoncourt: We're going to do our best to get the work done in the time frame we have, but we'll ask for more time as needed.
- Daniel Hawkins: Looking at the list, there are no current students representing dorms other than McCormick and Simmons. Because of all the concerns about the membership of this committee, do you think that it is effective to close membership and make the input from unrepresented only happen during the two week feedback period?

- Donna Denoncourt: We hope it will be.
- Rachel Meyer: When will the minutes and a timeline or a calendar be posted?
- Donna Denoncourt: We have summaries of the minutes posted.
- Rachel Meyer: A lot of people are interested in seeing the minutes with the names redacted.
- Donna Denoncourt: You seem to want more time for public collection of feedback.
- Sammi Wyman: It would be useful to incorporate student feedback earlier in the process if you didn't want to ask for more time. The dorms without dining halls and FSILGs would really like you to follow up on these things.
- Vrajesh Modi: Did you have a chance to look at the bill the UA passed a couple of weeks ago? The impression I got from that was that every dorm (except Bexley) was represented in their concerns along with the fraternities, sororities, and ILGs. Everyone got concerned about the draft, and as such, people want more input before things have to be finalized.
- Paul Baranay: How do you plan on going about collecting feedback? Will you utilize the UA?
- Noah: Jessop One of the ideas we have is to have anyone write up a suggestion formally according to the 8 principles, and we will try to tie it into the larger scale data and include it into our findings. Would people like this?
- Vrajesh Modi: I think it's a good idea, but it will make difficult to get feedback if people need to look at the 8 principles and such. It might be easier if we could respond to data because MIT students are very good at looking at numbers.
- Suzanne Flynn: But there were also focus groups, and they were another source of information. The survey is only a part of a bigger picture.
- Vrajesh Modi: The survey was very comprehensive. What information did the focus groups generate that the survey didn't?
- Suzanne Flynn: We talked more specifically and in greater detail than just clicking a number on the survey.
- Donna Denoncourt: We had four or five questions for the focus groups to lead the discussion. We can try to post the questions on the website as they'd give you a better understanding of the focus groups.
- Daniel Hawkins: It seems the consultant's report was based entirely on the survey data. It seems to be a significant portion of the puzzle. Can the data be released?
- Donna Denoncourt: I've noticed that you want this.
- Vrajesh Modi: Would it be possible for this to be brought up before spring break? People might have more time to look at the data then.
- Catherine Olsson: All of our concerns seem to lead back to there not being enough time. It seems like the 6 weeks is forcing the BRDC into a lot of decisions that the students at large aren't comfortable, such as closing membership. After the leaked report, there's a lot of mistrust. There doesn't seem to be a lot of time to look back on the consultants' recommendations instead of only plowing forward. It seems like BRDC can't really reevaluate to get more time and fix the trust issues in this time frame. Is it true that Dean Colombo is the only one who can grant more time?

- Donna Denoncourt: Having more time to alleviate these concerns seems to be a reasonable request.
- Catherine Olsson: How can we formalize this expression that we need more time more rather than just asking for an extension which could be rejected?
- Donna Denoncourt: If the committee feels they need more time as well, then we want to honor that request.
- Mike Bennie: I'm thinking of the student reps, only me and Preeya will still be around after this year, and we might not be in the same positions to be on it. This creates a gap in institutional memory.
- Vrajesh Modi: We could add more members.
- Daniel Hawkins: Can we get the first draft made public to help alleviate some of the mistrust which surrounds BRDC?
- Catherine Olsson: If you don't plan to go beyond this year, then I can understand not adding more members. But, simply moving forward does not seem like a valid response to the uproar that this has started surrounding this committee.
- Maggie Delano: It really concerned students that the administration received a report which did not get to the committee before Why did it get sent back?
- Noah Jessop: The first draft didn't really say anything. It was 7 pages with three predominantly photos. The second report didn't show growth in the right direction, but it still had more analysis in it.
- Donna Denoncourt: The first draft lacked the depth we needed.
- Maggie Delano: Basically, there wasn't enough analysis involved?
- Donna Denoncourt: Yes. There wasn't enough data to support claims.
- Vrajesh Modi: Is it true that there were really only minor changes? It seems like there were substantial changes between the first draft and the second because of the ten page difference.
- Donna Denoncourt: It was mostly additions.
- Vrajesh Modi: Has the committee talked about what the sticker price of MIT going up might impact financial aid and admissions? This might make MIT as a whole not come out ahead.
- Suzanne Flynn: MIT's commitment will still not change its need blind acceptance. Worrying about finances has never been committees job.
- Vrajesh: Modi If the price to attend goes up by 4 grand, that might drive people away.
- Suzanne Flynn: Dining won't drive it up that much.
- Donna Denoncourt: Overall, we want to hear you feedback. Email foodstuff@mit.edu. We also took notes and will bring them to the committee.
- Suzanne Flynn: Please email us with what you think would be productive.

