

Student Assembly Residence and Community Life Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 26, 2013

4:30-5:30 PM

146 Goldwin Smith Hall

- Meeting Attendees
 - Committee Members: Elsie Liaros, Elaine Lin, Rebecca Sharma, Nick Vasko
 - RA Representatives: Rachel Carleton (Townhouses), Hannah McGough (Townhouses), Jacob Ritter (Dickson/McLLU)
- Discussion/Feedback – RA Training and RA experience
 - Structure of Training
 - 6-7 day long process, 12 hours/day
 - Run by RHDs
 - Summer training, Winter training (2 days, for newly appointed mid-year RAs who will cover for those abroad, etc.), Training session (half day, in winter, lecture focus on one topic like hazing)
 - Activities: Lectures, Group Building Projects, Behind Closed Doors (role playing), In Service (work with in-house people)
 - Themes: Program building, Conflict resolution
 - Feedback
 - Length of Training – feels dauntingly long, overwhelming, starts very early in the day
 - Lectures – boring because same topic for hours, lots of facts and figures so hard to retain information, just being talked at is not effective
 - Group Building Projects – helpful, got to know other RAs, reinforce topics just learned
 - Behind Closed Doors – really effective, interactive, most useful, people loved it, no one gets to open every door (role play options) so may miss out on learning how to handle particular situations (i.e. emotional dilemmas, excessive partier, etc.)
 - In Service – mostly ice breakers so boring
 - Major Pros
 - Interactive activities (Behind Closed Doors and group projects)
 - Bias Incident training
 - Major Cons
 - Retention of information from lectures
 - Need better balance between interactive and lecture based activities
 - Do not know anything about RHD training

- Need more time between end of training and residents showing up (not enough time to do all the technical and maintenance stuff to prepare residential hall for residents)
- Not much focus on transfer student residents
- RA Program's stance on Greek life is ambiguous and not touched upon
- FUN Sessions (large group icebreakers with other RAs before meals) takes up a lot of time
- Cohort Groups (groups of 5-10 RAs from different residential halls) are also allocated time for icebreakers, which takes up a lot of time
- Spend more time on how to file bias incident report
- Option of summer online pre-training
 - No one will want to do this because already coming to Cornell early and have a lot to do after training
- Current Feedback Surveys
 - Most feedback is vocal and done throughout training
- Suggestions
 - Use In Service time to focus on/reiterate topics learned that day
 - Disburse and increase role playing throughout the week
 - Use lectures to learn basics and then go right into interactive activity to really delve into topic
 - Cut all the ice breakers and use extra time towards more interactive activities and/or more hall preparation time
 - Provide better incentives (i.e. fun prizes for notable RAs), currently just an email sent out with names of RA award winners
 - Train RAs on how to talk to residents once they decide to join Greek life
 - RHD need to spend more time learning how to communicate with new RAs (What do you expect from me? Here is what I expect from you.)
 - Cut FUN Sessions and Cohort Group time, do group projects in cohort groups
 - Switch up members of cohort groups each day so get to know more RAs
 - In-Hall Time (not part of official training) be used to reinforce particular needs of residential hall (i.e. needs of program houses differ from needs of townhouses)
 - Include brief "How to Help New RAs" session for returners
 - Allow current RAs some input in the planning of training
- Next meeting: Tuesday, April 2 @ 4:30 PM (146 Goldwin Smith Hall)