

**DormCon Meeting
November 6, 2014
Location: East Campus**

Agenda:

1. UA Judboard
2. Guide to Residences website
3. HDC
4. Maker Spaces in Dorms
5. HSG
6. LCA Effects on Dorms
7. Spring Move Out Date
8. GIH Updates and Discussion

Attendance

Dorm	Representative	Absent
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	
Random Hall	Guarav Singh	
Senior House	Rodrigo Lopez Uricoechea	
Simmons Hall	Lars Johnson	
Secretary	Jasmeet Arora	
Treasurer	Caitlin Heber	

Start time: 19:37

1.UA Judboard:

- Matt: We're an independent body of the UA so we don't report to exec or anything, people just bring us disputes they want settled etc. We're apolitical so we don't involve ourselves in things that are going on in the UA.
- We want to gather a list of who has judicial structure and what that looks like, and as a Judboard we'll look at similarities so that if the administration asks us any questions we already have something to give them. So we want to get an idea right now of who has an existing judicial structure. Raise your hand.
 - [Random, EC, Baker, Next, McCormick, Senior House] I'll send you guys an email.
 - Chloe: in McCormick we're active, but we weren't before that. So that might be what it's like in other dorms.

Guide to Residences:

- Cosmos: I sent out an email about a week ago... my intent is to meet with Jennifer and possibly Henry/someone else from DSL to propose a series of improvements/changes to the Guide to Residences website (sent this out to you)
- The GTR is a digital form of the booklet and CD they used to mail out. Last year it was the first year it was launched. In the email I sent out there's a file with the current layout on the left and the layout I'd like to propose on the right.
- The changes I'm proposing are in three parts: general layout changes (too much emphasis on facilities, not enough on photos, etc. so I'm proposing photo tiles and info bar on the side, and video in the center, also get rid of the banner), recommendations for individual tiles (instead of binary yes/no for facilities, more of a free-form list, get rid of "shuttle stop" since everyone has a shuttle stop close to them, headings, etc.), aesthetic changes (better colors, increasing readability, making it less dreary, etc). When I meet with them I want to be able to speak on behalf of Dormcon, so that's why I'm presenting this to all of you so I can see if people have objections.
 - Matthew: I did see that the facilities space becomes very small. It would be nice if it did have a prominent color or something to distinguish it so parents could find it easily if they wanted to see it.
 - Ryan: When do you plan on meeting?
 - Cosmos: Don't have a specific date, probably a week or two.

No objections arise.

HDC:

- Cosmos: The house dining committee is probably the worst committee in this school, maybe even in the state or country. There's a student rep from every dorm, Dormcon reps, DSL reps, some housemasters.
- We talked about the IAP meeting plan. Very few people signed up last year, so how do we come up with a meal plan that will fail as little as possible (since we have to have one). Questions we came up with: Do students want breakfast/lunch/dinner, brunch/dinner, just dinner, etc. and do they want a block plan or weekly plan? They will open one dining hall, either Baker or Maseeh (if too many people sign up).
- We decided on brunch/dinner, and we asked them to come back to us with a 5/7/10 per week plan. The hours will also be a little different. Brunch from 11-1:30. Daper also really wants a meal plan for IAP and will strongly recommend that their athletes get on the plan. They claimed that these hours will work best for everyone except swimming. The meeting almost ran smoothly and was almost productive. Yay.

Maker Spaces:

- Chloe: Me, Walter, Matt, and Antonio met with Humphreys (he called this meeting) because he wanted to know more about maker spaces in dorms. He wants to collect information about them and make sure we can develop these spaces so that they're up to a good standard. It sounded positive, like he wanted to help improve these spaces. He said the directive is kind of coming from the edX people, who are willing to support it.
 - Gaurav: Has he defined what a maker space is?
 - Matt: Administrators are trying to figure out what students think a maker space is. Is it a workshop, do people do arts & crafts, etc. and there is a lot of variation among communities as to what a maker space is. The provost and president encourage maker spaces to be collaborative environments in which students do academic things and build things.
 - Gaurav: Sorry, that question kind of went on a tangent. Random has a woodshop and EE lab in our basement that we've run ourselves for a while, and we'd appreciate more supplies if they'd give us money. But we want to run the spaces ourselves rather than them running it for us.
 - Chloe: I think safety is one of their biggest concerns, but it is for us as well, so we don't have to worry.
 - Matt: They're not as far as that. They're on board with it being student run.

