

DORMCON MEETING – April 12, 2012

Dorm	Representative	Absent
Baker	Michael Plasmeier	
Burton-Conner	Janille Maragh	
East Campus	Robert Johnson	
MacGregor	Edward Mugica	
Masseh Hall	Regina Cho	
McCormick	Sheila Lee	
New House	Benjamin Shaibu	
Next House	Austin Brinson	
Random Hall	Alexandra Westbrook	
Senior Haus	Katy Gero	
Simmons Hall	Eli Ross	
President	Ellen McIsaac	
Vice President	Virginia Nicholson	
Secretary	Deena Wang	
Treasurer	Leonid Grinberg	y

1. Announce DormCon elections

Ellen – Our next meeting is when we’re electing people. All positions except for VP for REX are being elected. Dorm presidents can vote. Dorm residents can run. You have to be dorm resident while in the position. Consider for running in positions that interest you and tell your dorm residents. That meeting will take more than an hour. Send in platforms.

Virginia – If you have questions about being both a president and in an exec position, talk to me.

Ellen – The dormcon straight talk panel for CPW is on the Saturday of CPW, Saturday April 21st.

The panel is for advertising to prefrash, answering their questions with no parents. They can ask whatever they want. The first time was successful, but last year was not as good.

Virginia – Last year’s was not that useful.

Ellen – When I went, they asked about alcohol and changing dorms. It’s good to get a representative from each dorm to serve on the panel.

Ben – They asked the same kind of questions last year.

Ellen – It’s good to get rid of stereotypes.

Virginia – Be honest. Don’t talk about old stories. Make sure you’re painting an accurate image.

2. Piano Drop funding request.

Michael – Leonid sent it out. Piano drop is Baker’s signature event. We’re asking for \$2,700 for police detail and for Housing Facilities and Grounds involved in setting up safety and cleaning up afterwards. We’re covering \$2,800 ourselves for piano transport, t-shirts, tools.

It’s already in the Dormcon budget.

Katy – Lots of people talked at retreat about dormcon stringency, so this is a good opportunity to practice it.

Michael – The Infinite Display boards up. The week after we’re going to poster.

Ben h – Is dormcon in the logo?

Michael – We already put up the Infinite Display board. I don’t know if posters have been printed. I can check to get it on there

Patrick – We budgeted 5000 for DYTD, piano drop, and msc.

Ellen – Do you need money this time?

Katy – I wasn't the person who was upset about funding people, but what about other people?

Edward – I'm confused with why you're asking for money if you didn't want to during the retreat.

Michael – We'll play if everyone else is playing.

Edward – Is this the kind of event that won't happen if we don't fund?

Baker – At retreat, we decided this wasn't going to be an issue. We decided not to attach strings to funding. It will be advertised.

What is the attendance?

Michael – 200 to 300 people.

What percentage of people are from Baker?

Michael – 20 to 30%

What percentage are MIT students?

Michael – 60%?

These are rough estimates.

Ducky – As a local, I attended Piano Drop before I went to MIT. I think piano drop gives MIT and dorms a good reputation. I think attendance numbers are less important than the image.

Michael – It was in the MIT 150.

Katy – I think the issue is whether if dormcon doesn't fund it, then it doesn't happen.

Michael – We decided not to apply means testing.

Means testing?

Michael – We decided at retreat that these types of events would be funded

Edward – Baker has voted down certain events that fit the criteria. What about now?

It was voted to give Baker \$2,700 for Piano Drop.

3. Living Pink talk.

Carlos Garay – I'm the Living Pink representative. The Living Pink guide is a survey that LGBT community does to measure how dorms stand on issues. It's a campus wide survey and we analyze the data. Some questions are: how would you feel living with an LGBT person? Do you know an LGBT person? This is important. If this guide existed, I would have taken it into account when joining a dorm. The objective is to lift the entire community with LGBT issues. They should be talked about. You can go to dorms and rank them by LGBT friendliness. Most indicative for dorms is the response rate. I hope you'll send this out to your dorm. I know last year we got responses from every single living group except one. There was outrage because one frat didn't fill out the form. Don't be that group.

Regina – Is this from last year?

Carlos – We're doing this every year. We're doing LGBT trainings for frats and sororities. 30 people came. As it becomes more successful, we'll do more. We need to know what's going on before we address problems. Can you all commit to sending it out? Can you also commit to talking about the guide at dorm meetings?

Regina – When do you want responses by?

Carlos – The end of the semester. We want to put the info in the Rush booklet. If that's successful, we'll do the same thing with REX. We want more visibility.

4. Baker housing document voting

Michael – Baker has rule that says if you want to change bylaws, you need dormcon approval. We're changing the rooming bylaws. Does everyone still have a copy?

Ellen – I think it's silly to have to approve everything.

Can we pre-approve?

It was whiteballoted to change the housing bylaw and to change the Baker constitution to not require Dormcon approval to change.

5. Vote to add Dining Chair to Constitution

Ellen – We discussed it in the retreat. It's not officially in the constitution.

Does the position do stuff?

Ellen – The chair has been involved in the past. They haven't been super involved in the recent past.

Michael – I'm planning on running so I can give my slot to a freshman.

Austin – Jonte and Michael want to change role of the UA dining chair to not overlap with Dormcon.

The current Dining Chair is Nikki Castle.

Ellen – No one ever ran for the position. I think the position has value and I want to make it official.

Ben – What are the responsibilities?

Ellen – To represent dormcon on dining committees. There's a go-to person.

