

Agenda:

- Mutual selection updates
- Updates on spring hall transfers
- Discussion of the future of the East Side Festival
- A demo of the "This is East Campus" presentation about our values and the things we care & worry about that Tesla is going to give to DSL and interested faculty some time later

Roll call: all here

Mutual selection

The year before last year we changed mutual selection policies in response to Barnhart's request that we revisit them. It was a wishy-washy request and we revised the policies proactively to show we think about the process a lot. The process has been used twice now, and we've collected feedback and we expected to have to talk about the process, but now it seems that DSL wants to talk about the broader question of move-in process and whether mutual selection should exist at all. The talks started 2-3 months ago with some pretty intimidating statements from admin about getting rid of mutual selection because it has not benefits and makes people feel rejection. We haven't managed to 100% convince them that's mistaken, but at least now they realized their original analysis might've needed more nuance. There will be an administration-student-HoH workshop in early February to "troubleshoot" housing processes and design new guidelines for them. It's unclear what the exact form of that workshop is going to be because the workshop is being workshopped right now. They want to come up with some general housing principles, and then use the principles in the workshop to come up with guidelines so that the processes come in alignment with the principles. Ideally, DSL will release principles that we'll have to adhere to keep mutual selection. If this fails and we have to give up mutual selection, we'd probably gradually switch to a single-sided selection system where freshmen rankings matter the most. We are concerned that this will disincentivize frosh-upperclassmen interaction during rush, enable squatting, and possibly incentivize anti-rushing. Random has single-sided selection and it works for them, but they're small and have a very aggressive hall rush process, and it's unclear if the process scales. Tristan & Tesla ran some single-sided ranking algorithms on last year's freshman preferences and some algorithms gave non-terrible results, though a little skewed towards both ends of the "more people on loved halls" and "non-zero numbers of people on 'absolutely not here' halls", which could possibly be fixed with some manual shuffling at the end. We're stressing that whatever new policy should not just be forced upon EC, but instead workshopped here at EC and passed through Housecomm.

Q: If we keep mutual selection, what do you think the biggest changes are that we'd have to agree to? A: Three components: (a) possibly changing the algorithm, trying to understand how efficient it is, how biased it is towards freshman/upperclassman preferences, (b) changing how we present the process to freshmen to minimize negative feelings and anxiety, (c) changing how upperclassmen engage with the process, e.g. minimizing gossip, hasty assumptions, rumours etc.

Also, there will be a panel with faculty (with a more reasonable structure than the “panel” on toplessness) about community building and housing processes. Tesla will email out when there’s more info.

ESF

Omar is presenting on the plans for this year’s ESF. Slides:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1xOC0o29xSVox4AEc8RiG_6i-UeWhJVS-CMdYz91gBMA/edit?usp=sharing

Last year the planning for East Side Festival was started way too late, which is why we’re talking now, especially since if we want to have live music we should start the process in December.

Last year people felt like EC was fairly involved in executing plans for ESF but not in the actual planning. EC involved was also heavily skewed towards people from 4W.

We want to have a more even distribution of planning duties/workload. Admittedly, SH is no longer a recognized student group, so they can’t e.g. book spaces, so EC would have to do that. SH would like to fix that by getting recognized as an ASA group, but this is not going to happen in time for this year’s ESF. The Alumni Association can give us funding *if* we get EC alumni more involved in the organization. We want more of the “sub-veep” roles to go to people in the EC community. Ideally we should gauge interest soon.

Q: How is EC as a dorm going to decide if we want this and to what extent we should be involved? A: We were hoping to talk about that this Housecomm. Last year people seemed kinda positive about the thing, especially because it seems that the biggest issues we had last year could be fixed by more timely planning. We want to do a yes/no vote for ESF either today or next Housecomm, then (if yes) have another discussion for how it would work (whether it would have music and if so where, how to elect/appoint veeps, other major organizational matters...)

Have people had ample time to think about whether ESF should happen at all? Should we vote today or next Housecomm? A hall would like to delay this until they can get more opinions. Let’s probably vote next Housecomm, but if you have feelings it’d be great if you shared them *right now* because the next Housecomm is going to be long.

Q: Why would we *not* want ESF? If the problem was EC representation, let’s just represent it better this time. A: Welp, this is a pretty complicated question. Last year there were some negative sentiments around EC because, well, not everyone got along with SH very well after a large contingent of SH people moved into EC, and people were concerned that running ESF would be seen as us associating with/giving refuge to SH by the administration and harm our relationship with the admins. People also just didn’t feel ownership of the event. The implementation was also a kind of a rushed mess that resulted in some unfortunate interactions with the DSL, and e.g. the security measures were an inconvenience to residents. We think all of these things could be mitigated this year.

Last year both MIT admin and EC house team were uncomfortable with the idea that alums/randos would stay overnight, which is a good reason we shouldn’t host the concert part in the courtyard (because it’s late).

Q: Do we have polling data about how people feel? A: We have poll results from Spring, and most people were okay with it happening again? And then we discussed the comments from that poll in a separate debrief meeting.

We'll send out more information and possibly polls by email. If you have opinions on how that should be structured, talk to Tesla (teslaw@) and Omar (laris@).

The ESF vote is happening at next Housecomm.

Transfers

The way that inter-hall transfers work is that imminently Milka will send everyone an email going like "hey tell me if you want to move to a different hall". You can respond with a ranked list of halls you're willing to move to, but note that you're committing to accepting the move if you're offered one. If you have special circumstances, mention that. EC is at capacity, we're going to try hard to make everyone happy, but our options are limited and depend on where people want to move out of and into. Email milka@ or house-me-daddy@ if you have questions.

Housecomm adjourned.