

**DormCon Meeting**  
**September 25, 2014**  
**Location: Simmons Hall**

**Agenda:**

- 1) Apple Picking**
- 2) UA MIT2030 Committee**
- 3) DormCon Q+A for Maseeh**
- 4) Letter**
- 5) General Announcements**
- 6) New Committee on Discipline Policy**
- 7) Constitution change for i3/REX chair elections in fall**
- 8) Dorm Culture Websites**

**Attendance**

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

**Start time: 19:34**

## 0. Death of a Community Member

- Chloe: We're gonna talk a little about what happened in MacGregor.
- Walter: On Tuesday afternoon, we found Phoebe's body in her room. She was unresponsive to most attempts at contact, and the building manager told campus police after being notified about this. The police found her body. The house is still shocked, mental services that need to be there are there and have been providing coping services. The dorm has had several meetings as a community and given support to those that need support, and let people know that support is there when they need it. Legally, we don't know official cause of death. I'll try to keep you up to date with details if I can.
- Chloe: Be on lookout for people who seem affected, and make sure they know the resources that are there for them

## 1. Constitutional Change

- Gaurav: We want to move REX VP and i3 chair elections to fall because of complaints that they didn't have enough time last semester. We're moving it from first week of spring semester to last week of fall semester is the extent of the change. The last Dormcon meeting is the week of dead week, around Dec 4th.
  - Chloe/Yo: We should take into consideration that finals week is around this time.
  - Chloe: We could do second to last meeting instead of last meeting.
- Gaurav: We could change it to during one of the last two meetings.
- Proposed wording:
  - **Elections for the VP of REX shall be held annually during the one of last two DormCon meetings of the fall semester, and the officer-elect shall be sworn in immediately.**
  - **The i3 Program Coordinator shall be appointed by a majority vote at one of the last two DormCon meetings of the fall semester, or as soon as possible thereafter, subject to the approval of relevant MIT personnel.**

*Vote passes unanimously to change constitution.*

## 2. Letter:

- Chloe: Let's go over any changes anyone wants to make about the letter. Is there anything you liked or didn't like about it.
- Gaurav: Some background about the letter: around last May near the end of the semester, Senior House (SH) received notice they were getting AD this fall. Up to this point SH has successfully argued in the past that they didn't want one, and this was a surprise at the end of the semester so they didn't have time to really voice

their opinions about it/discuss anything about it with the administration. Dormcon wrote a letter in fall 2013 saying that we would like more time before announcements were made so that we could communicate and collaborate well with them. We wrote a follow-up letter now that the letter a year ago was well-received but this new announcement happened which does not really agree with what we had in the previous letter.

- Chloe: Any opinions?
- Sean: We probably shouldn't say anything about Bexley since they couldn't tell them at any other time, like in the fall.
  - Gaurav: We want to say that the timing was unfortunate, not that we're accusing them of anything but just that it was unfortunate that it happened.
  - Matthew: We should keep Bexley there since that's what prompted the original letter.
- Gaurav: Ryan had a comment about the sentence that says putting an RLAD in SH was something they had been thinking about for a while, since we don't really know that.
  - Walter: We should say that it's a decision that can't really be made on the fly, because they can't come up with an RLAD position without any planning.
  - Lars: We should say "it seems"/"it appears", we shouldn't have strong/aggressive wording that assumes we know what their decision process was.
  - Matt: Take out "clearly", there is no reason it "should not" have been announced earlier rather than "could not". The administration is on board with the fact that it should have been announced earlier so there should be nothing wrong with putting that there.
- Gaurav: Will print and get signatures after the meeting.

### **3. Maseeh:**

- Chloe: How many Maseeh people are here?
- There are two Maseeh people here.
- Chloe: Do you have any questions about Dormcon?
- Sydney, VP of Maseeh & Katie, member at large, which means she helps out when needed.
- Dormcon prez/exec introduces themselves briefly to Maseeh reps
- Walter: We know Austin's stance on the matter, but we don't know how the rest of Maseeh exec feels about this. Basically the process for re-applying to Dormcon constitutes an email to dormcon-exec with a "Maseeh wants to join" which is your application, it'll be brought up at the next meeting and whatever the vote comes to will be your status in Dormcon.

