

- I. Opening Prayer, Luke Sheridan-Rabideau, *Keenan Senator*
- II. Roll Call - If you could pick anyone to guest chair the Senate (other than Elizabeth Boyle), who would you pick?
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - i. SS1920-11: A Resolution Asking the University to Eliminate Single-Use Plastic
 - ii. Student Union Treasurer Nomination- approved
 - iii. SO1920-31- A resolution to Suspend Student Union Executive Board Approval dates to accompany prior student union transition suspensions - Passed
- IV. Executive Announcements
 - a. Happy Spring Break!
- V. General Orders
 - a. A Discussion on the Off-Campus Differentiation Policy with Heather Rakoczy Russell, *Associate Vice President for Residential Life*
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- x. A Discussion on the Off-Campus Differentiation Policy with Heather Rakoczy Russell, Associate Vice President for Residential Life
- xi. Heather Rakoczy Russell- I am going to send a document around the room, and I have 50 copies. I am sending around a working draft policy of the differentiation policy, with the backside a draft for Rec Sports. There are some things that are within Res Life and other things that are in the domain of Rec Sports. Also, for instance, Karen oversees hall dances, that would be working with SAO and not Residential Life. I am sharing with you where the policy comes from and why, and then will hear your concerns.
- xii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- This policy is not the Access Policy, that policy is something we have been working on for a handful of years and it predates the Differentiation Policy. I am telling you they are not related. Also, it isn't the senior exclusion policy as it has been called, that name made it difficult to have a conversation about it. If I were to believe this is intended to exclude people, I would not have been here and I would have signed a petition. That is not what is intended. People are not wrong in feeling how they felt, but that is not how

it is intended. This takes effect in the class year 2021/2022. Current juniors and seniors are not included in the policy. Why are we doing this? The first reason is we believe there is something special about dorm life at ND. Part of how you are formed and why you are formed is that there is someone from every class in every section. As a junior and senior, we hope you give back to the community. There was a time there were 80% seniors on campus, and we are now 40% Seniors on campus. We did studies from other schools such as Vanderbilt and they have a 4-year requirement of living on campus. We determined that for this to work, you need 50% of seniors on campus. We want to go from 43% to 50% to preserve this unique model. Also, the student leaders of student government and various other campus leadership organizations, about 6 years ago, would have been the group that championed diversity in residential halls. There was a hall that had football players in the dorm, and another hall said off-campus seniors can come to dances, and some rector allowed it and others didn't. They took up this issue of the inconsistency between dorms on these issues such as dances, sports, common spaces, parientals. The genesis of this question came from student leaders asking for consistency. This was a practical decision that started with a football team. We also want to share the value that you are formed in these communities and you are invested in where you are. For those who are open to it, we hope you take the good things you learn and invest in the communities you live in. That used to be part of the legacy here. People would move

off-campus, and when I was a student, we played on sports teams off-campus and we had dances off-campus with cash bars that were unique for seniors off-campus. That's how South Bend knew who ND was. Not just because of ambulance runs on football weekends.

xiii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- Let's look at how this policy will be carried out.

People thought it would be a hard differentiation, but that is not what we intended and was never on the table. This year, the Sophomore Class officers asked for soft differentiation, asking for seniors to be a mentor in the hall and earn the right to participate in the hall. As I listened to these requests in the forum in December with Sophomore Class Council and its officers, I heard soft differentiation is harmful. We aren't choosing hard or soft differentiation. The conversation and survey from this forum alongside other conversations with hall presidents and RAs, and we landed that the way forward was something that is clear, simple, consistent, and fair. We decided that the policy is narrow enough to give guidance, broad to give exceptions, and simple enough to be an elevator speech. This year has been punctuated with this issue. Between October 2nd and 14th, the SCC met with the senate. November 14th, I met with the Res Life steering committee to give updates. On November 14th, I met with the Sophomore Class Council. On December 9th, I attended an open forum by those class officers. The event was 60 minutes, and I stayed for another hour and a half. On December 18th, I met with the Res Life community members who were interested in this issue. At each of

these meetings, we discussed what are the pain points and what are the goods about making an informed decision. In January, I met again with SCC to go over the followup survey. In February, I discussed the survey results. Also in February, the directors of Res Life attended advisory meetings and discussed how to draft the policy. On February 12th, we got feedback. From March 6th until now is the stage when we have working groups with Senate, HPC, RAs, rectors, and ARs and listen to feedback anyone wants to offer. The plan is that the week of March 16th, I will come back for round 2 and then the following week we will roll out the final policy to the student body. In terms of moving forward, the policy you have in front of you is a strawman, meaning it's hard to have a practical conversation without having something in front of you. As such, it's a working draft but is not final. It is directionally correct and represents what I have heard, but I'm open to the fact that it needs tweaks.

xiv. Keegan McArdle- One of the first things I see is about residence hall communications is about the listservs, why are you taking off-campus students off of the listservs?

xv. Heather Rakoczy Russell- First, we are doing it because, in terms of differentiating, as the residential life working group worked on it, they said it should be easy to remember and follow. The policy is that if you live in the hall, you have priority for those events. If you live off-campus you can go as a guest of the current residents of the hall, and you can ask for an exception from the rectors. This allows you to calibrate between the halls, such as large men's

hall to large men's hall. In a number of meetings, the same questions have been asked. We made a friendly amendment that if you don't live in the hall you can opt-in.

