

**Name of Meeting:** SCAPE Meeting

**Date of Meeting:** 12/2/11

**Committee Members:**

- Morgan Levy
- Palida Noor
- Tess Petersen
- Clay Monson
- Andrea Golden
- Alicia Lewis
- Kaitlin Organisciak
- Caitlyn Behmlander
- Melissia Schmidt
- Dana Perrin

**Morgan:** Email about food choices

- The subcommittee that came up with food choices to be served at events with alcohol being served have a list currently, but we'd like them to put together a guide to be posted to the Event Registration website and to start being enforced starting in January.
- We will continue to reassess and see how people are doing it, etc.

**Next topic of discussion:** Dandelion Day Recommendations for Dean Burns

We have two major goals:

1. Fewer alcohol related issues, damages, etc.
2. Making the event more inclusive to those who either choose to not participate at all, leave campus or recreate their own versions of Dandelion Day elsewhere.

Other goals:

- Consistent policies for open containers.
- Work on more effectively using Security.
- Make the open container policies crystal clear to students.
- Having groups like CAB and Athletics put together programming for the day.
- Connect with Fraternities and Sororities directly to discuss what they believe will make the event a success, talk to Monica and John as well.

**Morgan:** Dean Burns as already made clear that he will be advocating for us to get additional funds for Dandelion Day, as it is necessary that a real transformation takes place from what it has turned into over the years. We discussed what we thought would be best for our community, and with more solid ideas we are more able to get the support we need, monetarily and otherwise.

**Morgan:** Right now, we should be focusing on our plans for this year, and doing our best to de-emphasize the role that alcohol plays in the tradition this coming April. As for long-term plans, that isn't necessarily SCAPE's responsibility and should not take away from our more narrow focus on the here and now.

- **Clay:** So who is going to create that long-term plan? There are many groups that can potentially play a role in the event, though claim that such planning is not their responsibility.
- **Morgan:** That's a good point.
- **Alicia:** That's why I'm here, replacing Lydia from WCSA and as the CAB advisor.
- In recent years, the consideration has always been, do we go forward with this event or not? And we always end up backing down and going ahead with it. The truth is that even through any kind of transformation, people will still recall what it used to be like and many may grab onto that past idea, which makes such change more challenging. What we need is a full-on cultural shift.
- **Alicia:** We do have meetings leading up to Dandelion Day about planning and what happened in the previous year and what we want to see be different in the current year—those exist and will occur in the coming months.

As a University, we need to make a 3, 4, or 5-year commitment to this change, not only looking at what is happening this year. We start implementing changes to the organization of the event, collect data, feedback, etc. and then see what happens over time in terms of acceptance by students, etc.

- On the other hand, when you are trying to implement an entire cultural shift, like the one we all would eventually like to see, gradual changes might be more effective than something more severe. It's more feasible to do things more gradually, more attainable.
- **Morgan:** But sometimes an abrupt change can make all the difference! What does "abrupt" versus "gradual" actually mean in this discussion?
- What about the "No second chance" policy?
  - **Morgan:** We're not taking away second chance and there is not going to be any change to the alcohol policy. I think it may be abrupt. Saying that you can't have open containers of alcohol, which has always been our policy, will be abrupt to some because its enforcement will be substantially reinforced this year. It's not about changing policy, it's about changing enforcement.
- **Melissia:** This has been the same discussion we've been having for the past 11 years. It's about enforcement, and the continuing message we are sending to change the culture. In the past, there was next to no professional staff support, only representatives from WCSA, ResLife, and the various Security officers. But having other staff members that are willing to come to campus and **set an example** will be paramount in supporting the deep cultural change we want! The message has to come from above and be in conjunction with staff. In the past, great plans were put in place, but few student workers who said they'd attend would show up and those who did were intoxicated.

**Morgan:** Maybe we can ask the band that's coming to judge a battle of the bands. That might motivate people to be sober if someone with a recording contract is evaluating their music...

- **Melissia:** You can try it, though I wouldn't bank on it; it's definitely a possibility, though. I'm just trying to give you a clearer view of how things have gone in the past and what the challenges are that we've had for some time.

Student buy-in is still very important. Students don't want to lose D-day, so there is motivation.

