

## **2017-2018 Task Force on the Relationship between the University and the Eating Clubs Final Report**

### **Introduction**

During the 2009-2010 academic year, a task force convened to review the relationships between the University and the eating clubs and to, as stated in the charge, “examine whether there were steps that could and should be taken to strengthen those relationships for the mutual benefit of the clubs and the University, and for the benefit of Princeton students and the undergraduate experience.”

The recommendations from this task force resulted in changes to policies and practices, as well as new initiatives that have ultimately enhanced the undergraduate student experience (a summary of the recommendations is available in Appendix A). The relationship between the University and the clubs has continued to strengthen through increased collaboration, communication, and monthly meetings between the Interclub Council (ICC) leadership, the Graduate Interclub Council (GICC) chair, a sign-in club chair, the GICC and ICC advisors, and University administrators.

Since the earlier task force report issued in 2010, the demographics of the student body have changed substantially (e.g., 22 percent of the Class of 2021 is eligible for Pell grants for low-income students compared with 7 percent in the Class of 2008) and the University engaged in a campus-wide strategic planning process that identified major strategic priorities, including expanding the undergraduate class size, enhancing socioeconomic diversity, and attracting and supporting talented people from all groups and backgrounds. With this changing landscape in mind and the timing of the comprehensive review of the University board plan, it is an opportune time to take another strategic look at the relationship between the University and the eating clubs.

### **Charge to the Task Force**

A new task force on the relationship between the University and the eating clubs was assembled in 2017 and charged with:

- Reviewing the outcomes that stemmed from the recommendations of the 2009-2010 task force to determine if particular recommendations require further attention and/or different responses at this time.
- Considering additional steps to ensure that the clubs are inclusive, that they contribute in positive ways to the undergraduate student experience, and that their memberships reflect the increasingly diverse student body.
- Identifying how the eating clubs might help to achieve the University’s long-term goals for the undergraduate residential experience, especially as they relate to dining, co-curricular opportunities, and creating community.

## **Composition and Work of the Task Force**

The 2017-2018 task force included 19 people – seven undergraduate students, three representatives from eating club graduate boards, and nine staff members (three of whom are alumni). A full roster for the task force can be found in Appendix B.

The task force met 7 times between November and May, and exchanged ideas and feedback between meetings. During the course of these meetings, the task force welcomed a number of guests with subject matter expertise:

- Vice President of University Services Chad Klaus shared and solicited feedback from the task force on proposed changes to the University board plan (input from the task force helped refine some of the recommendations, which continue to be shaped by conversations with the campus community).
- Vice Provost for Institutional Research Jed Marsh joined the group to review:
  - Aggregate eating club demographic data for the Class of 2011 through the Class of 2017 by academic division, gender, federal race/ethnicity, parent contribution to Princeton, first generation to college students, Princeton legacy status, and for recruited athletes, as compared to all students, students with dining plans, and students who are independent or without a dining contract.
  - University survey data for the Class of 2014 through the Class of 2017 to understand the movement of students among the different dining options.
  - Student experience data for seniors in eating clubs, as compared to other dining choices.
- Director of Studies Rashidah Andrews and Deputy Dean of Undergraduate Students Tom Dunne attended a task force meeting to present the preliminary findings and recommendations from the Committee on the Sophomore Experience, which was convened to better understand the sophomore experience and how best to extend the horizon of successful transitions at Princeton beyond the first year.
- Dean of Admission Janet Rapelye shared trend data on the composition of the entering classes, and also provided ideas for how the clubs could support and participate more fully in the Princeton Preview programs for admitted students.

The task force also had in-depth discussions on important topics that ranged from financial aid to the admission and selection of eating club members. In addition, the task force considered whether recommendations from the 2010 Task Force on the Relationship between the University and the Eating Clubs required additional attention at this time.

## **Vision and Guiding Principles**

To guide the recommendations and the work ahead, the task force articulated a vision and guiding principles.

