Residence Affairs Committee
Minutes
Thursday November 11th 9am-10am
Zoom

Present: Bolu, Ciel, Dave, Devon, Eliza, Honoka, Kate, Maria, Mustafa, Timothy
Regrets: Andrea, Eddie, Ishika, Kevin, Klara

Terms of Reference
• Reviewed

Residence Life Updates
• Common Spaces Overview
  o COVID restrictions still in place for our common areas
  o Please note that the way that Public Health views residences/post-secondary institutions is different than the average space
    ▪ Chestnut Residence does not make these decisions themselves
    ▪ Following Public Health guidelines with the support of EHS (Environmental Health and Safety – UofT Department)
• Currently Open
  o Urban Lounge: Max. Capacity: 25
  o 28th Study Room: Max. Capacity: 25
  o Study Rooms (3): Max. Capacity: 2
  o Wellness Room: Max. Capacity: 2
  o Music Rooms (5): Max. Capacity: 2
  o Gym: Max. Capacity: 6
  o Fitness Studio: Max. Capacity: 2
• Currently Closed
  o 27th Floor
    ▪ Working with Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) to open this space as soon as possible
    ▪ Unfortunately, as the space is in the shape of a donut, it is not possible to open the full space (it would be impossible for students to visually track capacity when entering the space)
    ▪ Hopefully will open part of the 27th floor within the coming weeks
• Visitor Policy has recently been updated (previously no guests allowed)
  o Currently allowing students to have 1 guest visit at a time. Guests must live in another UofT residence.
    ▪ Planned future stages of policy
      1) Anyone from UofT Community
      2) Anyone
  o Vaccination verification: for all stages, people will need to be vaccinated or enrolled in a rapid testing program due to an approved exemption
• Waste Water testing (organic waste water is testing 1 or 2 times per week)
  o https://ehs.utoronto.ca/covid-19-wastewater-program-at-large-u-of-t-residences/
  o If test is positive, we contact all guests/contractors/students/staff/etc. to let them know to get tested as a precautionary measure

Administrative & Finance Updates
• Working on the budget for 2022-23
• Upcoming Operations Projects
  o Replacing hallway carpets – 3 floors remaining (will be completed this winter break)
  o PTAC units (heating and cooling units) have been shipped and should be arriving this month, no set arrival date yet (original arrival date: May 2021)
  o Working on replacing drapery in rooms (have finished two floors so far and will continue to work on this throughout this year and in the coming years)
  o Looking at updating bathrooms for upcoming years, in the planning stages now
    ▪ Schedule has not been confirmed yet
    ▪ Will look at many factors to determine schedule, including: occupancy rates and reviewing work orders to identify the rooms where it is needed the most

Food Services Updates
• Increased seating capacity in the Dining Hall
  o No longer need to seat 2 or 4 to table - can now sit in long harvest table
• Birthday Cake celebrating monthly
• Special Days
  o World Pasta Day
  o Thanksgiving Menu
  o Diwali Treats
  o World Kindness Day
  o French Toast Day
  o December Holiday Themed Dinner
  o Exam Jam Themed Events
• Eco-2-Go program
  o Please return any containers in room
    ▪ Are running low on containers
    ▪ All returned containers will be washed, sanitized and put up again
• Dining Hall Committee
  o No volunteers from first year students
  o Looking into creative solutions to increase participation
• Mobile App
Working to launch as soon as possible (have experienced a number of delays related to contractors)

**Housekeeping Updates**

- Laundry Room machines with display errors are back online
- Still a number of machines out of order due to leaks

**Urban Crew Updates**

- Schedule Confirmed
- Recent programming
  - Halloween Movie Night
  - Costume Prizes
  - Pumpkin Carving
  - Reading Week Movie Night
- Mask Wearing Issues
  - More and more people are feeling more frustrated/resentful of mask-wearing policies (attitude has shifted from previous years)
  - Average Urban Crew shift: 5+ people/shift who need multiple reminders to put mask back on
  - Suggestion: Automated reminders intermittently – Please Wear Your Mask (similar to how one would hear at a store such as Wal-Mart)

**Residence Council Updates (Bolu)**

- VP, Internal Chestnut Residence Council
  - Day to Day workings
  - Bring issues forward to council
  - Collectively work on implementing events to overall improve residence and culture
- Still electing officials onto council
- Planning to meet this evening

**Student Updates**

**Kate**

- Academic Mentors ‘
- Time Management workshop recently – low turnout
- Study Session tonight
Laundry Discussion

Room for Improvement

- People don’t take their things out in a timely manner
- Piles of clothes sitting around on top of laundry bins and table behind us
- ½ of the machines were tapped with Out of Order signs
- Lines can happen during busier hours

Feedback on Potential Features:

- The ability to see which machines are available either through a web page or app;
  - Very positive responses
- The ability to be notified by text when a machine is free;
  - Not very helpful
- The ability to be notified by text when your load of laundry is almost done
  - Could be helpful, but not critical
  - Already set an alarm on their phone
  - Might be helpful as a reminder to folks who forget their stuff there
- The ability to load a vendor specific laundry card in the laundry room, by cash or credit card
  - Currently used
  - Would like to have a poster with clear steps on how to use the machine to reload the card
- The ability to load a vendor specific laundry card online
  - Better than in-person – would like both
  - Easier to load online
- Preference for using one’s TCarc vs a vendor specific card for payment
  - TCard would be very useful!
- Ability to purchase supplies like detergent, etc., from a vending machine or other means;
  - Depends, could be helpful
  - Would need to be consistently available and affordable
- Any other enhancements to the room – e.g, folding tables
  - Sock Lost and Found
  - Need repair for some of the current chairs – don’t feel sturdy
- Any suggestions for other features in washers or dryers, means of payment, etc.
  - None suggested

Additional Comments

- Dining Hall Related
  - Suggestion: partnerships with other restaurants? Use your T-Card at other locations (i.e. purchase Bubble Tea with your T-Card)
  - Pan Station concerns create long lines, doesn’t flow well
    - Suggestion: ensure ordering from the pan station is available on the Mobile App
• Suggestion to make use of both pan stations on weekends as well – could help
  o Hard to communicate, lots of background sounds
    ▪ Suggestion: microphone to better communicate with staff
  o Food has to be passed over the ingredients under the Plexiglass and is awkward to receive

• IT Related
  o Could we have one laptop that could be logged out for staff? Yes there are laptops available from the RLO

Next Meeting
Thursday December 9th 9am-10am