RPI House Corporation Workshop

April 1, 2017

Sponsored by:
Rensselaer Alumni Association
Alumni InterGreek Council
Office of Greek Life Commons
Topics to Cover for House Corp

- Dr. SAJ meeting Jan 9th
  - EHS Life Safety and Sanitation Standards
    - Inspection Results
    - Relationship Statement Requirements
    - Greek Life Commons Agreement Requirements
  - Develop some kind of live-in requirement to raise occupancy rates
    - Before complain about lost revenues and occupancy of Summer Arch, improved current situation and perhaps offset with Soph and Sr year live-in mandate

- Student Life Performance Plan Goals/Actions
  - Annual and Longer term facility maintenance planning and executions
    - Develop House Corporation/Director manual
    - Get back on track for at least annual meetings
  - Re-assess the role of Pro-Formas and budgets for financial stability
  - Participate with definition of the concept of a student live-in advisor
    - Establish expectations for the suspension recovery requirement and perhaps a broader application like MIT has implemented
  - Review the Greek Life Commons Agreement and Relationship Statement
    - EHS is constantly ratcheting up the requirements and HC must agree to them, finding win-win aspects
FY17 Student Life Performance Plan

Strategy: Enhance support for fraternity and sorority members.

- Action 1 Review and revise the Greek Life Commons Agreement to strengthen support for CLASS, Title IX efforts and adherence to Institute policies. (Collaboration with General Counsel; FY17)
- Action 2 Develop relationships with inter/national fraternity and sorority headquarters. (FY17)
- Action 3 Conduct outreach with Rensselaer fraternity and sorority alumni/ae members. (Collaboration with Institute Advancement; FY17)
- Action 4 Ensure quality standards related to safety, security, cleanliness, and financial health of the Greek Commons are maintained. (Collaboration with Finance, Administration, Human Resources; FY17 – 18)
- Action 5 Develop and implement live-in student advisor positions for each Greek house. (FY17 – 19)

Are these still part of the SLPP now that Frank Ross has departed?
House Corporation Topics

- Review/reinvest in the Relationship Statement and Greek Life Commons Agreement
  - The expectations of the undergraduate, alumni, and RPI stakeholders
  - Review of EHS Life Safety Inspection Program
- Discuss impacts of Summer Arch on corporation housing financial operations
  - Live-in requirements and eligibility, budgeting for more fluctuations of membership, shift to year round operations, etc
GLCA Manual Markups

- **Dean Bielaska’s presentation**
  - Present this while Travis Apgar and Craig Cook are in attendance
  - The HCs are likely more interested and capable of asking and answering insurance related issues

- **Background History**
Commons Review Committee

- Chair: Meredith Bielaska, Associate Dean for Greek Life Commons
- Student Representatives:
  - Elizabeth Dinella, Alpha Omega Epsilon
  - Katie Todd, Pi Beta Phi
  - Aaron Harmon, Alpha Chi Rho
  - Ben Bowles, Sigma Phi Epsilon
- Alumni/Advisor Representatives:
  - Alex Pezzuoli, Alpha Chi Rho
  - Peter Liporace, Rensselaer Society of Engineers
  - Steve Wood, Sigma Alpha Epsilon
  - John McWilliam, Zeta Psi
- The Greek Life Commons Concept and “Agreement”
- General Comment Form:
  - https://rensselaerpolytechnicinstitute.formstack.com/forms/commons_review_general_comment_form
The Vision of Greek Life Commons

- The Greek Life Commons is a commitment to sustaining the legacy of leadership, service, education and personal excellence within the RPI Greek Community.
- As a diverse community of leaders, the Greek Life Commons will align all students, alumni, and community partners through selfless service, cooperative programming, and individual acts of character befitting the values and purpose of each organization and that of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.
- As a united Greek community, the Greek Life Commons will elevate members, chapters, and all of Rensselaer to the highest levels of excellence.
Original 2009 Opportunity Proposition

- Greek Life Commons Agreement: What is it?
  - Opportunity to be part of CLASS
  - Opportunity to be part of Sophomore Year Experience
  - Opportunity to have sophomore members reside in the house
  - Opportunity to participate in the design and development of the Greek Life Commons
  - Opportunity to receive special benefits
  - Opportunity to strengthen the Greek Life system as a living learning community
Original 2009 Opportunity Proposition

- Greek Life Commons Agreement: What is it not?
  - Not a policy mandate
  - Not required to sign
  - Not designed to change status of recognized chapters
  - Not penalized for failure to participate
    - (except sophomores can’t reside in the house)
Greek Life Integral to CLASS Initiative

- Clustered Learning, Advocacy, and Support for Students
  - “fostering your growth personally and professionally, and preparing you for meaningful impact in the world”
  - “cultivates an awareness of self, creating gateways to transformative experiences that will help you realize your potential.”
  - “our residential clustering model, which undergirds a transformative campus experience, and time-based clustering, which begins with the FYE and continues with developmentally appropriate experiences throughout the collegiate experience.”