8pm: Senate Meeting

Call to Order: 8:07 pm

Roll Call

- Late: Nelson Elhage
- Absent: Zachary Tribbett, Hongyou Xiong, Austen McRae, Sun Kim
- Proxies: Asmamaw Wassie for Shin Nee Wong, Paul Baranay for Charlie Huang

Vinayak Ranade and Matt, the Representative at MIT from Service and Employees International Union

- Matt
 - 2 million member labor union, 5000 of our local union work in colleges, 550 of the property service workers work at MIT—we represent staff at MIT who aren't faculty or administration
 - We assist them in dealing with the MIT administration with their wages, benefits, etc. I've been working with those at MIT for about 15 months now.
 - Our union already has alliances with students at other schools like Harvard and Tufts.
 - I've been talking to some students here about issues workers and students have in common, and unfortunately, we have something in common over budget cuts. We want to show solidarity on student and worker issues. We see the administration likely attempting layoffs. We don't believe that MIT or any other higher education learning institution should act like a big corporation with respect to layoffs, but rather try to work on sustaining families by retaining workers. I ask you join us in bringing these principles to the MIT administration.
- Catherine Olsson: Could you elaborate on the alliances you have with students at other schools?
- Matt: Students will usually advocate with pressure on the administration. Students from other schools have created demonstrations and protests. Some at Harvard went on a hunger strike.
- Catherine Olsson: At other schools, these are more specialized student groups. The UA is a much broader organization.
- Matt: We came here because it is broader. With respect to the budget cuts, it seemed that the UA is the best representation of the students. At other schools, there are more specialized organizations that support union goals.
- Paul Baranay: There's a lot of strong language about MIT's future financial goals, like the "recent announcement by MIT of multi-year budget cuts is *a reaction based on uncertainty and not necessity.*"
- Matt: It seems premature. We don't want to hurt the living standards for our workers at this point.
- Paul Baranay: It seems strange for an outside organization for MIT to come to MIT and tell MIT how it should cut MIT's budget.
- Matt: We see ourselves as part of the community.
- Daniel Katz: How much of the endowment do you hope to get to "cushion the impact of the current recession and fulfill its responsibilities to students, employees and the surrounding community?"

- Matt: This is a very higher level statement, without numbers for a reason. We really just want a very transparent process.
- Vinay Tripuraneni: The language is about MIT firing is very strong. I like the ideas, but some of the specifics are less agreeable. Can we edit this draft?
- Matt: Yes.
- Keone Hon: I'm not convinced that students and workers have mutual interests in this case. Certainly, students need to appreciate what all of the staff does. It's disappointing that not a lot of us necessarily interact with these workers. However, I'm not convinced that this is the place for this because I don't think I can speak for all of my constituents at this point. I also don't think that this is terribly urgent. The budget cuts are going to take months to do through the committees. I'd like to see support from students somewhere on campus, but I don't think the UA is the proper place for considering this right now. Maybe after it gets a lot of support from another group, coming here might work better.
- Martin Holmes: The budget cuts are going to hit different departments differently. Additionally, there will be no significant changes to academics and research, so 5% cuts overall will mean 10% cuts elsewhere.
- Catherine Olsson: There have been cuts to research already, such as the number of research assistants hired.
- Sarah Dee: We don't need to believe MIT will do bad things with the budget cuts to put out a statement about our goals or about aspects of MIT we'd like to see preserved.
- Keone Hon: I just think that the issues students are facing are different from those that the workers are facing. Students are facing losing TA's and less money for student life.
- Paul Baranay: As Sarah said, we have 10 student reps on the budget cut committees, you should all talk to them with your concerns.
- Vinayak Ranade: If there are wording issues, we can fix that. If we all agree that there should be any sort of joint statement, then we could
- Mike Bennie: We're discussing the idea behind a joint statement right now, not the specifics. I do think we face different issues, but as a team, we can work more towards achieving those issues than we can individually.
- Sari Canelake: In response to Keone, I do think that this is a bad thing to say that this doesn't affect a lot of the students as well. Students will be looking to more UROPs and such because of less job opportunities.
- Keone Hon: This proposal just seems like saying we should not cut 3 jobs into 2 jobs. So either we need to cut the budget elsewhere or give up on cutting the budget, and the latter is fiscally irresponsible.
- Matt: At least from the union's perspective, part of the problem is that we're not involved at all in the process to create cuts. If cuts are necessary, which we have not been persuaded that they are, then why aren't all of the stakeholders involved?
- Vinayak Ranade: The goal, if nothing else, is transparency within the financial decisions.
- Daniel Hawkins: Maybe we should look at both whether we support the reactionary cutting of jobs or the transparency in the issues or something in between. We should probably wrap this up soon so that we can go back to our constituencies to discuss it.

