

Dormcon General Body Meeting - September 30, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM (ET)

Location: New House MPR

IF YOU HAVE ISSUES WITH MINUTES (EDITS/CHANGES): PLEASE EMAIL
dormcon-secretary@mit.edu :))

caragay: please fill out the contact tracing form!

brief overview of agenda: reports from exec, prez

relationships with HoH

REX feedback (you can also email us!)

starting with exec reports

alan (judcomm): no updates :))

zawad & jordan (housing): we have a bunch of updates that we put in the doc

- we brought up noise complaints with HRS (referring to construction of music building in Kresge)
 - loud noise construction should be stopped for now, no excessive noise until mid october
 - loud noise should not start before 9am
 - the loudest parts are yet to come
- someone else: mccormick manhole project noise is just as bad.
 - hrs said this is unrelated to music building construction. this is something they can't stop and it should only happen for a few days
 - hrs seems like their hands are also tied since they are trying to get construction done before winter
- hrs is going to organize meetings with students
 - they also gave us music-building-project@mit.edu
 - this mailing list will help you directly reach the construction people
- housing is building a new housing portal
 - old one is jank
 - the RACs mentioned previously that they have been shown the beginning. the way that the students select their housing preferences was extremely jank (insert a description of how absurd it is). this is not how they are actually planning to do it
 - they will get students to help test it so that it's actually working properly
 - working with cultural houses to better suit them

- new house person: they asked us to give a paragraph of each house for them to put on there. not sure how this will better suit us but i guess it gives a bit of an explanation of what you're getting into
- jordan: students ranking cultural houses in top choices will immediately get sent to a separate application
- new house person: we have informal info sessions that we would like students to attend. this is okay as long as it doesn't take the place of these info sessions
- zawad: they are trying to add technical capabilities to it.
- jordan: this was only a feature for cultural houses
- zawad: another feature is that RACs will be able to give housing assignments directly into the portal. reduce housing's place as a middleman because of the errors that happen
- also discusses 24 hr place for dorms undergoing renovations
 - administrative hoops to go into
 - we don't necessarily need a big party place. just more of a place for the community to gather
 - they want to get a place first, and then they will discuss what the place will be used for
- guest policies for every dorm should be completely back to normal
 - exception of contact tracing
 - security needs to get contract tracing information unless you are on an express guest list
- updates on bc renovation team and fyre/syre stuff

ashley (dining):

- mark hayes agrees that 75% capacity thing in dining halls makes no sense
 - not much dining can do, medical is in charge
 - beginning of october: reviewing of covid policies
- shuli: has mark hayes conveyed to medical that this is not good?
 - ashley: yes yes
- housing dining teams meetings
 - literally everyone involved in dining in every house was in one meeting
 - mark hayes agrees that this is not the best
 - duha: last year we had meetings with mark hayes, two dining chairs, and only a few other people. we were

thinking there should possibly be more people in this smaller meeting. how does this work for you all?

- ashley: meeting with dining chairs. unsure of plans to bring in heads of house
- tims mart exists in new vassar
 - mixed reviews
 - definitely cheaper than target + whole foods
 - missing lots of grocery staples
 - too much candy...more groceries please
 - also pretty bad hours
 - survey students to find out what would be better
 - students staffing tim's mart? because one of the BA problems was staffing
 - shuli: before covid we surveyed students to find what hours they want so we should look for that data
- pick 4 breakfast will become pick 6 and have more options because students have complained that it's bad
- vending machines are empty! except 26-16
 - all other ones are controlled by BA. trying to handle building access issues, taking forever.
 - in process of being restocked. unclear of when
- retail dining: anna's could be back this year next year or NEVER!
 - had trouble finding staffing + stud contracts
 - cafe four might open next semester but issues with mold in their space
 - sate has no physical kitchen to cook. could come back later in the semester? but they have issues to be worked out
 - bigger talk about restaurants in the stud (big push to make it a wellness space. meditation rooms, dance studios)
 - thinking of surveying students about what food they want in the stud
 - also maybe more food trucks?
- last semester ua ran a dining survey. dormcon will yolk the survey from ua and get it back running again!
- apparently next house dining hall lines are crazy
 - space is not being used well (lines intersecting)
 - comfort section self serve?
 - could speed up stir fry lines (with some ideas like those from mccormick)
 - issues in other dorms? or just next?
 - mohan: lines in simmons are same as pre-covid
 - shuli: is the issue people coming to next or inefficiency
 - people feedback: both

