



Spaces & Experiences

CHESTNUT RESIDENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

March 3rd | 4:30 - 6:00 PM

St. Lawrence Room, Chestnut Residence

Meeting Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE

Name	Role
Steve Masse	Dean of Residence and Director of Student Life
Aisalyn Templin	Administration and Communications Assistant (Secretary)
Andrea Nelson	Rooms Manager
Eliza Davies-Greenwald	Assistant Dean, Residence Administration (Chair)
Farheen Khan	Chestnut Residence Lead Don
Jordan Craig	Occupancy and Admissions Coordinator
Joshua Cheng (virtual)	Chestnut Residence Council President
Obii Udemgba	Chestnut Residence Student
Tapur Verma	Urban Crew Manager
Young Mo Lee	Chestnut Residence Council Vice-President, Finance

REGRETS

Name	Role
Chelsea Chen	Chestnut Residence Council Vice-President, Social
Jessi Sidhu	Assistant Dean, Residence Life
Kevin Dancy	Director of Residence Operations
Sangeeta Jeyakumar	Manager, Finance, Administration and Operations
That Thiri Oo (Tina)	Chestnut Residence Student

AGENDA



- Admission report
- Student survey presentation
- Residence Council update
- Other Business

ADMISSIONS REPORT

Jordan Craig provided an overview of relevant dates related to the summer and academic year Admissions cycle.

- Summer applications opened on February 10th. The first round of offers was sent this week. All eligible applicants can expect an offer, as we have not reached capacity yet.
- Upper Year returner Applications opened February 17th. The Admissions team will begin sending offers next week. The sooner a student can submit their application, the better their chance of securing a spot. Offers will continue going out on a rolling basis.
- The deadline for all residents in their first year (guarantee) is coming up on March 31st. Students who miss this deadline can still apply to be on the wait list.
- The St. George waitlist opened on March 1st. If a student applied and ranked us first, there is a good chance they will receive an offer.

Discussion

A student asked, for upper years, do offers go on a rolling basis? Jordan said that yes, they do. We receive cancellations throughout the summer. Even if spaces fill up initially, there is still a chance of receiving an offer.

STUDENT SURVEY PRESENTATION

Eliza Davies provided highlights from the 24-25 Chestnut Residence Student Experience Survey. The survey was available from November 20th to December 16th, 2024. The completion rate increased from 25-42% this year. Overall, the responses were positive, and room for improvement was identified.

Key insights include:

- 99% of residents know how to contact their Don, and 48% interact on a weekly basis. Only 2% said they never interact. Almost 100% are satisfied with their Don.
- For engagement with events, the highest rate of participation (36%) attended at least once a month. Only 11% of residents attended no events this semester.
- With respect to social connections, 51% felt supported and made some friends. 16% have no close friends but do not feel isolated. 3% say they have struggled. 1% feel isolated. There is room to make connections.



- At the Front Desk, 95% of residents receive services within 5 minutes. With respect to all metrics, 90% indicated satisfied, or very satisfied. We are looking at room for improvement with Managers.
- With respect to housekeeping in student rooms, over 90% were satisfied with the cleanliness, frequency, and friendliness of the staff. 50% of respondents are satisfied with the cleanliness of common areas.
- Students are satisfied with Security, indicating that staff are friendly (87%), attentive (89%), present (97%), and ensure safety (96%). Overall, residents found that Security ensure a good environment without students feeling 'over-policed'.
- With respect to Facilities and Building Maintenance, the level of satisfaction, apart from laundry, is high (85-96%). 38% indicated satisfaction with the availability of laundry machines. 161 students reached out to indicate broken or inefficient machines. This was not surprising, as we know this has been an ongoing concern. Having this data is helpful in moving forward.
- 93% of residents are satisfied with the speed and reliability of the Wi-Fi. Students are able to reach out to ResNet.
- With respect to common spaces, the Lookout, Urban Lounge, Study Commons are most used (51 – 78%). The least used space is the Wellness Room, as 90% do not use it monthly. We may need to revisit how this space is used. We are looking at future purchases for the gym, and we recognize that there are some things we cannot change (i.e. there are no windows)
- Residents are satisfied with the food stations in the Dining Commons (76-93%), apart from desserts. 61% agreed with being satisfied with the Access meal plan.
- 85% agreed living in residence supported academic success. 88% think it enhanced their university experience.

