

AHEC Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, November 3, 2020, 6:30pm @Zoom

Attendees:

Adam
Allison
Amanda
Andrew
Haosheng
Katie
Kruthika

Minutes: Jacqueline

[Update] Outside meetings

- GSC: election support and voting resources, including [mailing list for interested international graduate students](#) (international-support-admin@mit.edu) meant to be for peer support, information, and address international concerns
 - MIT preparing a guide for how to handle [social gatherings following election](#), including recommendations to follow COVID guidelines
 - [MIT Reboot](#) started yesterday and goes until the 11th
 - Kru to send out email about MIT Reboot to Ashdown, including a schedule of events
 - MIT's COVID website is [now.mit.edu](#)
 - More info on Touchdown spaces: first-come first-serve and only available to people on COVID Pass who can already access building; must email buildingaccess to reserve spaces & looking into reserving outdoor spaces
 - Can have 8-10 people in room based on room but must still follow COVID guidelines (no food, all wearing masks)
 - Approved archivist position in GSC
 - ARC has a podcast series on academia coming up
 - GSC open to funding new proposals
 - RISE campaign made [departmental scorecards](#) to assess how departments have been advancing in DEI efforts
- Sustainability: no
- Activities: no
- HCA: no
- Housing w/ Suzy Nelson: check in about how things are at Ashdown
 - Amanda brought up concern of last week's arson & was told sprinkler system should handle cases like that
 - Housing thinking of creating outdoor skating rink since Johnson isn't open (would be on Kresge lawn), setting up open tents with space heaters, and setting up vans for hot chocolate to encourage students to

- Brought up question of needing to know why people aren't complying
 - Housing will work w/ discipline committee to make and send out survey to residents to figure out why there's low compliance
- Housing plans to have 2 town halls – 1 for all dorms, then 1 per each dorm
 - Originally meant to tell people more about how we're tracking non-compliance, why it's an issue, and what we can do about it (& suggested by grad students as a way to improve compliance)
 - Housing is working through budget for all-dorms town hall as they plan to contract a company to make a video
 - All-dorms town hall meant to be moderated by Naomi and a grad student
 - Where it's dorm by dorm we could show data, and Housing says they'll send a packet to guide dorm leaders through questions
 - Chance that those who are noncompliant are unlikely to attend a town hall
 - Chance that questions brought up in Q&A will be focused on Housing and not COVID compliance

[Update] Discuss how Halloween events went

- Went well; low turnout on Zoom but more people carved pumpkins than were on Zoom (~30 pumpkins delivered to Ashdown)
 - Pumpkin carving Zoom was meant to be a movie showing, but tech difficulties; Watch Party on Amazon Prime requires everyone to have Prime accounts
 - Rather than Netflix, Hulu, or Prime Watch Party, could take advantage of on-campus Xfinity plan and just have people tune in at the same time
- Discussed use of common spaces for organizing/preparing events now that weather is getting colder
 - Adam got approval from Naomi to have Coffee Hour folks use Hulsizer room (up to 10 people) and Crafts Lounge to sort things out
- Had 1 submission for costume contest and low submission for candy counting
 - Amanda to announce winners
- Kru working on election night cookies right now

[Update] Intersection of Albany of Mass Ave

- City had neutral to positive reaction to concern; discussed possible reasons for how markings could have been faded but recognized that it's an issue and have plans to solve it on their own time
- Katie to check back in with them

[Discussion] Website and email timing issues

- Website is still down
 - Haosheng to ask James about it
- Madeleine suggested purging alumni emails from Ashdown list
 - Haosheng to check with Oscar about Ashdown email list

[Update] Request update on last week's arson case

- Ongoing investigation, know nothing more than that
- Good news: it's the first real fire we've had in Adam's 7 years, and it was put out very quickly (bad news: disturbing, but police are looking into it and had arson specialists come in from Cambridge Fire Department)