- mohan: apparently we are running out of spaces to store food and trucks are not really coming by because there aren't enough truck workers
 - ashley: new vassar has absolutely no storage. 5 deliveries a week, then some deliveries get cancelled and then they don't have any food. this is also a problem in other dorms.
 - mccormick: self serving? and more efficiency?
 - never heard of this issue before?? why exactly is this happening
 - delivery thing is new, impacts of covid
- zawad: met with ashley with erica, new person that helps students with financial issues
 - food, security, shuttles, financial issues generally
 - erica is interested in coming to dorms and giving presentations and teaching students what they need to know. if your dorm wants to host that, you can reach out to her or us.

mitali (rac and risk management):

- only heard from 2 dorms about syre/fyre/rex feedback. if you or your rac have thoughts, please send to me! thank you to those who have already said stuff

mohan:

- compiled information about p cards and sent them out
- sole is not too responsive rip
- confused about whether you can get a p card if your area director has one, asking about this issue. if your area director doesn't have one, you can definitely get one so go through the form and get one!
- dorm reimbursement for rex! please submit your receipts to me :)
- new funding form will go live soon! send suggestions about changes if desired

caragay and shuli (p/vp):

- met with suzy about issues
 - tap pads on doors
 - contacted kristen who is in charge of space(!)
 - gave solutions about how to resolve issues
 - drop off/pick up locations for testing
 - they know this is an issue but it's logistically difficult

- we did get across that this is very important. suzy understands.
- also talked to suzy about a poll survey she wants to run to understand how people feel about the covid restrictions and inform the potential changes in covid restrictions (esp those in dorms)
- suzy and melissa are going to tour some of the ug/g residences soon. applicable residences have received information about it
- shuli: please fill out the contact tracing form!

PRESIDENTS!

madison (baker):

- no updates

ret (random):

- thank you to dormcon for funding apple picking trip
- currently workshopping having yellow light for guest list
 - residences can say who they would not like to have on any guest list
 - judcomm would talk it out with the person
 - not to ban anyone from the dorm
 - just to make sure that there is no one who would make a resident uncomfortable that can freely roam in the dorm
 - whether or not that violates a student's right to be on a guest list??
 - ec has experience with this. admin says that only people that can have this jurisdiction is mit police.
 - presence on yellow list doesn't mean anything unless someone tries to add you on the guest list. just to let the person know someone is a bit uncomfortable with you.

adina (mcc):

- construction is loud and disturbing. emailed suzy and david about this. hoping to meet and request compensation.

duha (new):

- internal elections and no one wants to be on exec :(

octavian(?) (maseeh):

- elections for freshman reps and floor reps

tina (new vassar):

- kicking off elections. hopefully more people on exec

- are guest lists handled by student govt or security (in terms of creation)
 - caragay: ec went through this recently talk to us. student govt and keith moser together decide guest list policies
 - zawad: all of the guest policies are linked on an mit website for your reference
 - link: <http://studentlife.mit.edu/policies-procedures-library>

shruti (macg):

- finished internal elections and budget meeting
- thinking of haunted house trip but not sure so would appreciate help with this
 - duha: if you need an extra AD you can use ours
 - jordan: was the apple picking trip run by ADs or no?
 - ret: this was organized by students
 - other people: ADs now do not do this
 - caragay: if you want advice you can email dorms-prez@mit.edu

mohan (simmons):

- simmons/mcc/next are figuring out fall formal
 - probably november
 - usually 4 months of planning but now 2 months so they definitely need help
 - adina: our exec are social chairs rn so idk how much they can help at the moment

brendan (ec):

- ec renovations things
- we are trying to create a club through the ASA to get a physical space
 - would give space to bc for their renovation
 - ec resident is the ASA rep responsible for assigning spaces
 - DSL and ASA are doing lots of conversations, we will see what happens

alan (next):

- budget
- vaguely planning simmons/mcc/next formal
 - if this doesnt happen this semester it will happen in the spring
- dining problem already discussed

