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MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

Housing and Community Affairs (HCA) Meeting May 13th, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Present: Wendy Lam (HCA), Julia Nickel (HCA), Nan Gu (GSC), Alex Chan (GSC), Julie Valastyan (Eastgate), Jason McKnight (ResLife), Paul Monasterio (Tang), Daniel Macaya (SP), Rob Wang (GSC EECS rep), Ben Scandella (Tang), Mustafa Kara (Edgerton), Bonnie Lam (Ashdown), Caroline Cochran (GSC Off-campus rep)

Start time: 6:08 pm

1. Rent Monkey. Housing office is working on a new website – expected launch date is Sept/Oct. HCA is pushing the office to launch the off-campus section earlier (August) so that it's useful for people currently looking for housing. In the meantime, please help spread the word about Rent Monkey (<http://rentmonkey.mit.edu>) since it's already in place. Emailed grad-dorm-officers the pdf of the Rent Monkey flier so that they can be posted in dorms.
2. Introduction of new campus safety initiative. Safety subcommittee expected to take care of individual issues such as Eastgate safety desk. Suggestions for new subcommittee: New safety website on GSC website, hold information sessions and workshops, laptop registration during orientation good incentive for people to attend security event. **Please let HCA chairs now if interested in working in or chairing initiative.**
3. Community Outreach Initiative: Currently brainstorming project ideas that will have long-lasting impact on community and allow MIT students to use their talents. Invitation to brainstorm session/dinner with PSC and ARC on next Wednesday at 7pm, GSC office.
4. Transportation updates:
 - a) Rerouting of Boston shuttles will probably start in June.
 - b) HCA will not further look into the Grocery shuttle to Wholefoods. Service is provided by the Saferide shuttle on 7 nights a week.Julie: Eastgate has already tried approaching Market Basket, but MB was not receptive.

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c) Crowding on Tech Shuttles: will be addressed within larger data gathering effort on Tech Shuttle use in summer/September.

Julia will meet with Larry Brutti to discuss this. May not make sense to seek short term route changes right now, since demand is going down during the summer.

Next step- more thorough data collection effort during the semester.

Mustafa: could have just one stop b/n sp and ashdown? switch back and forth? Dan, Paul: Too confusing to do that.

Smeed's law (London transportation office)-- traffic in London will always be 9 miles/hr, no matter what improvements we make-- it's the slowest speed people are willing to put up with. Moral of the story: can increase load in mornings to serve more people, but will always get complaints about NW shuttles.

Julia- Spread out safefide to cover more of Inman/Cambridgeport, areas that are less

well served by MBTA, through reallocation of service.

Caroline- hard to get a grasp of who lives where. - Data from 2006 available, data from Rentmonkey- 3000 people have signed up.

5. Grad Student Dental Plan updates:

Wendy is working on a survey to be distributed to current subscribers and non-subscribers. Plan to run survey in the summer. Will have draft by next HCA meeting.

6. Open Floor:

Nan- How do people feel about Ashdown dining being shut down during the summer?

Dan- Possible to extend dining service in the Thirsty Ear? Carry out cafe instead?

Thirsty and Ashdown dining use the same cook. Could open TE earlier for dinner (for example, 7-8pm).

Rob: Need to know how much money they are losing already?

Wendy (to Bonnie)- Bring issue up at the next AHEC meeting. Conduct email survey of residents to see what the demand is on the dining program.

Paul: if only 100 out of 6000 grad students are going per night, that is nothing. Is there really that much pressure to do anything?

Dan: Chef has been very receptive to making changes (like extending service) but she has no say in these things.

Caroline- upcoming events for off-campus students: harpoon brewery tour and lunch. Attendance at last off-campus lunch was roughly 40. Not sure if off-campus email list

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is up to date. advertise in gsc anno and off-campus students facebook group.

Rob- Who's updating the registrar's list?

Caroline- Last time it was updated was almost 2 years ago (by Kevin McComber)

Rob- Need to keep pressuring the registrar to update. They won't do it on their own.

Meeting adjourned: 6:50 pm