- “A Network of Support” on all levels
- “Time Based Clustering” to support personal and academic needs
- “Residential Clustering” – with commons with “character and focus, and each harbors a small, tightly knit student community that blends the academic, social, and residential aspects of university life.”
- “Faculty Student Engagement” – to “provide and facilitate academic and experiential learning activities.”
The How’s and What’s of GLCA

A. To actively participate in CLASS program initiatives, including the Sophomore-Year Experience;

B. To actively participate in Faculty Deans programs focused on the stimulation of the intellectual, cultural, and social life of the Residential Commons;

C. To pro-actively respond to Assistant Dean outreach counseling and personal development initiatives;

D. To actively participate in Class Dean programs providing support for academic success, retention, and strong class affinity;

E. To actively participate in Greek Life Commons programs designed to strengthen Greek Life as a community;
The How’s and What’s of GLCA

F. To ensure that the standards of quality of the living environment in the fraternity or sorority, with regard to upkeep and maintenance, meets the Institute Residential Commons Standards (which may exceed the baseline City of Troy codes and standards).

G. To participate in an annual review of the Commons Agreement as an extension of existing annual reviews with the understanding that the focus is on ensuring that all compliance requirements, standards of housing living quality, and active participation in the CLASS program initiatives are being adhered to.

H. The signatories to this Greek Life Commons Agreement acknowledge that they recognize and understand that, where appropriate, this Agreement necessarily supersedes some of the terms of the “Statement of Relationship Between Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Social Fraternities & Sororities at Rensselaer,” and they not only agree to be bound by the terms of this Agreement but re-affirm their adherence to and support of said Statement of Relationship.
EHS Life Safety Inspection Program

- Modeled after the NY State Code, which was updated/revised in 2015
Natural cut trees are not a hazard. 

Flammable materials are limited to not more than 10% of the corridor wall or room area.

Outside storage of combustible materials is not less than 10 feet away if it exceeds 6 feet in height.

Precautions

Risk Manager Session (Annual) Documentation

Fire Extinguisher Inspection (Annual) Documentation

Doors shall be readily operable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.

Egress

Storage of clothing and personal belongings in corridors and lobbies is compliant.

Door(s) requiring closers are not rendered inoperable by removal of the closer or the installation of any YES automatic hold open device.

Fire safety and evacuation plans are in place.

Planning

Boiler Inspection (2-Years) Documentation

Sanitary conditions maintained, exterior.

Sanitary

Exit signs shall be clearly marked. Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to indicate clearly the direction of egress when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more.

Egress

Outlet, switch, junction-boxes and wire splices are covered.

Building

Relocatable power taps are polarized or grounded and equipped with over current protection.

Overall 228 findings/deficiencies/violations in Fall 2016.

But counted multiple findings in each category.

Most were similar to those presented at Fall 2015 AIGC general meeting.

Link to the full Fall 2016 spreadsheet.

House Corporation Workshop - April 1, 2017

Life Safety & Sanitation Inspections
Top Ten EHS Findings/Deficiencies

1. Outlet, switch, junction-boxes and wire splices not covered (42)
2. Exit ways not provided with emergency lighting (22)
3. Improper use of extension cords, not a substitute for permanent wiring (18)
4. Sanitary conditions not maintained, interior (14)
5. Central Fire Alarm System not maintained or undocumented (Annual, 3rd party monitoring) (13)
6. Combustible waste material creating a fire hazard accumulated in building spaces or on premises (11)
7. Candles, incense and similar open flame producing items (10)
8. Indications of smoking in prohibited areas (9)
9. Portable fire extinguishers are missing or improperly installed on hangers or brackets (9)
10. Inadequate or undocumented Kitchen Hood Cleaning (Annual) (8)

