

Report of the Vice-Provost, Students to the University Affairs Board, Report # 1 (2003-04)

Task Force on Student Housing - The Task Force on Student Housing was formed by Vice-President and Provost Shirley Neuman in January 2003 and is chaired by David Farrar, Vice-Provost, Students. Between January and May, the Task Force met eight times. At its first meeting the committee reviewed the terms of reference. At the second meeting there were three presentations. The third meeting focussed on a discussion of student life issues. Throughout the following five meetings, the committee discussed the formulation of policies for student housing.

In May, the Task Force broke out into three subcommittees to discuss specific aspects of the strategy for student housing. One subcommittee discussed the policies and principles that should govern student housing. A second subcommittee discussed creation of the Student Housing Advisory Committee. The third subcommittee formulated a program of residence expansion. A final report will be presented to UAB in the near future.

Responding to the Double Cohort -

(a) Housing the incoming class

The University opened four new residences this month: New College Residence (277 students), 89 Chestnut (1,100 students), UTM residence (197 students), and UTSC residence (230) students. We are continuing to create more residence space in light of future enrolment projections. The University's residence staff training program has been expanded with a particular emphasis on the needs of our younger students.

(b) Orientation and transition

One of the recommendations of the Task Force on Orientation and Transition was increased coordination of orientation activities and more training for orientation coordinators. A report on those activities is contained in the following section. Recommendations on academic transition, learning cohorts, first year programs and other academic support projects will be developed in the context of the Provost's White Paper.

(c) Alcohol policy

Emphasis on alcohol at events for students has been reduced, starting with the orientation activities just completed. Our residence life training sessions have included an increased attention to alcohol education.

(d) Child care

The Early Learning Centre at 7 Glen Morris Street opened in August. In September, the University opened a George Brown College-run centre at 35 Charles Street.

Orientation Activities - This year, under the organization of Student Affairs and in response to the Task Force on Orientation, the orientation co-ordinators from most colleges, Engineering, SAC and the UTM Commerce Society met on a regular basis and received training regarding orientation activities.

Meetings covered:

- Goals of orientation and the Task Force Report
- Discussion around divisional events and SAC Day
- Inter-divisional event planning, including club night and baseball game
- "U of T Time." establishing open-house visits to student services and student groups
- Leader training techniques
- Setting limits to inter-divisional rivalry
- The Ask First campaign for sexual assault prevention
- Orientation website development
- Incorporating 89 Chestnut students into orientation
- Reports throughout the summer on divisional activities and planning progress

Training covered:

- Event planning and logistics
- Risk management, safety and alcohol
- Equity issues
- Logistics, including budgeting, leader training, registration, space management, volunteer management, etc.
- As this was concurrent with the "New U" student leader training, co-ordinators were also able to attend sessions such as team-building, sponsorship, leadership, volunteer management, media relations, etc.

Bringing together divisional co-ordinators, SAC and the university administration on a regular basis prior to September orientation has proven to be an extremely fruitful venture. Next year, we plan to begin the co-ordinators' meetings at an earlier date, preferably around February or March.