- xvi. Keegan McArdle- From personal experience, I had a friend that was not in the listserv as an accident. Studies have shown that when there's an opt-in policy, there is a lower rate of participation.
- xvii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- There are off-campus seniors who say "why are you bothering me?" The opt-in policy is a very low effort policy for people to want to participate. If people are invited, all they have to do is write in.
- xviii. Jack Rotolo- A lot of students and incoming students have the three-year-on campus policy affecting them. Can you speak to those considerations for students who have lived in the hall for 3 years and they are moving off, and how this will impact students?
- xix. Heather Rakoczy Russell- When we rolled off the three-year program, there are programs for seniors such as senior fellows and as a first-year sophomore you can get a credit for \$2,000 for pledging to stay on campus during your senior year. For all students, the incentives were no more upcharge for singles and different meal plans that allow for more flexibility. Also, we have at least 2 kitchens in each residence hall and free laundry. In addition, how to improve hall life for everyone through greater consistency and differentiation. We don't have housing that is as different as the schools of Vanderbilt, Dayton, and Princeton, so we think that that's okay that people

want to move off and have variety. Also, landlords were targeting sophomores before they could make a decision about friends. When this was targeting freshmen, this was too soon for them to sign a lease before getting to know the community. All of that is the backdrop for this. In this group and other groups, there were a lot of questions that the university had just killed the population of students who have applied to the school. Instead, that year, we had the highest yield of accepted students attending and students applying. Many students picked Notre Dame because of the residence requirement. We believe that if the planning went into that requirement is correct, then the students that chose ND. My team and I want to build a policy that is broad enough to allow the flowers to bloom. We want the seniors to be able to participate. We also think that fewer and fewer students will be asking for that. For students that don't want to stay on campus and participate, they will be more likely to form community off-campus. We have to leave open the policy that a different type of student is choosing ND for this.

xx. Jack Rotolo- With regards to the 43%, talking to hall staff, we have a 53% retention for seniors in Alumni. A lot of seniors enjoy the policy as is. Can you talk to that as well, does that apply to other dorms?

xxi. Heather Rakoczy Russell- This is a policy that is meant to lift all boats. We know that over time, the first years are always required to live off-campus. By putting this policy in place, the decision to incentivize seniors to stay, we think there are good reasons for seniors to move off-campus. However, we

want seniors to choose to stay. I mean what I said, we don't want to exclude anyone and this policy is meant for people who want to be a part of a community to find away. The policy won't take effect until 2021 and 2022. This doesn't end on March 23, but it's much like DuLac. DuLac can't change today as it's printed for the academic year, but it can be updated over the summer for how it meets the needs of the students. If you feel that changes need to be made, we need to discuss how to amend it. I want you to know the disposition is to be inclusive. I have sat with a lot of students this year. Happy people don't email or call. When I ask why they aren't happy, they say that those students won't have the same experience that I got over my four years. You shouldn't have the same experience that I had 25 years ago.

xxii. Luke Sheridan-Rabideau- It reads that current hall residents need rector support to participate in events. I think that a Keenan Revue leadership position would qualify as a situation that warrants an exception to this policy.

xxiii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- I remember a time that the Keenan Revue leadership was not run by seniors. That said, your example is not one that I would say no to or yes to. This is because I am not a decision-maker. If you, as a Keenan Senator, the hall staff, and rectors feel that that's what should happen, then I think you should go to your rector, and he will make the decision. They would come to me, and I would be able to say that it is or is not what we have done in the past. I will calibrate the consistency between hall to hall. We decided not to itemize all of the exceptions. By not doing this, we

allow for more possibilities. If the rector didn't jeopardize consistency, it has merit to happen.

xxiv. Danny Feldmeier- It has been agreed that we don't agree with this policy among students, and it is clear that it is still happening. Do you believe students have the right to reject the policy?

xxv. Heather Rakoczy Russell- I am wired in a way that I lead by consensus model leadership, meaning that I listen to all the voices and make a decision based on what emerges. As such, I don't follow a top-down model. In all honesty, this isn't my decision. When the whole University decided to invest in the 6-semester residency requirement, it was the University's policy. Those policies are logically aligned with each other. We value our system and students have asked for consistency. I don't always have the last say. I support the policy because it's doing what students have asked for. I know that requires a level of trust, but I'm saying this to you sincerely. I am aware of who was at the protest, and it was widely juniors and seniors who will never be affected and not the freshmen.