- Mike Bennie: About Keone's point about 3 jobs to 2 jobs, if we can cut down jobs effectively without losing things we should, but in all places. Administration has grown 80%, whereas the rest of MIT has remained constant. The people making these decisions unfortunately are in charge of these decisions.
- Sarah Dee: I'd like to echo Bennie's point.
- Cyril Lan: It seems like we've already resigned to cutting positions. Maybe we should cut down on research because some of the labs have millions of dollars and \$30K isn't a big change to them.
- Vrajesh Modi: How are workers represented on the budget committees?
- Paul Baranay: There are four facilities members spread out on the committees.
- Vrajesh Modi: Are they workers or facilities administration members?
- Paul Baranay: They're not people I recognize.
- Matt: None of the four are union representatives.
- Vrajesh Modi: Assuming cuts need to be made, cutting positions is not necessarily the best way, but it is part of the process.
- Jason Forte: Out of respect to our guests' time, we should just ask them questions they can answer and discuss our stance later over email.
- Keone Hon: This document needs to focus on transparency, and I would be in support of it rewritten in this matter.
- Vinayak Ranade: Can we have some commitment from people in Senate to be involved in the rewording to make it appropriate for Senate?
- Keone Hon: Sure.
- Jason Forte: Respond to Vinayak's email if interested.
- Paul Baranay: What has your interaction with the committees and administration about the budget cuts been thus far?
- Matt: We were not asked to sit on that committee. We have thus far been in discussion with individual managers to get information, but it hasn't been let's sit down and hash things out. My boss has been by administrators told that the labor force has been privileged in the past and that might not continue.
- Paul Baranay: I was speaking with Vinayak earlier, trying to discern why you're coming to the UA. We're all students first, UA members second... why do you think that we will have more time to negotiate with administrators than you or be more effective than trained union representatives?
- Matt: First, we want solidarity with the students. Second, it's not fair to just hand down cuts and changes. Ideologically, we believe that the university should really include us in the process.
- Sarah Dee: You guys have had experience with bargaining effectively, whereas we don't. What are we getting out of this?
- Matt: It's an act of solidarity goes both ways. You can then ask for help from us as well. We can pass that expertise handling bargaining with administrators down to students.
- Andrew: Lukmann Have you asked the administration about getting involved in the task force committees?

- Matt: No, we have not at this point because we are not convinced they are the body that should make the decisions about us. We're also asking you if this is the process that we should go for.
- Andrew Lukmann: The more efforts that you undertake to try to engage in the process, the more effective you will be. Senators, I have heard some of you talking about finances but you don't all seem to have the right information. To make these decisions, which you will certainly have to face in these times, you need to learn more about the Institute's finances.
- Cody Daniel: Everyone seems to agree that some sort of solidarity with the union will be positive for all involved, but the details are still a bit muddy, though.
- Vrajesh Modi: There are 550 workers part of the union, how many are there in total?
- Matt: At least 3000 or so.
- Vrajesh Modi: So about 1 in 6 workers are part of this union.
- Matt: I can't say for certain.
- Martin Holmes: I think it's around 8000.
- Keone Hon: We should stop discussion now because we've exhausted the avenues of discussion at this point.

Vrajesh: Are the Susan Hockfield lunches happening?

