45UAE6 Minutes

6th Exec Meeting of Fall 2013
7:30-8:30pm, Wednesday, November 13, 2013

Attendance:
- Connie Huang - PR
- Karen Hao - Sustainability
- Patrick Hulin - MIT 2030
- Anu Sinha - Education
- Rachel Keeler - ASA
- Emad Taliep - Health and Wellness
- Cory Hernandez - UA Treasurer
- Ryan McDermott - Finboard (proxy)
- Nathan Varady - Athletics
- Shruti Sharma - Chief of Staff
- Carrine Johnson - Special Projects
- Stephanie Yu - TSG
- Daniela Yuschenkoff - Events
- Devin Cornish - VP
- Sidhanth Rao - P

Old & New Business

1. UA Secretary (Sidhanth)
    a. Search for a new secretary underway
    b. Sidhanth: Isaac resigned as secretary but not as a part of the UA, will be working on policy.
    c. We are currently looking for a secretary, so send any potential candidates to Sid. Competency is important.
    d. Connie: is this a public search?
    e. Sidhanth: yes - will bring it to exec and council and let them spread the message and/or submit recommendations.
    f. Devin: needs to be done quickly, the sooner, the better. Person needs to meet officers ideally before Council.
2. Chancellor Search Advisory Cabinet (Sidhanth)
    a. Shruti: Interview and application already happened
    b. Sidhanth Rao, Katelyn Wolfenberger, Eli Ross, and Ben Frank will be the selected undergraduate members of the committee, which will meet three times before an official meeting. Will be reaching out to students, but unsure if people will be invested as it's not the first thing students are concerned about
    c. Want qualities students want in a chancellor, first 100 day priorities, and name suggestions

    d. Devin: Sidevin met with Grimson: want someone who has a concept of student life - teaching undergrads, being a housemaster, teaching in multiple departments, worked with advising, is a leader in the MIT community

    e. Sidhanth: Can also send recommendations for people who won't be good

    f. Meeting w/ Reif on Dec 3

3. Subject evaluation (Devin)

    a. Devin: met with Dean Freeman about subject evaluation. Want to supplement the with "real-time" reviews. Switching from brainstorming to implementation.

    b. Subject evaluations serve two purpose: to get information about a class (professor, workload, etc.) and to give admins insight into how classes are working. Currently, the two things are disjoint.

    c. Live, amazon-esque newsfeed for classes - relevant comments can be highlighted and irrelevant ones get pushed down

    d. Quazi-real time - can "tweet" about the classes to see what's "trending." Encouraging a team to be build around this.

    e. Anu: Subject evaluations through finals?

    f. Devin: nope, something separate

    g. Anu: How is student input going to work?

    h. Devin: Dean Freeman is open to input from both the concept and design aspects.

    i. Emad: what data do we want from this? Ex: units listed from class do not always equal the amount of work the class takes.

    j. Devin: Chancellor understands that there's not really a 1:1 ratio of units to work. Would be interesting to explore as a separate concept, but integrating would be too complicated. Twitter-esque idea is good because it allows an open forum for discussion about classes.

    k. Anu: anonymized feedback to professors would be useful for them.

    l. Ryan: Creating a better forum than piazza. Voting system would be useful, but you might struggle getting a good read on smaller classes (although this is something they have a problem with already)

    m. Emad: Syllabus is supposed to be solidified by the 5th week; can we see if 5th week rights are being enforced as well as end-of-term rights? Focused space, doesn't get lost in e-mail.

    n. Ryan: How do professors feel about this type of program? Professor buy-in is important.

    o. Devin: better than "money cards" (notecards that you put how well you're understanding things, which is a logistical nightmare).

    p. Stephanie: would be easier than cramming everything at the end of the year.

    q. Anu: Course 6 compiles survey data and summarizes, but takes a lot of manpower.

    r. Devin: How do you envision the pilot working?

    s. Ryan: use large, non-freshman classes (ex: 5.12 and 2.001)

    t. Anu: comparing same semester with same professor with prior semesters, and classes that have different professors each semester

u. Emad: sampling mid-tier classes for how students are feeling about the major in general after a more official introduction.

v. Devin: figuring out who this falls under in exec, or if it will be getting someone else on board with the UA. Underclassmen especially welcome. Can contact Devin if interested

w. Sidhanth: talked to Dean Freeman about a "major week" for freshmen. Freshmen take a major based on anecdotal evidence for students, but might be majoring in the wrong thing. Professors would give presentations as a "survey" of what the major is.

x. Cory: something similar happened last year

y. Sidhanth/Ryan want something better than academic fair and closer to when freshmen actually declare their majors

z. Cory: IAP class also had upperclassmen present.

aa. Shruti: all majors should have open houses - course 3 one was very successful, especially with upperclassmen and faculty explaining the major/interacting with students. Gives you a feeling for what the major itself is like.

bb. Devin: don't want to compete with what already exists. Talk to Dean Freeman about all majors having open houses

cc. Anu: nice to have everything in front of you at once (ex: understanding the difference between 7 & 20)

dd. Sidhanth: reverse-engineer classrooms that are available for using classrooms? Is that of value and is it easy to do?

ee. Patrick: very useful, but also very difficult to execute because the registrar wants people to actually reserve rooms

ff. Devin: can we have some rooms that are "flex" rooms after a certain hour?

gg. Patrick: we honestly just need more student study spaces.