- Maseeh VP: We want to know the purpose of Dormcon, benefits of joining again.
  - Gaurav: Purpose of dormcon:
    - Dorms can talk to each other about problems they're having/communicate with other dorms
    - Advocate for dorms; changes such as security workers, dining changes.. as Dormcon we advocate to administrators what we'd like to have as all dorms. Because we're many dorms we have more power talking to administrators and they're more likely to listen to us.
  - Chloe: I go to a lot of meetings and represent all dorms, but Maseeh doesn't actually get representation because I don't know what Maseeh actually wants.
    - Walter: Especially since Maseeh is the largest dorm on campus so there's a lot of students to represent
  - Allen: Being REX/CPW chair is also hard because Maseeh gets left out of REX and CPW things
  - Walter: Dormcon is mainly representation and coordination across all dorms, and it's hard without Maseeh being a part of it so there's kind of "Dormcon" and "Maseeh"
  - Cosmos: There are important groups that represent all students (HSG, etc.) that we hear updates on at Dormcon.
    - Chloe: Things like the mural policy are brought up at these meetings. The only way for us to represent Maseeh properly is if they're in Dormcon.
  - Caitlin: CAC, IST Advisory Board, UA--we have a lot of interactions with these groups
  - Matt: One of the biggest effects for New House is that if I want a meeting with an administrator I will get a meeting with them through Dormcon. One of the things Dormcon helps with is learning about things before they happen, then I can bring them back to my house government: "This thing happened at another dorm, so how can we prevent it from happening here" ex made a security committee months before announcement that they're moving on to phase 2 because of Dormcon. Basically I can learn from other dorms and bring it to my own dorm.
- Maseeh VP: We had concerns about why Maseeh left before; Maseeh is a large percentage of the dorm community, we thought that we were not taken seriously/underrepresented/received less benefits, concerned about representation (we didn't get enough funding for CPW around the time right before Maseeh seceded)
- Caitlin: How did you guys feel that you were underrepresented?

- Becky: CPW funding was different at the time, it was given based on previous allocations and how much REX/CPW chairs thought dorms should get based on taxes. That was one of the financial issues for Maseeh, they put in taxes for all their residents but didn't get much back for CPW funding. There was an issue with RBA and they brought it to Dormcon, but Dormcon didn't do anything about it.
  - Caitlin: The way we allocate REX/CPW funds is equivalent across all dorms, there was a committee because people were angry about how things were funded so now they're equal. For other events, you have to run events with other dorms to get money back from that.
  - Chloe: Dormcon gave funding to Maseeh-Baker-McCormick carnival (one example)
  - Matt: Because you're the largest dorm on campus, you'll probably not ever get all your money back that you put in, at least not as CPW and REX funding. But the hope is that the money you put in will benefit the community/community building across dorms (like the carnival). Everyone was upset with funding for a long time on Dormcon, and that's why a committee formed that redid the budget process... a lot of other dorms were also considering leaving due to that.
    - Chloe: Phoebe worked hard to create a new policy that we're generally pretty happy with.
    - Sadun: Email Phoebe if you have any questions.
- Walter: We can't speak on behalf of our predecessors in terms of advocacy, but it sounds like something that Chloe and I could handle directly with you guys if it's dorm-specific like the RBA situation you guys had.
  - Matt: Because housing chairs meet with Dean Humphreys on a bi-weekly basis, we can bring up issues that we've heard from you so that we can reach a solution with him about what's going on, and then that will assist you in conversations that you have with him later on.
  - Jess: I disagree that RBA is a dorm-specific issue, it relates to all of REX and all dorms.
  - Walter: I'm saying that for a dorm-specific issue, we could handle it not just within the Dormcon meeting but also offline additionally.
- Yo: REX chairs are also upset about the FYRE caps on dorms, so we could help advocate for that.
- Cosmos: Once you disagree with admins on something, you get a lot of leverage from Dormcon to stand by you and fix the issue. It sounds like Dormcon kind of screwed up in the past and that's why you left.
- Chloe: What concerns do you have, Maseeh?
  - Maseeh VP: Right now, not much.