House Corporation Workshop - April 1, 2017
### Fall 2015 Top Ten Findings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tr>
<td>BLDG</td>
<td>Outlet, switch, junction-boxes and wire splices are covered</td>
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<tr>
<td>PREV</td>
<td>Combustible waste material creating a fire hazard shall not be allowed to accumulate in buildings or upon premises</td>
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<tr>
<td>EGRS</td>
<td>Exit ways are provided with emergency lighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLDG</td>
<td>Extension cords are properly used and are not a substitute for permanent wiring</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREV</td>
<td>Combustible materials are not stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical equipment rooms</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLDG</td>
<td>Carbon Monoxide detectors present in required spaces</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTNC</td>
<td>Sanitary conditions maintained, interior</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCU</td>
<td>Fire Extinguisher Inspection (Montly, House Risk Manager or designee)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROT</td>
<td>Hand held portable fire extinguishers are installed on hangers or brackets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCU</td>
<td>Fire Drill (Twice per Academic Year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FURN</td>
<td>Curtains, drapes, hangings and other decorative materials hanging from walls or ceilings shall be flame resistant</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Suggestions to improve the program

- Provide this information in the annual Greek Life report.
- RPI Provide a Fire Drill guideline and reporting template
- RPI ensure the NY State Code checklist items are properly referenced and applicable to Fraternities/Sororities
- Better representation of the data and follow up
  - Can be a key information set for SO and NRB and Fall recruitment, esp. if we are forced to get more sophomores to live in to make up for loss of Juniors
  - Can help chapters get alumni support for house corporations and better maintenance planning for facility
  - Have in indication of severity like used in the Campus Owned facilities (see LXA report)
- Add Occupancy Ratings and living in demographics (including breakdown by class year so we can see trends)
  - Also perhaps note if have mandatory
- Ensure the Chapter Advisors and House Corporations get the inspection reports, as well as Dean of GLC
  - OGLC Dean could place into the chapter Google drive for Archive of Records as required by the Relationship Statement
- Others?
Contractors BBB List

- Build from old ones we used to have
- Have RPI again provide their preferred contractors like they did in 2011
  - Make like old MIT FSILG Vendor List
Drafting a House Director/House Corporation Guide Manual

- We’ve attempted a draft of sorts before
  - Jay Webb (Zeta Psi, AIGC) created a huge resource of contractual and operations training guides in January 2005 and had proposed training, then relations began to degrade to penultimate moment of April 2016
- Other schools have a good templates (as we saw with Chapter Advisor Manuals)
  - UVA
  - WPI
HMG

HOUSE MANAGER GUIDE

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More resources available at www.virginia.edu/fsl
Chapter Facility Management Manual
Jay Webb’s Training Material

- Purpose of Guidelines
- Notice Concerning Liability
- Emergency Planning and Preparedness
- Fire Alarm Systems
- Exit Route Diagrams
- Emergency Evacuation Drills
- Marking Means of Egress (Exit Signs)
- Egress Illumination (Emergency Lights)
- Portable Fire Extinguishers
- Cooking Exhaust Hoods
- Fire Related Construction
- General Safety
- Food Service Sanitation
- Vermin Control
- Automatic Sprinklers

Guidelines
For conformance with

Codes and Regulations Relating To
Safety, Fire Protection & Sanitation
In Rensselaer Greek Housing

Prepared by
The Alumni Inter-Greek Council (AIGC)

Jay Webb ‘61
VP- Safety, Fire Protection and Sanitation
203-483-7090
jwebb02@snet.net

With the 2006 “New Directions” and CLASS we never got to implement the training or publish this resource
Summer Arch Issues/Impact

- Juniors can’t live in houses during the summer
  - Can other students if other students will be taking classes?
  - Does RPI have the right to do this?
- AIGC Position Statement from Spring 2016
  - Despite provided it and other issues concerns lists to RPI several times
  - No official comment back, so ignored them and continued premise all
    Juniors must live on campus and other concerns are not of merit (kind of
    like the hockey coach search advice from alumni)

- Planning budgets for more transient numbers so go to
  semester to semester finances
  - Pro Forma gets messy as well and budgeting
  - Bursar billing will need to be more flexible
Summer Arch Impact Whitepaper