- Liz Denys: I attended one. I know another one has happened recently.
- Paul Baranay: From what I've heard, she hasn't shown interest in discussing on a UA type level, but more on a personal level.
- Nelson Elhage: One just happened today.
- Sarah Dee: Can we discuss the invitation process?
- Mike Bennie: The UA got about 100 people to sign up, and we sent them a short list of about 25 students from a variety of backgrounds, dorms, and levels of UA-involvement to the president. About half of the people who attend these lunches have been people we've recommended. They're also very unwilling to release the dates ahead of time.
- Liz Denys: Having attended one of these meetings, she really just wants to talk to students on a personal level.
- Daniel Hawkins: This wasn't the intent of these meetings.
- Mike Bennie: Unfortunately, we can't really influence how these meetings will run because Susan has the power to just stop the meetings.
- Vrajesh Modi: But the issues are more important than getting to know her on a personal level.
- Mike Bennie: Honestly it's at her discretion.
- Caryn Krakauer: I think it's not a bad thing that students get to meet her on a personal level if that this is the direction of it.
- Liz Denys: All of the other students I attended a lunch with just wanted to get to know her on a personal level.
- Paul Baranay: Students getting to know her isn't a bad thing.
- Sarah Dee: The problem is we asked for her to have office hours, but got this. Liz, does she dodge policy questions?

- Liz Denys: No, she answers them, but shows she wants to move on. I think a big part of that is because the other students at the lunches don't want to talk about these policy.
- Catherine Olsson: Why don't we just ask her for office hours because she hasn't met that need yet? Her meeting this other need shouldn't mean we can't ask for office hours.
- Andrew Lukmann: You should look at history of past chancellors, presidents, etc. and their attitudes towards engagement.
- Daniel Hawkins: We should write a bill about this. I propose we move to discussing dining now. Donna made it seem like we expressed concerns that had never been brought forth before even though Noah and Mike have brought it before her and the committee before.
- Vrajesh Modi: Read the BRDC minutes. The minutes say that students want these things to be public. It's definitely not the first time they're hearing about it.
- Daniel Hawkins: I want to discuss what you guys think would be the proper response to this issues and what action we should take.
- Mike Bennie: I'm willing to answer questions about how likely they are to do things. I also don't think Colombo will put the resources of working beyond this year. This unfortunately means that the committee isn't working with the best information, the best timeline, etc. I'm not opposed to a new committee being formed.
- Daniel Hawkins: Would you be willing to work on this committee as a member or as a chair?
- Mike Bennie: Sure.
- Paul Baranay: If the committee keeps dragging its feet, dining can't politically make changes.
- Sarah Dee: They could just get frustrated and do whatever they want themselves.
- Paul Baranay: Are there really changes to the current system that people want to see that badly?
- Vrajesh Modi: speaking for EC, we have no problem with the current system.
- Daniel Hawkins: People want in-house dining to be less mandatory and maybe students will then buy into a better system.
- Nelson Elhage: I don't think that dining needs to change, but the current form isn't great. Most of us don't want to cook all of our meals. I support the right to cook all of your meals, but at the same time, if you want to use the convenience of campus dining, it's a terrible place to be.
- Cyril Lan: In Baker, people don't want our dining hall to be a place students swarm to for food. We like that right now it mainly serves Baker, and we don't want it to also primarily serve non-Baker residents.
- Sarah Dee: I don't think the Institute is so invested in Blue Ribbon that they won't keep standing behind an ineffective committee. Administrators then might just get fed up and make the decision about dining on their own. I think we should form our own committee because I have more faith in a student run committee.
- Catherine Olsson: There's a lot of discussion about the scope of the changes and a discrepancy between the problems with dining that we need to fix and crafting this

high-level, large-scale picture for dining. There are problems with the expectations based on the time frame.