- Adri: They're never going to allow a maker space if some dorm gets a mill or something. Their definition is going to limit what kind of maker spaces they have.
 - Matt: I think you shouldn't make those assumptions yet. I want to make it clear that EHS is very into exploring and encouraging undergraduate run workshops. They're just trying to figure out how to make it work. I don't want any assumptions to be made yet about things like that because they're still in the very early stages, and they're open to these kinds of ideas. They know that students probably already have these spaces and are already doing these things so they probably just want to make it as safe as possible.
- Chloe: A general question I had is which dorms do have some type of maker space?
 - Sean: We have a woodshop that isn't open, but we have it.
 - Ryan: We have tools you can rent out.
 - Walter: We have the materials, not the space.
 - Victoria: We have a room with tools, but you wouldn't use them in the room.
 - Rodrigo: We don't have anything.
- Walter: For dorms that do have these types of spaces, is someone in charge of it, or.. ?
 - Ryan: We have some people who have access to the code, and they need to be safety trained first.
 - Lars: We have workshop/lab chairs as officer positions.
 - Sean: I probably have a key to ours.. ?
 - Chloe: We don't have anything like a maker space but we have a sewing room, and a sewing room chair.
 - Rodrigo: We used to have a toolcomm, but then he left with all his tools.

HSG Meeting:

- Chloe: There was one this Wednesday. We went over renovations that happened this summer. New House had renovations in their kitchen, Random had some done too. Sid-Pac is getting major renovations next year--important to know what's going on there so that when undergraduate dorm renovations go on we can remember what happened. They're keeping half of the dorm open and only closed the part they're renovating to keep the culture going.
- Walter: We also talked about LCA. LCA is currently split across two graduate dorms, half are on a floor of SidPac and the other half are on the floor of Tang. (two empty floors)

- Chloe: The main thing is that they will be moving to undergrad dorms next semester. So that will increase the number of undergrads wanting to move back to undergrad housing in the spring.
- Walter: Humphreys doubts that overcrowding policies will kick into any of the dorms. Everyone who is living on campus is guaranteed housing on campus.
 - Chloe: They're probably expecting ~40 people to move out next semester.
 - Ryan: They went through the same thing with DU last year, it worked out fine.
 - Victoria: But it's different to start overcrowding policies midyear, like oh someone is going to randomly move into your room.
 - Chloe: We'll see what happens, it might but Humphreys doesn't think it will.
- Walter: We also talked about the move out date. He wants a more formal proposal from us rather than just us mentioning it'd be good. He explained it'd be like a ripple effect because there's a lot of things involved with MIT being open that extra day, also because it's Memorial Day weekend. Dining and storage and the stud will all need to be open for that extra day.
 - Chloe: He basically wants us to consider that if MIT does stay open another day, what will students need for that day and how are we going to provide it. Antonio and Phoebe are working on that and they might be reaching out to RACs and presidents to get their opinion on that. Another option is to just have MIT stay open till later that day.
- Walter: Humphreys also mentioned a tentative/alarming idea ("I'm not saying this is going to happen, but just consider it) what if all the seniors moved out when the rest of the undergrads did, and then moved into a temporary dorm for two weeks all together.
 - Chloe: We didn't respond to this, but we wanted to know what your opinion on this was. One thing he said was that a lot of seniors travel for a week before coming back for senior week. He also said some seniors start emptying out their rooms way before graduation so we could make all seniors do that.. ?
 - Yo: This is the last part of your MIT experience and if people don't want to be forced out of their dorm and want to remember their last part of MIT. I think contacting the alumni offices about this wouldn't be a bad idea.
 - Matt: On a realistic level, that probably wouldn't just happen. It's inconvenient and too expensive. It's one of those things that would

happen only if we really wanted it. So I'm not too concerned about that being a thing.

- Sean: I don't know how many seniors still live on campus, but it would likely be more than just one dorm.
 - Chloe: He was saying it could be the dorms that have the summer programs in them.
- Ryan: My immediate thought is that's kind of pointless, so I would downvote it.
- Cosmos: Also having people living in a place they don't actually care about and people have nothing to do, so they could just trash it.
- Ryan: It could be useful for people who do just need a place to store their stuff and that's it, but I don't see that happening enough to be useful.
- Chloe: I didn't think we'd like it, but we needed to have good reasons why so thanks.

Chloe: I also want to note that the GIH updates were not brought up at the HSG meeting and I had to bring it up at the end, which was a little disappointing.

GIH Updates:

- Phoebe: Everyone is still on board with GIH, correct? Good. Housing kept kind of telling us that it would be passed at the next meeting or whatever, and wouldn't really talk about it until it was passed. At the meeting with Humphreys I asked where this program was and why it wasn't passed yet. He seemed surprised that it wasn't, but said we needed to check with all the Housemasters, then go to HSG, then the chancellor who will approve it. Those are the steps.
- Ryan: And the corporation has to approve it. I talked to Housemaster Columbo about it and he was really confused, I think there was a breakdown in communication between him and Humphreys somewhere. Basically he said if you look at other institutions that have this it goes up to the corporation level before it passes. MIT also sees it going to that level. I think this has been a huge breakdown in communication and it's been rough for us. I don't know if that gives you any more background on why this has been happening.
 - Phoebe: It correlates with it at least. Now we have this discussion about where to go next.
- Chloe: Humphreys says that this could be ready for the April housing lottery. The next steps are that the housemasters are meeting on 12/3, and it'll be brought to them then.
 - Phoebe: I was actually wondering if we could talk about that step here. It would be possible for presidents to bring it up to housemasters on their

own before the meeting and address any reservations the housemasters may have. If everyone could do that sometime in the next few weeks and email exec/me&Chloe that'd be great. If you want support (housing chairs, me/Chloe/Walter) to come talk to them as well that can be arranged. Also Humphreys has to put together some sort of implementation, and he said he'll leave a clause in there about how it will be tailored to fit each dorm's process. We should start thinking about that now--if you could talk with me about this before the meeting that'd be great. I'll send an email to you all with all those things.