4. Quality of Life Survey (Devin)

a. Data from Aideen Doneski from IR

b. Devin: survey from last semester. Data is now present, thinking about how to mine data. Want something along the lines of sleep study where the data can be visualized interactively. Question brought up: don't want granularity to be too high in order to avoid making claims about certain people on campus. However, questions about student life aspects can be explored through looking at the data

c. Next exec - have ideas for admins about how to use data

d. Cory: disagrees with lower granularity, especially if admins are going to be using the data

e. Devin: want people to still be able to answer candidly.

f. Sidhanth: more relevant people will hopefully get higher granularity in confidence

g. Devin: can understand both sides - wanting to know data, but not wanting to have students to misuse data maliciously. Mechanism by which students can request data so it's accessible, but there's still some oversight of the data.

h. Patrick: should be priority for the UA to get the most data released, especially for breakdowns. Granularity at least to living groups should be acceptable.

       i.   Nathan: might compromise the data of the next survey

       j.   Emad: survey is every four years, though

       k.   Sid: likely that a student will take it at least twice within their MIT career (every 2 years or so)

       l.   Cory: admins are going to target those living groups anyway, students should actually know why they're under scrutiny.

       m.   Ryan: big problem with security was that there wasn't a trickle-down of information

       n.   Cory: exec teams vary greatly between dorms

       o.   Sidhanth: should there be different levels of security clearance?

       p.   Cory: why is it this confidential to begin with?

       q.   Patrick: still think that it should be a priority to get data to students; however, screening the data would probably be a good idea

5.   Saferide (Sidhanth)
     a.   Follow up on Dean Colombo meeting
     b.   Sidhanth: Dean Freeman thinks that getting off-campus on a regular basis would be beneficial to improve student confidence. Additionally, the integration of FSILGs with the rest of campus is ambiguous. Shuttle service could work on both aspects.
     c.   Work with Aideen to mine the quality of life survey to see if shuttle service would improve happiness.
     d.   Some people might leave campus and not come back for the rest of the day. Also, the Boston shuttles don't run on weekends (or IAP), which makes it harder for off-campus people to get back on campus
     e.   Rachel: GSC is worried about ridership of Somerville shuttle because the shuttle could be shut down if people don't ride it. A lot of MEngers and grad students live in Somerville and people visit their friends there.
     f.   Carrine: Special projects can take care of the shuttles if it becomes apparent that shuttles are a problem
     g.   Patrick: Boston Daytime ran during the weekends & IAP in the beginning of 2011; shuttles cost $90/hour - expensive
     h.   Sidhanth: in the large scheme of things, cost might not be a factor

6.   Student Stress (Devin)
     a.   Devin: a lot of people brought up stress as an academic issue in the last council meeting. However, we don't articulate the relationship between student stress and student life nearly as much (ex: roommates, healthy eating habits). Need more solutions for that problem.
     b.   Sidhanth: Visiting committee was very interested in this, as well
     c.   Tabling full discussion.
     d.   Follow up on Dean Colombo meeting

7.   Treasurer - Next semester's budget (Cory)
     a.   Cory: Finboard allocations work on the quarterly system - do Jan-Mar in November. However, Jan-Jun budget hasn't been passed yet. Most likely that

Council won't pass allocations before passing budget for next semester. Typically would be voted on in February, but unlikely to be pushed off for that long.
   b. Basically, budget needs to be done by this Saturday.

Past & Upcoming Events

1. 11/14 Dean Freeman Meeting (Sid-Devin)
2. 11/14 UA Study Break (Connie)
3. 11/19 PAC Reif Meeting (Sid)
4. 11/20 Grimson Meeting (Sid-Devin)
5. 11/20 UA Council Meeting
6. 11/21 Dean Freeman Meeting (Sid-Devin)
7. 11/25 Commencement Lunch Meeting (Sid-Devin)
8. 12/4 HSG (Sid)
9. 12/4 UA Council
10. 12/5 CJAC Meeting (Sid)
11. 12/6 UA Sustainability Trashion Show (Karen)