Discussion

A student commented that some residents who do not have an Unlimited meal plan sometimes stay in the Dining Commons in between meals to use less swipes. Staff commented that this may occur, still, but that next year we will not have the Access 10 plan. One concern has been getting back to Chestnut for lunch. Next year there will be planned portability. All the residents will have the same plan at Campus One, New College, Oak House, and Chestnut. Not all meals, however, will be 'portable' to those not at their home residence.

In reference to the level of interaction with Dons, a student asked, does the RLO see this as a problem? Staff commented that the vast majority of residents have regular interaction with their Don, and the level of satisfaction is high. Some students prefer to have less interaction. In the past, changes were made, and Dons were asked to have more structure with their connections, i.e. 'intentional conversations. We saw improvement when we made this change. A Don commented that they are asked to do semesterly 1:1s with each student on their floor. Upper years are satisfied with this, as they already know what they need. The experience may be different for first year residents vs. upper years.



A student commented about housekeeping, and asked, were there follow-up questions? Staff responded that there were more detailed questions, and a small number (single digits) of respondents identified:

- Vacuuming (in general) and washrooms are areas where students couldn't see a difference after cleaning was done.
- The fridge and microwave rooms were identified as needing more attention.
- Respondents indicated that, at times, scheduled cleanings were missed.
- Early morning cleanings could disturb their sleep if there is an 8am timeslot.

A student noted that there is a cleaning section where you find the maintenance request on StarPortal. They commented that it would be good to be informed when the cleaning day is switched and provide more information about what was cleaned. Staff responded that with respect to what is cleaned, this is updated on the website. The schedule changes on long weekends and is sometimes weather-dependent. Most changes are planned and posted ahead of time. This year, there was a poster made indicating what is cleaned. We can re-print this poster and put it up. We can also email affected students.

A student commented that residents are unsure what the Wellness Room is. They suggested that Dons can highlight this for residents. As it stands, students need to book the space to see what's inside. Staff commented that currently it is not highlighted in the tours, partly due to accessibility needs. We can be more intentional about highlighting the space, and how to use and book it. Posters can still be quite effective.

Staff highlighted that we are beginning the process of a revitalization project on the 28th floor. Focus Groups will take place during the week of March 10th. Students will have two opportunities to give feedback, in person. The wider resident population will be involved, likely by email and a short questionnaire. The scope is broad in terms of furniture and space usage. This could include outlets and other elements. The timeline would likely see changes for the following summer (2026).

RESIDENCE COUNCIL UPDATE

A representative of the Residence Council noted that there was a semi-formal event on March 1st at the Sheraton Centre Hotel. 160 guests showed up, and the event was very successful. There was the right number of people at the event, according to capacity. The Council will be looking at how to continue the success next year.

Nik Roberts-Stahlbrand, Student Life Programs Coordinator, is departing from Chestnut residence, on a secondment. A representative from the Council wanted to say thank you. They have done a great job, and Council members really appreciate everything they have done.

Discussion

A student commented that the Council may want to consider a new date for the semi-formal event, as reading week may have affected the ability of some to participate. A Council representative



responded that we will also want to consider the student schedules who are involved in the planning.

Staff suggested that, in the future, the Council could consider a joint event with other buildings within the Spaces and Experiences portfolio, such as Knox, which would be too small to host an event of this scale on its own.

OTHER BUSINESS

A resident commented about the printer in the lobby and noticed that some students are frustrated. Sometimes a lineup develops if someone does not use it properly. A step-by-step guide, along with clear labeling, would be helpful. Staff commented that we don't have 24/7 support for this. Staff commented that a question about the printer is something we may want to include in the next survey.

A student wanted to say thank you to the staff for everything they have done this year. They wanted to note that they have had a great experience in the building.

Staff wanted to thank residents for their participation. Opportunities to hear directly from students are very helpful. The ideas and suggestions help us to work things out. The time and insight have been wonderful.