- Chloe: If you have any questions you can email dorms-prez, dorms-exec, or me.

#### **4. UA MIT 2030 Committee: Laila Shehata (Chair)**

**Contact:** [lshehata@mit.edu](mailto:lshehata@mit.edu)

- I just want to explain what we're doing as a whole and then our specific project so that you can help us. We want input on long-term campus planning and provide feedback to administration.
  - Our first project is a five year Bexley plan, we want to put a park/food trucks/etc. temporarily since it'll take a while for them to build something permanent. We'd also like to keep some historical aspect near where Bexley is. We want to maintain the Bexley archway since it would be nice for ex-Bexley residents. If anyone has any feedback or input on this email me.
  - They're hoping to build something there after demolition but not till 3-5 years, it's undecided whether it'll be a dorm or something else. They won't know for a long time. They're trying to relocate the religious center, that's just an idea though and they'll discuss later on.
  - Matt: You should make it into a Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory themed park with candy and stuff and call it Jurassic Park.
- Sadun: Is UA2030 going to be the dominant body for talking about the permanent usage of the site right now?
- Laila: Unclear, but it'll probably a committee of representatives from multiple groups.
- Yo: Have you heard anything about any new dorms farther west?
- Laila: We're going to talk about that later, but they're thinking about it because of upcoming renovations There will probably be a separate committee on that.
- Matt: Pay students to dress as Tim the Beaver in the Willy Wonka costume.
- Laila: Would you guys prefer we draft an email for you about this or that dorm presidents reached out individually?
  - Chloe: Might be better to create a survey and then have each dorm president send it out, to optimize response rate.
  - Laila: Easier to relay to all the dorms at this meeting since you're all here, but will organize a survey for you guys. If anyone has any questions about long term campus stuff you can ask me or shoot me an email.

#### **5. Committee on Discipline:**

- Rodrigo: COD is generally used when students do something they're not supposed to do, and COD disciplines them. This year guidelines changed a little in a way that now whole student groups can be brought before COD. Student groups means clubs, fraternities, dorms, halls, parts of dorms, etc. We're not sure who gets in

trouble if something wrong goes wrong in a dorm. Also only the IFC president has really been talked to about this.

- This stems from the fact that the IFC Juddcomm doesn't want to be disciplining the frats, so they asked COD to do this. So COD was like sure, and then we'll discipline the rest of the groups too.
- Jess: Previously nobody was really in charge of what happens when a group messes up, the IFC had a case that was so over their heads that they didn't know how to deal with it which is why they asked to have the COD oversee student group discipline. They sound like they're planning on making some policies but they don't exactly know what they're doing yet and are pretty far from actually making any. They don't seem excited to go start punishing student groups.
  - There was no previous oversight for if a hall messed up, who was in charge. They're even bringing in club sports teams for this. In the past some random person has stepped up as "probably in charge" and informally handed down punishment, so this makes things more consistent.
- Rodrigo: In my opinion, the thing that sets dorms apart from other student groups that dorms can't kick someone out. They can only kick students out if they do something actually wrong, but can't kick someone out until they do something stupid that will actually legally get them kicked out.
- Victoria: Frats need to be in IFC because they needed dorm licenses, so they have to follow these rules since being in IFC is required. However, because dorms aren't a privilege, they're a right until you move off campus. So we don't have a "first-check" before we get sent to COD if a hall/dorm gets in trouble.
- Rodrigo: Frats and sororities can choose who is in them, while dorms have no control over membership. It's harder to have group accountability when the group isn't defined by the group.
- Sadun: I think this is going to be a hard case to make to COD, because the response will be if this one person messes up, your hall can just "tell on them" basically.
  - Victoria: I don't think that will be the response, I don't know how much we can look into creating a check system but it's concerning because I don't want this situation. How can we prevent this from screwing over certain segments of dorms, or become involved in how the policies are being shaped.
  - Jess: They're still creating the policies
- Adri: What kind of things are they trying to discipline?
  - Jess: For example, the mandatory sensitivity training party that Tetazoo is throwing this weekend.
  - Victoria: In the worst case scenario they will dissolve floors and disperse them across campus. This has formally been done to EC.

