



49 UA Council Session 8 Meeting Minutes
 February 14, 2018, 7:30pm - 9:00pm in W20-400

Living Group	Representative	Present?
Baker	Rachel O'Grady	x
Burton-Conner	Katie Fisher	x
East Campus	Tesla Wells (Aleksejs Popovos)	x
MacGregor	Eleanor Wintersteen	x
Maseeh	Darius Bopp	x
McCormick	Laura Bergemann	x
New House	Emily Tang	x
Next House	Justina Yang	x
Random Hall	MJ Porzenheim (Sonia)	x
Simmons	Edward Fan	x
Interfraternity Council	Arjun Mithal	x
Interfraternity Council	Michael Trinh	x
Interfraternity Council	Christopher Mutty	x
Interfraternity Council	Samuel Ihns	x
Living Group Council	Emily Fleischman	x
Off Campus	Megan Kralj	x
Panhellenic Association	Meredith Loy	x
Panhellenic Association	Kyra Post	x
Panhellenic Association	Alyssa Weiss	

Leah Flynn Gallant

Agenda

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| 1. Roll Call + Introductions | 7:35 - 7:45 |
| 2. Approval of 49 UAC 7 Minutes | 7:45 - 7:50 |
| 3. Officer Updates | 7:50 - 8:00 |
| 4. Breakout groups | 8:00 - 8:20 |
| a. Food access and affordability | |
| b. Professional development & career services | |
| c. Student engagement with student government | |
| d. Student admin relations | |
| 5. Break groups report out | 8:20 - 8:40 |
| 6. Discussion: How do you share information and solicit feedback from your constituents | 8:40 - 8:50 |

7:35pm Introductions

Welcome new Councilors!

7:45pm Approval of 49 UAC 7 Minutes

Minutes are approved.

7:46pm Officer Updates

Sarah and Alexa met with Suzy to talk about Shaw's closing and are thinking about a few different things to improve short-term access to groceries:

- Improving / expanding shuttle system
- Partnering with company like Instacart
- Long term, bringing a pantry / grocery store to campus

In other news, the First Year Experience class launched this week. Ian Waitz is starting a Careers Committee to look at ways to improve professional development. We're continuing the rollout of academic advising recommendations and met with Undergraduate Officers over IAP, now setting up meetings with department heads.

Mo is still working on the Confidentiality Policy, which was development for students who serve on faculty committees to clarify what information can be shared with other students. Mo is working with faculty governance to vote on recommendation policy. The goal is to have a vote of the full faculty by the end of the semester.

7:52pm Breakout Sessions

Student engagement, professional development, student-admin collaboration, food access.

Food access and affordability

Challenges

- No close low-cost grocery that every can go to with Shaw's closing

- Meal plan isn't affordable
- There's no close convenience store, Verde's is expensive so not a long-term solution

Possible solutions

- Shuttles could be improved: Trader Joe's shuttles is only once a week, Costco every other week. Add different stores along route, since there's no generic regular low-cost grocery that's included in shuttle loops, maybe add to Saferide
- Instacart or Amazon Fresh or other online ordering methods has challenges, but can be delivered
- SwipeShare is cool, some people want to also use their actual swipes, better advertising, end of semester should donate swipes. Waiting on numbers from Suzy for how many swipes used
- Better advertising for shuttles
- There's a farmer's market that used to come to Stata, MIT could partner with farms, bring subsidized market back
- The year for the shuttle on the website is several years off
- Support for cook-for-yourself communities---how to sharpen knives, clean kitchen, etc
- Getting cookware, because communal cookware goes missing
- Fridge or microwave on campus for commuter students

Student-Admin Collaboration

There's a distinction between students in leadership positions vs students who aren't. Difference in awareness in what's going on, what students get a say in projects, etc, being mindful of those who don't have as much information. Talking about the distrust between students and administration. There is a divide between student life issues, which students get really passionate about, versus mental health initiatives, academics, etc, where it isn't the student's whole life so there is more collaboration.

How do faculty play into it? In EC we have a mostly positive experience with faculty coming in to moderate a discussion. Faculty were more or less a neutral party in the discussion.

On the student side, ways to improve the relationship include seeing the perspective of the administration and directing other students to an office to make change when they have issues with something.