- Alex Dehnert: Are people really that happy with dining in EC? Especially given the fact that it's losing so much money?
- Vrajesh Modi: We've talked to the dorm a lot.
- Sarah Dee: Yes. People generally like the system, at least in the ways that it affects them and at least enough so that they would rather keep the current system rather than possibly see terrible things they don't like happen.
- Daniel Hawkins: I'd like to move the discussion towards actions we can take, such as the bill I've written.
- Andrew Lukmann: Has money really never been a part of this discussion?
- Mike Bennie: Yes.
- Andrew Lukmann: Let's face it if the system wasn't losing money, then this drive to fix dining might not be happening.
- Noah Jessop: Colombo came to the committee and was asked about this, but the committee is solely to discuss a vision.
- Andrew Lukmann: It's really going to need to be rooted in money, or the recommendations won't mean anything.
- Noah: Jessop We're looking at plans which will lose at most about the same as our current system/require a similar subsidy. Moneywise, W1's AYCE dining hall has been scaled back at this point, but it might come into play at a later date.
- Martin Holmes: This committee was charged to talk about dining on a large-scale, high-sweeping level. It's may or may not even be a big issue as the administration won't even make large financial commitments with the budget cuts.
- Maggie Delano: We should write about what we did like about the report and what we didn't like about the report. We could all go home and get information on this and then compile it as Senate.
- Eleni Orphanides: Great idea, and let's make sure to do it by living group. A student run committee wouldn't have the data to focus on financial concerns.
- Daniel Hawkins: A student run committee could focus on financial concerns whereas Blue Ribbon apparently can't.
- Mike Bennie: We should do what Maggie said. We can also create an ad-hoc committee.
- Maggie Delano: My point is, we don't need bureaucracy to do this. You're all senators and can go home and compile this information.
- Daniel Hawkins: It would be more helpful to come up with a proposal from undergrads as a whole than to have individual living groups submitting their opinions to us. We can then take this proposal and submit it to the administration, not the BRDC.
- Paul Baranay: I'm kind of naturally anti-committee, such as when I opposed the Task Force for Student Engagement (TSE) last year. Committees can be very effective, but they also have a huge tendency to fail. If it's entirely student run, people might get hosed. I think we should reach out to students as a whole and collect their raw feedback and their words, then compile it, and present that to administrators.

- Andrew Lukmann: TSE is not comparable to this because it's very much so run by the administrators. There are past precedents for a committee like an opposing BRDC committee succeeding. You could put a better, more representative report on Colombo's desk and have him choose, or you can go to the higher ups when things are unacceptable.
- Sarah Dee: A dining proposal would still be necessary, because a collection of opinions is not necessarily cohesive. To be competitive with BRDC, we need a proposal for dining.
- Maggie Delano: I proposed this as a first step in the process. After this, Senate can write a bill or resolution. And then we can take this information to help support to committee. What I really think is that we shouldn't wait to form this committee before doing the some of the work.
- Daniel Hawkins: It sounds like you aren't opposed to the committee, but encouraging us to do more than that.
- Maggie Delano: Yes. We should start this now.
- Mike Bennie: Exec will sponsor whatever the committee needs to burn through the report and get its job done.
- Daniel Hawkins: If anyone needs to read the text of the bill, please tell me, so I can get it to you.
- Mike Bennie: We need a better name for the committee.
- Andrew Lukmann: The committee needs to be charged and assembled very strategically so that credibility issues won't arise.
- Sarah Dee: I have my own thoughts about how the membership should be made up. It needs to be made up much more specifically. It should be based on how people eat, not just on what type of dorm they live in.
- Eleni Orphanides: Is your idea of this committee to go from the very beginning of the process Blue Ribbon has gone through?
- Daniel Hawkins: We need to go back to the data, factor in student opinion, etc.
- Eleni Orphanides: We already passed a bill to create a new committee. We already expressed the sentiment of this, do we need another bill?
- Liz Denys: We need the bill that actually creates the committee.
- Alex Dehnert: We don't need titles for members of the committee. We can charge NomComm with picking the proper members.
- Daniel Hawkins: Without titles, we might inadvertently create issues with transparency. If there's a clear way to show that we're representing all of these groups, then do that.
- Mike Bennie: Is anyone against forming this committee? [A few are.] Are you against it because it's not clearly formulated yet or because it's not a good idea?
- Sarah Dee: Why might it be a bad idea?
- Noah Jessop: Those that insist that BRDC should continue on as intended will be quick to point fingers and say that the student committee is circumventing the process and undoing the hard work of a two-year-old committee. Our efforts might be stamped as irrelevant and disrespectful.