- Lars: Do you have any comments about Juddcomm?
  - Yo: Dormcon is doing well right now, and has been doing pretty well. I would be excited about Juddcomm being a really big thing if the transition to the next wave of presidents turns out alright.
  - Caitlin: We were thinking of collaboration of dorm juddcomms.
    - Simmons & EC do not have Juddcomms.
  - Gaurav: There is a Dormcon Juddcom code that allows us to punish people and recommend that people get kicked out of their dorm. Actions can be taken against dorms and can be brought to juddcomm (someone vs. a dorm) It exists but hasn't been utilized in many years. Dormcon as a body is rarely something that people tend to appeal to, but it does exist.
  - Yo: We should have someone to try to be a part of this discussion, like Sadun, who is risk management chair, to meet with COD and talk to them. The burden is on the COD to prove that an entire living group is involved with a certain action.
    - Jess: The COD does not make policies. We should ask who is supposed to be making these policies.
    - Rodrigo: COD wasn't very involved in making these policies, they just carry them out.
    - Chloe: Sadun you should contact them, ask what's going on and how policies do change, and then bring it back to us. Talk to Rodrigo and Jess who seem to have a lot of information.

## 6. Culture Websites:

- Chloe: How do you guys feel about the eastcamp.us/culture website?
- Caitlin: Can we have some background info on it?
- Jess: I wanted to provide more perspective on culture at MIT to admin, since there's a lot of "you guys don't understand us, if you just tried to see why we cared about all these things there would be less of a misunderstanding", etc. I don't think me or any small group was enough to effectively represent anyone so we put together a website, we have >200 responses on the website now with really detailed, well thought-out responses, there are a lot of to the point "I care about this place because it's my home" posts, there are some that go overboard and start to bash west campus which I was hoping we'd avoid. We're approving every post because we don't want to be moderating right now.
- We like having this very strong east side repository right now, and our suggestion is that other sections of campus make similar websites and that a larger group (Dormcon, reps from each groups) create a heavily moderated communal site (culture.mit.edu) with a "best of" section where we bring together the posts that we

really want the admins to see that we think are relevant to current/historical issue. We'll have a comments section so that residents can put their own opinions out there about how they feel about current issues and have other people express support.

- Sadun: This wouldn't have to be that every community puts together a website like ours, you could just have a "comments box" or something. Some way to acquire writings that we could put on the main website.
- Antonio: There was an article in the Tech last year that was asking admins to go look at Bexley's culture and investigate into why students loved Bexley/why they called it home. Including Bexley in this would be a good idea.
- Jess: Last night chancellor came to EC, talked to us. I sent her a list of ten posts that were a good balance of all the dorms that she should read.
- Cosmos: Elaborate on why that particular website should be particularly the "east side" since I was also planning to contribute?
  - Jess: My original goal was to make it campus-wide, it was easier to implement as east side initially and now other people in the group are fond of it being only an east-side thing. People feel like the east side needs protecting and think it's stronger that way.
  - Adri: The goal isn't to not let west side people be involved. A big reason we wanted to do this is to show dorm culture. It's easier for people with similar dorm culture to do this together, and the dorms on the east side culture page kind of have a similar culture so it made sense for us to represent that one aspect of MIT dorm culture together. I think we should have a secondary website that is open to everyone, we want everyone to get on board with this generic website.
  - Caitlin: Can non-residents post supporting east campus culture?
  - Sadun: There are random alums, parents, west campus people... everyone can write on this site.
  - Jess: The east side page is strongly in support of the east side, we don't care who writes. We just want something that's focused on "the east side is a great place, here's why"
  - Adri: We just don't think having something about how living off campus at a frat is a great thing, but if someone from a frat wants to talk about their experiences at EC, that's fine.
- Victoria: The point was to show why MIT students care about their homes, and I think the west side also feels the same way--"I've found a home, I've found people that understand me". I think we should expand the website to west campus, since we also feel this way.