[Update] Opening up gym, music room, or renting out gym equipment

- Could potentially get a card reader
 - Doable, but IS&T is backed up with requests so it would take time
 - Would be able to identify who's going in the rooms even if we can't restrict how many go in at once
- On air vents concern, Katie reached out to Peko & David, and Peko sent a study showing no cases have passed through air vents
 - Peko checked rooms and saw music room & cardio gym are connected to 100% outside air (no recirculated air going into hallways and adjoining rooms), weightlifting gym is within limits
 - MERV-13 air filters are only installed when a certain threshold of outside to recirculated air is met, but we're below that threshold
 - Cited specific room numbers and did thorough follow-up, recommending that it's fine to open up gym and music room
- Propose holding a 2-week trial and having compliance officers check the gym as part of their route
- Have clear signage on the door that only 1 person can use it at a time
 - Use MIT logo to make it look official
- Reach out to students at Edgerton and consult with them on writing protocol
- Since gym will be opened, won't need to rent out equipment
- Next steps
 - (Amanda) Write a protocol & make a sign for the door
 - (Andrew) Write an email to residents
 - Create a signup sheet (PickATime); 1 person allowed per time per room
 - (Allison) Check with student governments about how they got started
 - Contact Denise about having gym and weight room unlocked
 - (Kru) Work with athletic officer to figure out cleaning

[Update] Opening up music room

- Denise will contact piano tuner on proper plan for cleaning
 - Not clear yet how feasible cleaning is
 - Wait to hear back before opening

[Update] Making bike room more secure

- Willing to put a camera or two in bike room if people would like that
 - Would change policy on interior cameras
- Adam to let them know we're good to move forward with internal cameras in the bike room

[Discussion] Mental health app program

- MIT Mental Health is overwhelmed; there aren't enough therapists in residence or out in the community
- Wondering if MIT would be willing to subsidize opt-in trials for mental health apps in conjunction with some intake & exit survey to assess how people feel before and after using app
 - Concern about liability if people have poor experiences and this is presented as an official route through MIT Medical, best to check in directly with MIT Medical to see what they think
 - Ashdown has a liaison to MIT Medical
 - Katie to look up contact info (Xiaolu Hsi)
 - Could lower barrier to entry to standard mental health counseling for those who view stigma associated with seeking aid for mental health
- Amanda to propose idea to Ashdown-Medical liaison

[Update] Suggestion box

- Brunch in November -- Low turnout to virtual events has reduced funding opportunities from OGE, so Brunch proposed consolidating in Ashdown to have 50+ person event on Zoom or Gather.town to get funding
 - Hard to get 50-people turnout
 - Could have events like speed-friending, puzzles (small jigsaw), poetry, how-to-draw, paint night, chocolate/wine/chip tasting, several concurrent Among Us games (over Discord chat, Zoom, or Gather.town), raffle at end for people who show up, extra food or dessert to people who win
 - There's an MIT map option on Gather.town, so could have a scavenger hunt
 - Gather.town also has potential to draw more people since it's less overwhelming than a single Zoom call
 - Won't get reimbursed if 50 people don't show up, but good idea to have it even if it ends up being a sunk cost as there aren't many events going on in November; plus we're overbudgeted right now
 - A virtual fair-type event with lots of different activities could draw a lot of people
- Amanda will send email from AHEC through a Google Doc with all ideas

[Discussion] Thanksgiving

- Ashdown HoH typically do a big meal, but will now deliver individual meals on Wednesday of Thanksgiving with Zoom call for people to chat
- Need help coordinating getting dinners delivered to folks
 - Traditionally floor officers coordinate money, can figure out later

[Discussion] Job rotation

- Amanda to respond to emails
- Allison to tackle mailing list approvals, but if trying to send out something time-critical whoever gets to it first should just approve it or approve it yourself

[Update] Follow-up on attestation & night help

- Concerns about being locked out if attestations don't go well
- Judy says to attest honestly about symptoms, call response number (MIT Medical 24hr 4481 line or COVID response 4865 hotline), and if after-hours there is a DSL response team in place to lead people into their rooms where they're then expected to self-quarantine
- If you attest in a way that indicates you have symptoms, someone will be calling you (unsure about how long this would take) even if you personally don't know which number to call
- Try to work in this information to town halls and any future emails dealing with COVID

[Update] November Officer of the Month

- Haosheng to send out email for nominations this week

Presided by: Amanda

Meeting adjourned