### ***Vision***

*Princeton University and the eating clubs, working together, strive to provide all undergraduates with experiences that contribute to a campus social life that is vibrant, accessible and inclusive; help to create a sense of connectedness, belonging and community; and enhance the overall Princeton experience.*

### ***Guiding Principles***

- *While independent from each other, the University and the eating club leadership (graduate and undergraduate) will continue to nurture an interdependent relationship that is ongoing, cohesive, reciprocal, transparent and candid.*
- *Regular communication and the sharing of information between the University and the eating clubs will increase trust and opportunities for creating more vibrant experiences for undergraduate students.*
- *It is important that our shared values around diversity and inclusion be embedded in the full range of dining and social options; this requires not only that students have access to all of these options, but that each of them is truly welcoming and viable for students of all backgrounds.*
- *For many students satisfaction will be maximized if they are able to benefit from associations with both the eating clubs and the residential colleges; for all students, the campus climate will be more welcoming if there is a higher degree of collaboration and complementarity between the colleges and the eating clubs.*
- *It is important that students who choose not to join an eating club have access to other dining and social options that meet their needs, and that are viewed as viable and appealing choices.*
- *The dining, social, service, and community experiences that the eating clubs provide are valued by many students, and are the reason that many alumni stay connected with their eating club long after graduation; it is important that all students be aware of the opportunities available to them in the eating clubs and have access to the resources needed to elect this option if they wish to do so.*
- *We applaud existing efforts and encourage further steps to instill a sense of responsibility in eating club members for health, safety and well-being so that they view themselves as “community caretakers.”*

- *It is critical that the eating club system continue to include open clubs that students can join without having to participate in a selection process.*
- *Fluidity among the different dining and social options is important for community connectedness and shared experience.*

## **Recommendations**

In response to the charge, and considering all of the findings and conversations to date, the task force offers a number of recommendations in the areas of diversity, inclusion, and community; health, safety, and well-being; communication; and eating club costs and potential partnerships.

### **Diversity, Inclusion, and Community**

- Review the demographics of the eating clubs on an annual basis as part of a continuing effort to ensure that the clubs are diverse, inclusive, and welcoming to students from all backgrounds.
- Develop partnerships between the eating clubs and the dean for diversity and inclusion, the LGBT Center, the Carl A. Fields Center, and the Women's Center to help the clubs to recruit and support a diverse student population, and to promote a culture of inclusion.
- Align and embrace University and eating club values around equity, inclusion, respect for others, and service.
- Increase the number of social opportunities (with and without alcohol) for students on and off-campus that are sponsored by the University or by student organizations other than the eating clubs.

### **Health, Safety, and Well-Being**

- Continue, enhance, and potentially expand existing programs through SHARE and other offices to provide training for eating club officers and members, as part of a larger effort to address concerns about sexual misconduct, alcohol abuse, safety, and health and wellbeing, including expanded programming on mental health.
- Explore ways to improve the eating club selection process (e.g., requiring prospective club members to rank all of the clubs, condensing the admission process to a single week, decreasing the role of prior affiliations in the selection process, etc.), so that more students who want to join a club can do so, and to reduce the anxiety and stress that many students associate with the current selection process, while recognizing that the process has been improved since the time of the previous task force.
- Continue to improve alcohol and safety policies at the eating clubs, while positively referencing and endorsing the eating clubs' joint statement of principles that was adopted earlier this year (<http://princetoneatingclubs.org/statement-of-principles>).
- Expand the engagement of peer leaders (e.g., peer health advisors, SHARE peers, etc.) in and with the eating clubs to foster an environment that is healthy and safe.

## **Communication**

- Increase transparency and clarity (by the eating clubs and the University) about the policies, practices, procedures, composition, costs, and nature of the eating clubs for both current and prospective Princeton students through coordinated and improved communications and events that are open to non-members, perhaps as early as Princeton Preview and Orientation; do the same for other dining options, including residential college membership in junior and senior years, co-ops, and independence.
- Be more transparent about the ways in which students can meet the costs of joining an eating club, including University financial aid that offsets a significant portion of the costs; access to borrowing at favorable rates; and in some cases access to the financial support that some eating clubs provide to students.
- Continue the strong relationship and communication among the University, students in the eating clubs, and the graduate boards of the eating clubs, including regular University interaction with the Interclub Council and the Graduate Interclub Council. Add an additional student voice to these regular meetings through a representative from the Undergraduate Student Government (USG).
- Increase communication and engagement with eating club employees, as these individuals are well-positioned to support initiatives and students.

## **Eating Club Costs and Potential Partnerships**

- Continue to explore ways to reduce eating club charges by reducing eating club costs (as has been done recently with respect to insurance costs); these initiatives may include joint purchasing; arrangements that reduce eating club meal expenses by allowing eating club members to eat some meals (e.g., breakfasts, Sunday dinners) at the residential colleges; and perhaps some shared programming with the residential colleges.
- Consider ways to reduce club-related charges for sophomores by some combination of reducing the number of sophomore meals at the eating clubs, adjusting the University credit for sophomore meals at the eating clubs, or in other ways.
- Explore possible synergistic relationships between the eating clubs and the residential colleges, potentially to the benefit of both the colleges and the eating clubs (as well as to students), as well as between the eating clubs themselves.
- Consider other possible programmatic relationships between the University and the eating clubs that are open to all students on a sign-in basis, recognizing the benefits of having eating clubs within the overall eating club system that students can join without having to participate in a selection process.