- next guest policy. we built a guest list on our servers but desk workers not too familiar. we dont know who to talk to about this.
 - someone else: we do ours via google form
 - jordan: we also run ours on our db, student desk worker actually does the checks

caragay: conversations with house team / head of house

- it's hard sometimes
- some system so that students are supported in this area (bringing things up to an adult) so that they have options available
 - would like to hear anything about how you feel in this space. or things that could be helpful in having more productive relationship with house teams
 - shuli and i thought it would be nice to have someone not tied to any particular house that will help you navigate all of the sources they have
 - if you have issues with your house team they can hear you
 - brendan: there is no one above the head of house. if you have problems with the HoH there is no good way to have that conversation.
 - shruti: macg has a good relationship with HoH, would like to figure out how this happened. they were trying to get to know us as a person and tried to get our trust.
 - caragay: talked with suzy that it would be nice for at the beginning of the term having a meeting with HoH about how you want to interact. could go beyond HoH to generally relationships with house team
 - caragay: would it be helpful for people to have someone to help navigate these relationships
 - ashley: if the HoH and students have a fundamentally different vision for the dorm then I don't think relationship building will help
 - ret: yes ++, at the end of the day we sometimes don't get support on our initiatives because of this fundamental difference
 - caragay: HoH is supposed to support student's ability to create dorm. even if you have fundamentally different views (this is a problem. students just have to deal with this at the moment)
 - duha: would be nice to have someone above HoH but not sure how it would help to have someone else to talk to about

this because they are removed from the dorms and won't understand my perspective

- brendan: do the HoHs receive training on how to interact with students?
 - caragay: yes but at the beginning of the term and terms can be extremely long
- there was a survey last time about how house teams are doing, talking with suzy about making this happen again?
 - course evals but for house teams. apparently house teams actually look at this information
- duha: really valuable to know about the gras and area director
 - before exec did not really know area director too well
- shuli: yes maybe the area director needs to put themselves out there more. this could be helpful to tell them
- jordan: was this a yearly survey? or how often?
 - caragay: suzy says it only ran once. but it could be requested as a yearly/regular survey
- alan: HoH are very data driven, this could be extremely helpful

caragay: just so you know, our dormcon advisor is zooming in the room.

- [cameron, who is operating the zoom, shows alexandria to the room with ipad]

caragay: a little bit of time for REX feedback! we can discuss how things went right now

- ashley: when did people stay up until
 - 4am, 11am, what is sleep, 11pm but we started at 3pm, 12:30am, 4am
- caragay: one thought we had. what if people moved on friday. so they have a day between when people get results and when they move.
 - baker: why do we even have all of this in one day??
 - shruti: ofy gives thursday off to the first years so they can move. but they like having orientation end on friday so this would involve them logistically
 - duha: the extra day would be good for desk workers because i was up 6am to get keys ready
 - random: ++ our rac is our desk captain
 - mcc: we got random emails asking us to fill a bed
 - next: ++
 - simmons: ++

- simmons: there were mixups where someone was listed as next but was supposed to be moved to simmons
 - all of these issues were syre
- macg: got a call from interim AD asking that a freshman didn't have a room in any of the dorms??? please fix these general housing issues
- ec: housing has a strange spreadsheet system with multiple spreadsheets so they don't have a consistent system
- mcc: sophomores did a huge building assignment switch over the summer??
 - jordan: this was done because lots of students had complaints. also to alleviate in person syre
- baker: our process was very smooth. we also did stuff over the summer
- macg: met many people who got into a dorm that was not in their top 5 because housing alphabetized it.
 - caragay: we will ensure this does not happen again.
- mutual selection changes
 - brendan: became more of we don't want this person rather than we want these person
 - shruti: very much became "we don't want this one person" which was not very helpful. we also had someone who was in macg and nv at once. got lots of emails back and forth about being moved to new vassar but then not and then being moved and then not.
 - ashley: it used to be that entries ranked people based on fit but then came down to "i don't want this specific person"
- alan: a lot of it was that there were many more people to house this year.
- brendan: we should discuss this in advance of renovation building housing because this is now 3 generations of people to house
- mohan: please use single sided printing because we screwed up so much
- someone: some dorm couldn't access housing algorithm?
 - yes the conversation became oh yes this person seems like they would fit well in the community
- shruti: we did this over one night instead of two and no one said anything
- ret: we also did this by hand. until someone figures out an actual algorithm, we are going to do this.
 - we had first years rank every single room
 - issue of first years having to live on a floor that they don't want to live on

- ashley: by hand is not inferior to algorithms because they do mess up. but would be nice.

MEETING ADJOURNED!