- Mike Bennie: One way we can frame this is as an advisory committee to the student reps on BRDC. We might not want to use NomComm because that process takes some time.
- Paul Baranay: NomComm can put out an app as soon as tomorrow. We're willing to put in the time to properly pick the committee members.
- Maggie Delano: I feel like we shouldn't be spending our time right now arguing about this committee. Do you really think that the committee is the best way to get student input? What is our end goal and the best way to get this done? Arguing about a committee isn't the most constructive use of our time.
- Eleni Orphanides: Are students realistically going to put in the necessary time? The work that SCEP did with the GIRs survey took a long time.
- Vrajesh Modi: SCEP actually put together a report which had a pretty significant influence, as far as I've seen. I think that now, we should figure out whether or not we are creating the committee and starting the NomComm process.
- Nelson Elhage: If we take action now, the committee will only have a month to put together this report, so they won't be able to put together a report with a significant effect. We want a more well-written and researched report.
- Keone Hon: If we create this committee in the light of evaluating Blue Ribbon, it might.
- Catherine Olsson: It doesn't really seem well-formulated at this point. What will its role be? Are we trying to advise? Gather student information? How can we ensure that it won't go the way that the UA dining committee goes?
- Rachel Meyer: Students working for 6 weeks cannot compete with professionals working for two years.
- Andrew Lukmann: We need to have there be the right number of people on this committee as well as the right people.
- Daniel Hawkins: There are motivated students. While time is a good concern, similar reports have been drawn up under similar timelines in the past. While advising BRDC is a good step, but we need our own proposal for Colombo to read.
- Richard Dahan: With the survey data already determined, it is possible in this time frame. SCEP got something of this level done in the same amount of time after the survey data was in.
- Ye Yao: What does the dining committee do right now?
- Mike Bennie: The dining committee right now is working on other issues. Working on improving quality in the dining halls through surveys and feedback to chefs.
- Ye Yao: Who will comprise this committee? Who will elect them?
- Daniel Hawkins: Members will be nominated by the Nominations Committee and confirmed by Senate.
- Ye Yao: Senate is really informed, but the rest of the student body might not be as informed.
- Sarah Dee: Senate members could be part of this committee as well.
- Vrajesh Modi: We are eligible to apply.

- Sarah Dee: Not undertaking this task because it's difficult is not a good option. We should look at the parameters of what we're asking the students to do. Unless we have better ideas with trying to fix this situation, we need to have a committee.
- Andrew Lukmann: Information collection is the biggest issue in writing a report. This committee could help put pressure on the data being revealed.
- Mike Bennie: There might not be enough time for a full report. A better idea would be to look at the consultant's draft, even if the ultimate recommendations will be different from the consultants' report. They should work with the BRDC so we have a report on what we agree and disagree with. This will get people more informed overall so that as soon as the report goes out, we will have the UA opinion on it already formed. We will ask for the data, but get a summary, and then ask for the data four more times, but we won't get it by the time the report gets issued.
- Vrajesh Modi: I don't think anyone can reasonably assume there will be a report on Colombo's desk by April. We should have a timeline, but maybe we don't need to have the same timeline as the BRDC. Also, as senate, we can ask our VP to get the data. There is not enough time to write a full report, but I disagree. While it's not trivial, I can put together four pages between now and tomorrow morning—this took them a year and a half.
- Alex Dehnert: Aimlessly talking about this won't get us anywhere. I motion to suspend the bylaws to discuss a bill about this committee. Second. 15 for, 3 against, 1 abstention. Bylaws suspended to address only bills about dining.
- Sarah Dee: Motion to discuss this bill. Friendly.

40 U.A.S. 8.1: Bill to Create the Dining Proposal Committee

- Sarah Dee: Let's take out the dates and deal with them later.
- Jason Forte: We should leave at least one of the dates there so things get done. Senate's last meeting is May 11, so I suggested April 24 so that we can discuss it in Senate.
- Tim Stumbaugh: If we want this to be our opinion, we need it to be out around the time of the Blue Ribbon proposal.
- Alex Dehnert: Motion to change dates to "aim to submit a draft report" and "aim to submit a final report".
 - Vrajesh Modi: We need to leave concrete dates there so that we don't have an ambiguous set up.
 - Sarah Dee: We have discussed how this will take a lot of time to complete. Realistically, there will be less than a month after membership selection.
 - Ye Yao: Having a deadline is good, but if they can't get it done, then what will we do? Can we add in "or given more time as reason?"
 - Daniel Hawkins: Presumably, they will understand the urgency of this.
 - Mike Bennie: If they don't meet the deadline we can deal with it then.
 - Alex Dehnert: My change suggests we care more about a good report than meeting that deadline.
 - Ye Yao: There is so much in this report that the deadline won't be that big of a deal.