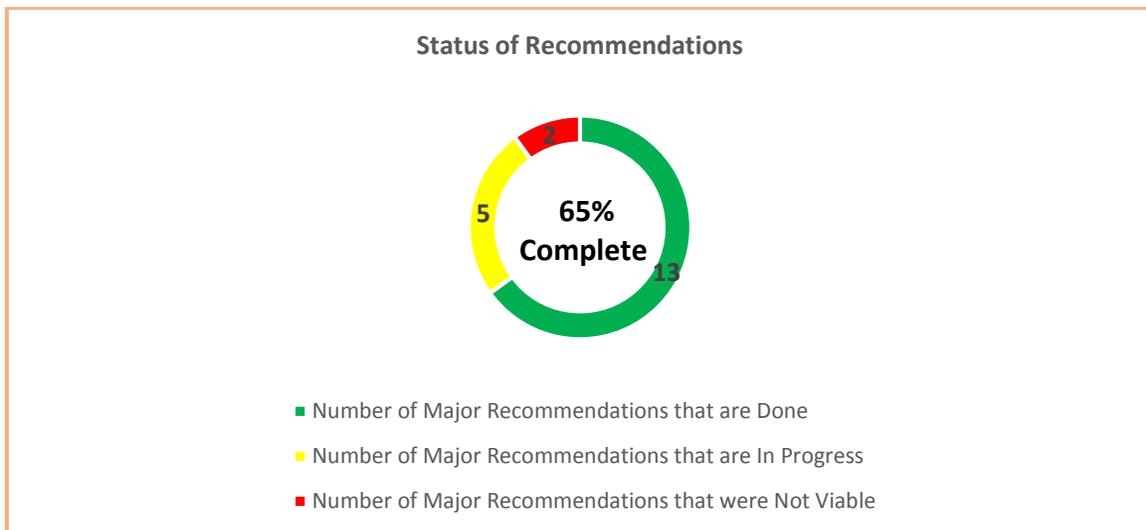
Further development and implementation of these recommendations will be the responsibility of the University/eating club group that meets on a monthly basis. Potential implications for the eating clubs of new University initiatives and structural changes (e.g., the approved changes to the academic calendar, which will take effect in 2020) will be evaluated by this standing committee, which will be expanded to include a member of the USG and, when appropriate, representatives from other offices with subject matter expertise. The group will consider how to measure progress and success, and will determine if, and when, a more structured review of the recommendations, outcomes and new circumstances might be warranted.

## **Conclusion**

While the eating clubs and the University operate as separate and independent organizations, it is increasingly important that we continue to acknowledge our interdependence when it comes to enhancing the Princeton experience for all of our undergraduate students. Working together, the University and the eating clubs can achieve the aspirations articulated in the vision and the guiding principles of this report. Creating a sense of community, well-being and belonging is our collective work and these recommendations are the next steps on that path to achieving these goals.