- **Morgan:** But is that all we can do? Say "Do it well or it's never going to happen again?" I don't really see that working. I believe there must be another way to engage students...
- **Clay:** We need to find a way to address this positively, because it's not like canceling the event will stop students from finding a way to celebrate. Seniors are not going to just give up their last Dandelion Day, nor would juniors likely give up their second-to-last one. There need to be viable options for the day that are not alcohol-related, though we still need to play off of what is currently here. Have performing groups go head-to-head in competitions, find a way to engage students so that Dandelion Day doesn't have to start with a beer in the shower.

Think back to your freshman year...how did you find out about Dandelion Day and the expectations, etc?

- Upper-classmen students are definitely a major influence. With comments like "this is what it has always looked like," these students have the power to hype up the event to freshmen and draw them into the culture.

**Alicia:** When I worked at University of Southern California, their Halloween weekend was ranked by Rolling Stone as one of the top places to party. The University didn't like that and since their Security resources were not effective enough, they brought in hundreds of policemen on horseback and made substantial changes in my first year. By the third year, it was better. Maybe that's something we need to consider, bringing in outside help beyond the resources that we typically have at our disposal.

Consider a standardization of containers. Is it possible to suspend all types of containers on campus other than bottles of water donated by Coke?

**Case in point:** Staff support is a necessity for making the changes we want to see, though at the end of the day, the students are the ones responsible for making the changes stick indefinitely.

- **Clay:** But remember, that even though it seems this way today, this tradition is not only about students. Faculty and staff were at some point as much a part of Dandelion Day as students are. However, their culture became one of giving up and distancing themselves from the event entirely. While I agree students will play a key role in making the change, the faculty and staff's culture is one that needs some editing as well.
- **Melissia:** We also need to think about the influence of Alumni! Considering the fact that many of them come back to campus on Dandelion Day to relive their "glory days" puts a big damper on our ability to make the changes we want! The Admissions Office has always argued that they should be here, but I think a deeper discussion of this issue should take place.
- **Morgan:** Maybe we can send an email in advance to alumni through Alumni Relations telling them not to come for the purpose of getting intoxicated like you did 20 years ago.

**Alicia:** You can have Dandelion Day on the last day of classes. Have the band start in the evening, maybe around 7PM. It's possible that people could arrive after drinking, though the chances of that in comparison to the current set up are much slimmer. Faculty and staff will already be here, so their help would be more easily accessible. We can have food, maybe a Yellow jacket kind of carnival set up and just switch it up. If things go well, then it's possible in future years to move it back to Saturday.

- **Clay:** What happens if students just decide to have another day of celebration? What resources would we have to combat that?
- **Alicia:** Maybe we do need to have more Security on the Saturday of the first year that the date change happens, but over time that'll get easier.
- **Morgan:** In my experiences previously, when traditions such as this one were changed, students claimed that they'd still participate in the way that the event used to take place, but most didn't bother.
- What are the considerations if we were to make this day change?
  - Would we be able to get a band for a Tuesday night?
  - Would CAB have adequate time to set things up and get prepared?
  - None of this is unreasonable; it would just require some new efforts.

There's so much talent here at UR. Would students have the respect to have their student groups perform on Dandelion Day and the discipline to not have open containers? There has to be a better way to everyone's benefit.

If we were to survey students, freshmen to seniors, I would imagine that most people would say they prefer Saturday over a weekday.

- **Alicia:** But this doesn't mean we can never move it back. For the change to happen and stick, taking the celebration out of its standard context has a better chance of being successful than keeping it on the Saturday.

Another issue is pre-gaming, one that has continuously come up across the board, from on-campus events to off-campus bar parties. If we suspend open containers outside, then pre-gaming would likely shoot through the roof...it would focus the drinking in rooms, and as a Resident Advisor, that can make us nervous. This can potentially be more detrimental to the student body in the end, considering the staffing, the state of bathrooms, decorations in the dorms, etc.

**Morgan:** I think moving Dandelion Day to Tuesday would be the most successful way to make an effective change.

- **Alicia:** Keep in mind, regardless of the day, we still need the financial and staff support, perhaps even more so on a Tuesday, because we'll want to put as much into making the weekday transformative as possible.