- As you know, Senior House and EC have this already, and it's not impossible for your dorm to follow the same process that we did if you want it earlier (for the spring). You have to just run a survey in the house and see that a large majority of people are interested, then have a meeting with the house government, and then some guidelines about how you'll implement it. So if you have any questions about that you can talk to me.
- Matt: If dorms did this survey, it would make a stronger symbolic statement that we do want GIH. I don't know if it would have any formal effect.
- Sean: Is there a definition of what GIH will be according to MIT?
 - Phoebe: I can send out what has been proposed, I don't think Housing has one written yet.

Chloe: Does anyone have anything else they want to bring up?

Becky: Aren't we electing REX/CPW chairs and i3 next meeting?

Chloe: We can do it on the 12/4 meeting (last meeting)

Walter: At the end of HSG yesterday, Humphreys and Columbo were talking to me and Chloe. They asked me how MacGregor was doing and it started a brief conversation about what the attitude towards MIT across campus was. They think that people think that MIT is a sad and miserable place. So we're going to have a separate meeting to talk about ways to address this. He asked what the main issues are, and I said that I only ever hear positive feedback from S^3 about getting out of a test and getting a pset pushed, but were relatively unhelpful with an actual personal emergency. Also mental health appointments are really hard to access.

- Ryan: I think that DSL is really worried about this right now, and it's true that MIT has a lot that they can improve on with wellness.

- Adri: A phrase I use often is that we're miserable at MIT, but we're happy being miserable here rather than anyone else. I know that's the general sentiment of me and my friends.
- Sean: I think people generally seem bored and not having as much of an outlet as my freshman year (this is also influenced by the frat party ban though)
- Walter: People pointed out the sad news from Reif messages in their inbox: there is an expectation that when they get an email from Reif it's going to be bad news.
- Chloe: We will be having a meeting with them about this soon.
- Matt: What can we do to make life better for our residents? Can we transition more money into more social/community events, have more conversations, etc. What can we do to help this? Does anyone have any suggestions?
- Adri: Can we ask them to extend walk-in hours for S^3 and mental health?
 - Victoria: It'd be good if they had walk-in hours for S^3 before you could potentially have class (8AM)

--some conversation about mental health hours should be extended--

- Walter: The same level of service for S^3 and mental health is not available after hours.
 - Sadun: I've heard a number of S^3 horror stories, like they don't really give much support. I feel like extending the hours aren't going to fix the broader issues.
 - Cosmos: The committee on student life talked about this recently. I've heard this sort of anecdotal S^3 never solves anything, and people who have experienced this are invited to come share their stories with CSL. This is something CSL wants to focus on but they haven't heard anything specific about it that they can fix.
 - Yo: I think someone should have this conversation, and I think the best way for Dormcon to be involved is to have presidents survey their residents about mental health issues and level of support that they're getting. The more people that say this is a problem, the more resources they could put towards helping that problem.
 - Victoria: Someone that might be helpful is the SDS person. If she ever hears that someone can't get their meds because walk-in hours for mental health didn't fit their schedule, she gets really upset. So she would provide a lot of support and anecdotes for why mental health walk-in hours should be extended. Also I think there's a huge stigma from professors about mental health and students with disabilities. They think people who take extra time for exams, for example, is wasting their resources. I think that's a huge thing, that even for students with legit paperwork about having mental health issues, professors just don't give a crap. I think it's

environmental issue that professors don't like dealing with students with mental health issues and getting the equity officer on board could be useful for this.

- Ryan: I wonder if IFC and Panhel also notices this. I know the UA has seen these things and don't know what action they're taking. But we could work with these other large student groups so we would be a lot more powerful.
- Matt: We could put this on the next council meeting agenda.
- Chloe: Is someone willing to bring this up?
- Ryan: Yeah, I can do it.
- Victoria: Maybe a campus-wide Thanksgiving thing would help ease the tension for a short-term fix. Some people might not have people to cook with, etc.
 - Rodrigo: I know Senior House has a Thanksgiving thing...
 - Sean: Baker exec funded something in the student center one time.
 - Walter: Every dorm does an individual thing so it should be fine
- Chloe: Thanks for all of your suggestions on that.
- Walter: We're going to take these to Humphreys and Columbo.

Rodrigo: Does anyone have any updates on the Title IX thing?

Gaurav: I emailed Judy, didn't get a response.

Yo: We didn't get a response either. Someone said she was out of office?

Matt: She's back, she's responded to my emails.

End: 20:45