- Alex Dehnert: Move to close the debate and then to vote. Amendment passes.
- Keone Hon: We need to establish a means to get the data. Bennie just asking for it won't do enough.
- Tim Stumbaugh: We also really need to address the athletics constituency.
- Alex Dehnert: Keone, I'm writing that bill right now.
- Maggie Delano: We don't need to argue about these positions, they can always be added later.
- Vrajesh Modi: Motion to amend the bill and add an athletics constituency. Friendly.
- Catherine Olsson: We really need to focus on the charge. It currently outlines a very ambitious objective.
- Daniel Hawkins: Currently, it directly competes with BRDC's charge.
- Eleni Orphanides: If this is to be more of an advisory committee, we will need to rephrase the bill.
- Daniel Hawkins: Overall, BRDC is flawed and not what we need to represent student interests, so it should not be just an advisory committee.
- Vrajesh Modi: We asked for transparency 4 months ago, but didn't get it. We need to ask. Motion to vote on passing this bill. 12 for, 2 against, 2 abstained: Bill passed.

Mike Bennie: I'd like to take my bill off the table.

Keone Hon: Motion to suspend the bylaws so that we can entertain any further new business that comes up. 14 for, 1 opposed, 1 abstained. Bylaws suspended.

40 U.A.S. 8.2: Resolution to Support the Proposal on Moving the September Student Holiday

- Mike Bennie: You should note the survey asked about moving the Career Fair to a holiday instead of moving a holiday to the Career Fair. We're meeting on Thursday to get a slot to talk to the faculty about it.
- Vrajesh Modi: Motion to amend by changing the fourth whereas clause to say total hours. Friendly.
- Catherine Olsson: Motion to vote. 15 for, 0 opposed, 1 abstention: Bill passed.

40 U.A.S 8.3: Quiz Bowl Bill

- Sarah Dee: Why does the money they've taken in add up to more than what it costs?
- Vrajesh Modi: They've spent money on other things during the year.
- Sarah Dee: How much money do they have on their own for this?
- Vrajesh Modi: They have some money already that they can tap into, this will help them, but they will still need more money.
- Iman Fayyad: Motion to vote for the bill. 10 for, 1 opposed, 3 abstained: Bill passed.

General discussion

- Mike Bennie: Renovations
 - We've been looking into putting a projector for Senate Chambers, it would cost \$11,500. We would probably only have to pay for 10 to 20% of it

- Also been looking into getting rid of the locks on the internal office doors, this would cost about \$500.
- Also looking into putting electrical outlets in these desks
- Vrajesh Modi: What happened in the Task Force for Student Engagement?
 - Mike Bennie: IFC and Panhel President didn't show up, I wish I knew.
- Andrew Lukmann: We should have Finboard allot Quiz Bowl money in the future because this has come up for the past 4 years.
- UA P/VP Debate
 - Vrajesh Modi: Did we ever discuss minutes for an hour and a half?
 - Liz Denys: No.
 - Jason Forte: A point that was brought up was that transparency in Senate is very key, sending emails about what happens to your constituency would be very useful.
- Vrajesh Modi: We should think about possibly confirming Committee Chairs every term instead of just once a year.

40 U.A.S. 8.4: Resolution to Demand Meal Plan Study Data

- Paul Baranay: To whom will this data be released?
- Keone Hon: It says to the UA. Releasing it to the UA, as opposed to the undergraduates as a whole sounds more legitimate.
- Catherine Olsson: The UA sounds more legitimate.
- Mike Bennie: Can we add "and by extension the MIT Community?"
- Tim Stumbaugh: Motion to amend to "to the Undergraduate Association and by extension the MIT community." Friendly.
- Keone Hon: What do you think of the very last that clause? Should this be the role of the Tech?
- Catherine Olsson: It needs to be said, so I support it.
- Paul Baranay: Motion to strike "assembled tonight." Friendly.
- Alex Dehnert: Move to the previous question to vote. 18 for, 0 opposed, 0 abstained. Bill passed.

Adjournment: 11:15 pm