**Appendix A**

**Report of the Task Force on the Relationships between the University and the Eating Clubs (Issued May, 2010)**



Major Recommendations	Status	Notes/Outcomes
Increase transparency about the costs of clubs, and improve processes around club payment and aid plans	In progress	A webpage devoted to the eating clubs outlines costs; the Financial Aid Office has provided ideas for how the clubs could improve their payment and aid processes.
Consider whether there are ways to increase aid available through the clubs	In progress	PU has provided suggestions on how to reduce the financial barriers that exist for some students.
Steps should be taken to remove barriers to inclusion and to socioeconomic and ethnic diversity	In progress	The ICC hosted a forum on this topic in FY16; PU is working with the clubs to provide the demographic info of their members.
It is important to preserve a critical mass of clubs and to ensure that there continue to be non-selective clubs	In progress	PU is actively working with the clubs to reduce costs.
Consider additional steps to address high-risk drinking	Done (ongoing)	Examples include UMatter; the requirement that incoming students complete AlcoholEdu before registering for spring semester classes; code of best practices developed by the ICC in conjunction with the Title IX and SHARE offices; annual trainings with UHS, DPS, and ODUS prior to club admissions on hazing, alcohol safety, etc. A street-wide code of conduct policy is also being developed.
Create a more diversified social scene with at least one major alcohol-free event each week at a club and an increase in on-campus events with alcohol for of-age students and perhaps faculty and staff.	Done (ongoing)	Examples include regularly scheduled wine and cheese events in the colleges with of-age students, faculty and staff; the clubs are also more engaged in community service initiatives
Explore the possibility of DPS being the first responder for the clubs	Not viable	This was not possible, as the clubs are located in the area that are under the jurisdiction of the PPD.
Consider further improvements to PU's financial aid program to address concerns about costs not covered (e.g., social fees and sophomore charges) and the mechanics of the aid process	Not viable	Social fees are not considered an educational expense, and sophomores receive their meals in the colleges.
Sustain PU support for wireless access and snow removal and encourage clubs to consider cost-reducing ideas	Done (ongoing)	Wifi was upgraded in all clubs; 10 clubs collaborated and worked with Risk Management to secure better insurance at a lower cost.
Consider an alternative club selection process, which matches students based on rankings from students/clubs	Done	The clubs created an online admission system, allowing clubs and students to rank and match. Clubs have reintroduced a multi-bicker process. As of FY17, all six selective clubs now participate in this process.
Encourage bicker clubs to pick up new members at the 1879 Arch	Done	All eleven clubs now pick students up at this arch.
Consider actions by the clubs to reduce the advantage associated with fraternity and sorority memberships in the club selection process, and to postpone their admission process to the sophomore year.	In progress	Students are now prohibited from rushing a fraternity or sorority during their first year.
More programs should be created to introduce all freshmen and sophomores to the clubs	Done (ongoing)	A recent example is the Taste of Prospect, which showcases the clubs to freshmen & sophomores. USG continues to collaborate w/ the ICC to provide add'l opportunities for engagement.
There should be more PU sponsored programs that are attractive to students who do not socialize in the clubs	Done (ongoing)	ODUS provides support for nearly 700 student-initiated events annually, some of which are in close proximity to the clubs (e.g., lawnparties concerts)
Activities that increase interactions between campus and the clubs should be encouraged	Done (ongoing)	The shared meal plan program helps foster this interaction, as do annual events like TruckFest and the dodgeball tournament. PU is also introducing a meal exchange web application for the clubs and the dining halls.
The clubs should be described more fully and fairly to prospective students	Done	A webpage that showcases all of the clubs was created. The clubs and PU also updated a video on the eating clubs.
Admission staff and tour guides should be better informed on the clubs	Done (ongoing)	The clubs hold open houses/tours during Princeton Preview to engage prospective students and their families.

The clubs should increase their connections to PU's educational activities and to community service	Done (ongoing)	Additions to clubs have provided more study spaces. Community Service continues to grow in importance on campus and on Prospect, with TruckFest serving as the flagship club program.
The Best Practices Handbook sections on alcohol usage and safety policy should be strengthened	Done (ongoing)	Through their group insurance policy, the clubs now host annual risk management seminars conducted by their broker. The GICC is also drafting a code of conduct for club members.
Improve communication and shared planning between PU and the clubs	Done (ongoing)	Monthly meetings with the ICC leadership, the GICC president, a sign-in president, the GICC and ICC advisors, and PU officials now take place.

## **Appendix B**

### **Members of the Task Force on the Relationship between the University and the Eating Clubs**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
Zartosht Ahlers '18	Student (participated on task force in November, 2017)
Bryant Blount '08	Assistant Dean, Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students
Chris Burkmar '00	Executive Director for Planning and Administration, Office of the Vice President for Campus Life; <i>Task Force Administrative Support</i>
W. Rochelle Calhoun	Vice President for Campus Life; <i>Task Force Chair</i>
Amy Campbell	Assistant Vice President, Office of the Vice President for University Services
Jackie Deitch-Stackhouse	Director, Sexual Harassment/Assault, Advising, Resources and Education (SHARE) Office, University Health Services
Allie Diamond '18	President, Cloister
Robert Durkee '69	Vice President and Secretary, Office of the Vice President and Secretary
Benjamin Eley	Senior Associate Director, Undergraduate Financial Aid
Tom Fleming '69	Chair, GICC; Graduate Board Chair of Cap and Gown
Chuck Freyer '69	Secretary, GICC; Director, P-Cubed Insurance Group
Khristina Gonzalez	Associate Dean, Office of the Dean of the College
Olivia Grah'19	Student
Amy Ham Johnson	Director of Student Life, Rockefeller College, Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students
Matt Lucas '18	President, ICC; President, Colonial Club
Samual Parsons '19	Student (joined task force in March, 2018)
Angelica Pedraza '12	Graduate Board Chair of Colonial Club
Folasade Runcie '18	President, Ivy Club
Rachel Yee'19	President, Undergraduate Student Government (joined task force in December, 2017)