- Issue #1 – Personal Impact on Students If Required To Live In Approved On-Campus Dormitory Spaces During the Summer Academic Term
- Issue #2 - Not Allowing Rising Juniors to Live In Their Greek Houses Is a Violation of the Greek Life Commons Agreement
- Issue #3 - Financial Impact on Greek Organizations Can Be Significant
- Issue #4 - Financial Impact to Students and Families
- Issue #5 - Potential Impact on Effective Operations in Greek Organizations, Especially Those Having Chapter Houses, Including Chapter House Condition and Neighbor Relations
- Issue #6 - Potential Impact on Leadership Opportunities for All Students
- Issue #7 - Disparate Treatment of Greeks
- Issue #8 - Potential Impact on Recruitment and Size of Greek Chapters
- Issue #9 - Landlord Practices May Encourage Living in Apartments
- Issue #10 - No Summer Programming Developed to Support Need for All Students to Live On Campus During Arch Summer
- Issue #11 - Potential Impact on Mental Health of Students
- Issue #12 - Lack of Availability of Sequential Academic Courses
- Issue #13 - Minimal Placement Assistance for Out of Sequence Job Opportunities
- Issue #14 - Lack of Choice for Students Who Simply Don’t Want to Participate

Link to full whitepaper
## Financial Scenario: Large Chapter

### Now With Arch

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<th>Live In</th>
<th>Live Out</th>
<th>Off Books</th>
<th>Live In</th>
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### Total

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<th>Now</th>
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### Annual Fees

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<th>Shortfall</th>
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### Delta

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### Shortfall

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<th>Arch – Soph Mandatory Live In</th>
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## Financial Scenario: Small Chapter

### Now vs. With Arch

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<th>Live Out</th>
<th>Off Books</th>
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### Annual Fees

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Issue of Live-in Requirement to offset loss of Juniors

- Dr. SAJ suggested with biggest class sizes, chapters should naturally grow to be bigger to offset loss of juniors.
- Coupled with the premise that chapters can easily become larger in membership, Dr. SAJ suggested that since houses aren’t filled to capacity now, perhaps a live-in requirement should be imposed to have all sophomores and seniors live in if there are beds available and have fewer juniors living in because they’ll be in Dorms for the summer and away for a normal semester.
- What to folks think about these suggestions?
- Dean Bielaska asked for Housing room and capacity numbers to put into StarRez for Bursar Billing efficiencies this spring.
  - Did everyone get her the information? Did you know you needed to provide that information and why RPI wanted it?
Relationship Statement
Reinvestment

- Same slides as for Chapter Advisors
- May not need for House Corps as the GLCA manual review/revision is just presented by Dean Bielaska with the aspects HC may care most well.
Other topics for future meetings

- Workshops with details on:
  - Budgeting
  - Planning annual maintenance and bigger projects
  - Maintenance types: Preventative, Generic Repairs, Remodeling
  - Maintaining Life Safety and Sanitation Standards (to also help with improvements in EHS inspections)
  - Kitchen operations
  - House rules
  - Best practices
  - Keeping records for inspection and future planning
  - The role of the undergraduates in sustaining the micro-society and living standards
PRACTICING FIRE SAFETY
Fire Safety

- Video of dorm fire and Slides of common causes
- Recent Known Close Calls on Campus
  - Sigma Alpha Epsilon Boiler Overheated due to faulty water supply – heat alarm called out fire dept
  - Alpha Sigma Phi – gas leak
Top Eleven Fire Safety Tips

1. Install smoke detectors!

2. Plan to escape a chapter house fire before it occurs.

3. Designate areas outside the chapter house for cigarette smokers.

4. Prohibit unauthorized/untrained individuals from using the kitchen.

5. Eliminate (or restrict) space heaters in the chapter house.
Top Eleven Fire Safety Tips

6. Control and monitor the electrical load. *Many chapter houses are older and cannot handle all the Brothers’ CD players, TVs, VCRs, computers, printers, telephones, etc.*

7. Post emergency numbers next to all phones.

8. If you are caught in a fire, **STAY LOW!** Smoke and poisonous gases rise with heat.
Top Eleven Fire Safety Tips

9. If you catch on fire, **STOP, DROP, and ROLL**. Remain calm, drop to the ground, cover your eyes, and roll on the ground to smother the flames.

10. Keep all fire doors in the chapter house shut. They are useless as a fire barrier if left open.

11. **Keep the chapter house clean!** Excess rubbish only increases the combustible material within the chapter house.
JR Favor Promotional Material

- RIT School insurance
  - https://www.rit.edu/fa/grms/content/fraternity-and-sorority-insurance-requirements#
- PhiGam Kirklin – now Holmes Murphy