Edward: Simmons has resident scholars living in the building, mostly faculty with small children. For the most part the residence hall programming built around it hasn't panned out in the way originally expected. The resident scholars come to dining but don't interact in very meaningful ways. A lot of faculty are very receptive to student concerns, so unclear where the disconnect is.

We could get Bruno Verdini, who teaches 11.011 The Art and Science of Negotiation, to come lead a discussion at Council.

Katie: Students are only here for around four years, but admin are here for longer than that, so there's a difference in perspective. There are a lot of shared values but we come to the table with very different perspectives. One of the most important things you can do is think about where they are coming from and articulate what you want that gets at those shared values.

Emily Tang: A dorm is a nice place to rally around, versus there isn't something to rally around for mental health, or if you have a problem with a class people aren't as likely to come forward, versus for dorm life people get a lot more passionate.

Megan: Maybe changing the environment to empower students to come forward with these issues, ex. Something on the syllabus for fear of retaliation.

Professional Development

Different outlets on campus to help learn about different industries, interview prep, how to translate skills to industry or grad school.

Some issues that came up:

- People don't know where GECD is or the services they offer. Don't have easy way to know about events.
- Improving freshman advising to help people get started in externships, UROPs, getting that first thing on their resume.
- Getting exposed to resources early, during orientation
- Fraternities do career oriented events, informal sessions, talk to upperclassmen who worked in the industries, get resume, interview help, not something that can be easily replicated in dorms / off-campus
- Adding department events in dorms
- More networking dinners to get students in front of recruiters

Who is responsible for setting up, say, networking dinners? Where is the disconnect between companies who want MIT students and students who don't hear about it?

- Recruiters not knowing how to reach MIT students. GECD doesn't organize networking events with departments or living groups, so a lot of them are monopolized by a few companies.

Companies get funneled into a major they are most interested in, so for smaller companies most of the information is through Anne Hunter. The problem is the onus is on the students to go and reach out to companies, on top of being a student. At UChicago, for example, you have a career advisor, but right now GECD is so understaffed they are being forced to do a lot of things.

One common complaint from alumni 10 years out is they didn't learn enough soft skills as they transitioned to leadership positions. A lot of fraternities in the week leading up to the career fair

have a night specifically for freshmen, so we talk about how to write a resume, what to wear, how to tie a tie, how to interact with people, so we talked about how to translate that into dorms.

Ways to get careers outside of the popular options coming out of MIT, so ways to spread awareness about those fields and ways to support students who go down that path.

If we were to have more things that were open to all undergrads it would benefit off-campus students, who are currently not allowed to create a mailing list and don't hear about dorm events.

Unsure of having a career advisor or having freshmen focus on their careers because it would cause a lot of stress for freshmen to focus on careers and academics, because they might be more focused on UROPs, internships.

Student Engagement

Is student engagement actually an issue? Are there actually students who care a lot and could contribute a lot but don't? Yes, for example, designing the first year class has brought out a lot of students who haven't been involved.

Traditional chain to get the word out is by coming to this meeting and bringing relevant info back to your constituents. But this framework doesn't work out all of the time because of lack of interest. Lots of people aren't aware of things, even those things that are relevant, and some are medium-long term changes that won't affect them, or certain changes only affect a small subset of students. Having incentives to stay involved, ex. Maseeh has housing points for people who get involved. A lot more people are familiar with Class Council and UA Events because they were relevant to their day-to-day lives while the UA is more behind the scenes.

Suggestions for improving student engagement

- MIT Confessions
- Suggestion box (digital or physical)
- MIT-wide piazza, 6.AcAd has been really successful, can help out people who want to be anonymous
- Banner in lobby 7
- Postering

Separately, we should have a Piazza for every major. There has been some pushback from some departments, but is something Ian is interested in.

A few years ago the UA tried to implement discussions.mit.edu, but that didn't really take off. Is it actually something that students want or was there something about that platform?

8:58pm How do you share information and solicit feedback from your constituents?

We don't have time to think about it, but please think about how you share information from UA / dormcon / IFC / Panhel / LGC meetings to people you represent, and how do you get their feedback

on these issues? I think it's in your interest to be in communication with people you are representing and have that communication channel go both ways. There's some representatives in the past who have done opt-in mailing lists for their communities where they do brief synopsis, and talking about things you hear here at wider house meetings.

Thank you for spending Valentine's Day with us <3

8:59pm Adjourned