- Adri: Right now everyone who wants to post, their post is going through. If we're going to try to represent living at MIT as a whole, some of the dorm leaders/IFC people might not want every post going through, so if we had different websites we could have different moderation for each website. The east side website should stay exclusive to east side.
- Jess: It's hosted on eastcamp.us, it says "this is the east side", etc. people don't want to put that away.
- Chloe: I wouldn't mind posting about how much I love my dorm, on the west side of campus, on the east side website. That doesn't bother me, because to me the website is about loving where you live.
- **Antonio: Also, we're all east of Harvard.**
- Yo: It sounds like if we had a second website that wasn't heavily moderated where the various dorm residents can all contribute that they care about their homes that wasn't east-side specific, it would be better.
- Adri: If people from the west side wanted to post and wanted it to say "this is the west side" there's going to be issues.
- Sadun: I think it would get more responses if it was on a more neutral campus.
- Lars: "This is MIT"
- Allen: I think the best of MIT website that represents a bunch of different groups is good.
- Chloe: I don't like how that splits everything up.
- Gaurav: We should have a website that's like "these are our homes", have a preset filter that has east side, west side, etc. I think it would be nice to have everyone post whatever they want so it isn't just like people on the east side being angry like they always are, etc.
- Cosmos: Many of the posts have general themes that a lot of us care about, regardless of dorms. I think it would be better if we focused on the things that bring us together, not the things that separates us.
- Chloe: Sounds like west campus wants to be involved.
- Lars: We could have a single website that's on just a general URL.
- Allen: If you keep it on the east campus website we won't really care, but some residents might not post on it.
- Chloe: We should have the same exact idea, but just for all of campus.
- Jess: We can put this together now that everyone is in--this is MIT, this is MIT culture.
- Yo: Panhel and IFC both would like to be involved.
- Caitlin: Once you split it up into two websites, it lessens the impact.

- Cosmos: It'll influence the way that people write their posts "these are the things I like about west campus" vs "these are the things I like about residential life at MIT"
- Lars: If you want good writing about what culture is like at MIT, you can go to admissions blogs. Something along those lines that is relatively unmoderated and campus-wide would be nice.
- Allen: we should also definitely have a "best-of" website.
- Chloe: We can probably get IFC panhel involved too.
- Jess: Would you like our current group to draft a new website (culture.mit.edu)? Do you want us to try to draft it or does Dormcon want to put together a group?
  - Allen: You guys know what you're doing and are willing to do it.
  - Cosmos: It makes more sense for it to be under Dormcon, but it won't be as effective.
  - Antonio: Dormcon web chair, anyone?
  - Chloe: Just keep us involved and send out emails to dormcon.

## 7. General announcements:

- Caitlin: I'm going to be sending out a late email about getting funding, presidents tell REX chairs to send Caitlin your spreadsheet with funding.
- Next: Next house is having a party on Saturday, tell your residents to come! 10PM, open to all of campus.
- Chloe: Carnival Saturday 2-5, Dormcon funded.
- Chloe: if you have any announcements you wanna add to agenda for a meeting, email me/Jasmeet/Walter beforehand.
  - Adri: At some point can we talk about REX/i3 and those projects as a whole, and the idea of accurately representing cultures? Also presidents, make sure you have an i3 chair before winter break.
    - Allen: We're meeting with Julie and Jennifer (rex admin at Reslife) soon so if you have anything to bring up, email REX chairs.
  - Gaurav: Students can apply to exceptions for 1AM rules, just not at CPW (from UA meeting). Also I have the letter, you should all sign it.

**Meeting end: 20:55**