Ellen – The idea is that the dining chair would represent the dining halls and cook-for-yourself dorms on committee.

There's a student from each dorm and a housemaster from each dorm and staff on the dining committee.

It was voted to add the dining chair to the constitution.

6. Adjustment Lottery

Patrick – The orientation committee came out. The deans took time to make changes. I talked to people in housing. They don't want to call it adjustment lottery. They're going to have a meeting with dorm presidents?, Although maybe not at dormcon. They will come up with a new name.

They're changing some things in the guide to residents. They're removing the word temporary before assignment because it's disheartening to freshmen.

Patrick- They want REX to be more "welcoming" so they want focus of REX to be community building and not adjustment. Some people are scared, like on the Senior House email list. I'm not worried. I don't think it's a big danger. Only the language is changing. It's not really clear, some changes are contradictory. They don't want to add the adjustment lottery to materials.

Regina – Will moving day still be emphasized?

Ellen – They want freshman to take it seriously the first time.

Patrick – I'm uncomfortable that this might decrease the amount of people who take advantage of adjustment lottery, and eventually they might get rid of it.

Edward – Is there a chance that they'll change REX?

Patrick – The people who are implementing it are friendly.

Edward – Is there anything we can do as a dorm to counteract any decrease?

Patrick – Tell people about adjustment lottery and take it seriously

Baker – At least for us, there's a strong preference in housing for the summer lottery.

Virginia – They try to tell us during CPW is not a time for dorms and such to rush. Do we fill out the i3 video and guides so people can find out what dorms are like?

Patrick – This needs to be remembered. I know a lot and need to record it. I think this should go in a privileged folder in the locker.

Ellen – we can publicize this in the dormcon panel. It's easier to do now.

Brian – From a housing perspective, it's not about changing the adjustment lottery. We want students to feel settled, not that they have to move, versus, "you have to move."

Patrick – It's dishonest to say that's their permanent residence. Freshman can't choose to stay in the same room.

Michael – I think the branding should be finding a roommate that you like.

Patrick – I don't think anything is bad, and it's an improvement in that we're allowed to hold events after housing lottery closes. If anyone has questions, ask me.

Regina – This info is public?

Patrick – Yes.

7. Procurement cards

Brian – There are 3 big things for clarification: 1. Currently there's a test pilot with controlled value cards for some undergrad groups. I've been asking about it for a year now and I think they're great. I hope to find out more. 2. RLAs have p-cards and help students. But it turns into a student emailing too late to order stuff. RLAs are willing to work with students but if you request stuff 24 hrs or less, that's not good. We're always behind on receipts. If people come to us for last ditch efforts, it's bad. I don't know how to correct this as a global thing. Some funding things need foresight, especially multi-thousand dollar spending. People need to know that things need lead time, like movie licensing. We can give request for repayment directly to vendor. SAO is slow with reimbursements.

Michael – It seems like their business processes are not streamlined. The tools are not right, both online and paper. It's not conducive to doing business well.

Ellen – They wait two weeks or so to process them in a batch.

Michael – Their tools are not done well.

Brian – SAO is a whole other beast. RLA's are here to make things happen. Things go wrong when it's on short notice. It's hard for me to do.

Regina – Can RLA's make a guide on how far in advance to order things? I don't know if the amount of money is the only factor.

Brian – A week or two is generally good. Simmons has been good with this. The more specific, the better. We have limits on what we can spend. Two years ago I hit the limit. Most of the time, we can make it work.

Regina – Where can we know about the 2 week cycle?

Ellen – That's unofficial.

Talk to Collin Codner, he's new.

Michael – Is turnover a big issue?

Austin – This is the first semester it's been fully staffed. My reimbursements have sometimes disappeared, so we copy and turn them in weekly.

Ben – How often can we ask?

Patrick – What's your limit?

Brian – Last minute food stuff is bad. And the wording “I need to use house card.” The tone is the difference.

Brian – I think it’s prudent that undergraduates have access to p-cards. I think you can argue for the control value card, which has more restrictions.

8. Dorm “bill of rights”

Ellen – We talked about it last semester and the retreat. The idea is that there are certain basic rights each dorm should have, like the rooming system, house tax, RBA, readjustment lottery, party registration, etc. The idea is to present this to housemasters and say dormcon supports this. McCormick, Simmons, and Masseh were not at retreat, so I wanted to get feedback.

Simmons – Sounds good to me.

Regina – Sounds good to me.

Ellen – We had a huge list of things we talked about, but there were 4 main things from retreat: rooming system, house tax, RBA, and party registration. Dorm execs should be able to determine these things. Housemasters change over time and so do relationships. Masseh has had issues in the past. Dorms need autonomy.

Regina – I think that the housemasters have been cooperative this year.

Virginia – But dorm governments should have their control written in stone

Regina – How do we get housemasters to agree with it?

Ellen – Peer pressure. If 11 of 12 housemasters think it’s reasonable, then the other will agree. They can have a discussion with other housemasters. We were talking about doing this at a housemaster’s dinner.

Patrick – I don’t think they’re going to say no.

Ellen – It’s not like we have a lot of crazy demands.

Michael – We could say that they’re things that dorms have always done and we’re just writing them down.

Ellen – I can be point the person.

Virginia – The way the structure works, DSL has large amount of power and housing gives it to housemasters. Housemasters give you as much power as they want.

Brian – When we talked about this, there were arbitrary places like party registration.

Expectations are different. The same thing with RBA. Even just starting conversation about consistency is good.

9. President's circle

Austin – Dorm presidents can talk about things after the meeting.