xxvi. Jordan Isner- It says something that the people who won't be affected, such as juniors and seniors, care the most about the policy change. Have you not discussed this with off-campus seniors?

xxvii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- While I have not discussed this with the seniors, Leah Kicinski, the assistant director for off-campus within Res Life,

did engage with off-campus seniors and off-campus council members about the exclusion policy.

xxviii. Jordan Isner- I went on my dorm retreat and participated in other hall events. As off-campus seniors, we are a part of our dorm's community. We are hosting a sports league within our dorm, we host tailgates for our dorm, and we also have hosted three events for our section throughout the year. I think there's a perception that off-campus seniors are leeching off of the dorm community. We are not guests.

xxix. Heather Rakoczy Russell- The language of guests is wrong, and I don't believe you are leeches. In terms of the retreat example, a rector posed the question if we have great seniors who have given talks at retreats, can they still participate. In this case, don't call those seniors "leadership," but still let them talk. In this sense, we are allowing the policy to evolve. I want you to hear that we don't think less of off-campus students and don't think they are leeching.

xxx. Elizabeth Hughes- Speaking as a sophomore here, there has been a culture change, and this is what we are used to. Why can't it be rolled out for the new students coming in who didn't know this would happen?

xxxi. Heather Rakoczy Russell- The two policies were rolled out together, and in terms of the piece you named, there was and remains a belief that when your class will be seniors, then there will be a different feeling than the one that exists now. If we are wrong, then we can discuss this. This is going to matter.

- xxxiii. Mike Dugan- There are two parts of the policy, positive and negative reinforcement. When there is uncertainty, people avoid risk. If we are attempting to build a better community, why don't we use positive reinforcement rather than negative?
- xxxiii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- Everything on the list has been very positive except for the differentiation. The reason we are doing it is that we want 50% of seniors. Also, we are responding to the students asking for consistency between the dorms. Student leaders asked us to address this. Also, we want you to get the idea that you invest where you live. Looking back to invest in your hall misses the mark.
- xxxiv. Mike Dugan- I see that if you are at 43% living on, do you think inflicting pain points on people living off is effective? Why do we need negative reinforcement for a 7% change?
- xxxv. Heather Rakoczy Russell- We don't just want that value, but we need 50%. Something that never shared is the other side of the argument. There are students that say it's not fair that in my hall off-campus students occupying space in the hall and using resources. They won't speak up and don't feel comfortable saying this out loud.
- xxxvi. Jackson Oxler- The policy allows exceptions. I am wondering if there are any instances where people ask rectors for exceptions and the response is negative.

- xxxvii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- The example of a no is the hall is hosting an event and the venue only allows for a certain number of people. In this case, the priority goes to an on-campus student. I can't think of too many events that would happen. We are trying to figure out how to get to yes.
- xxxviii. Connor Whittle- I know it says it will vary from event to event, so if you can answer this in terms of an event that every dorm hosts, like an SYR, what does the guest system look like?
- xxxix. Heather Rakoczy Russell- When this gets operationalized, part of the res life role is going to the rector and me, then another conversation partner is SAO. What about dome dances? The hall of the year, the people who earned that honor, then you get to go. There has been a debate about the language of former residents or guests. I am open to either current residents and guests. If you live off-campus and you want to attend a dance, then you can go on a date. The reason the language of the guest is there is that you are tied to another resident in the hall. I have been working on Title IX cases, and we know in events with multiple guests, then there is a higher frequency for sexual assault. Part of the spirit is we want you attached to another person.
- xl. Eric Kim- I am focusing on senior incentives, I am concerned about sophomores who commit to the senior incentive program. There is a penalty of 1,000 if you can't take this. As a low-income student myself, it would take 4 paychecks to pay for that 1,00 lack of commitment.

- xli. Heather Rakoczy Russell- We tried to look at the things within our control to affect cost savings. No single upcharge and free laundry, and the senior credit of 2,000. We think the biggest one is the senior fellows, and there is one that is unique to the culture of the hall, and that student receives \$3,000. There are 82 of those senior fellow roles and we want to identify leaders for whom this would make a difference. that 2,000 is not the only incentive.
- xlii. Matthew Bisner- I am here as VP of elections for Judicial Council, my question is that off-campus seniors have been allowed to vote in elections. Are you allowing those students to be disenfranchised?
- xliii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- that question has not come up yet. This is not taking effect until 2021. We won't fail to answer that question.
- xliv. Keegan McArdle- Clarify about going to the rector.
- xlv. Heather Rakoczy Russell- you are an off-campus student, you go to the rector for an exception, then the record will go to his supervisor. If saying yes does not jeopardize consistency then yes. Every Wednesday Hall Leadership meets and that could be where you calibrate.
- xlvi. Keegan McArdle- There is a difference between dorms, things aren't fair. Leaving up to the rectors' decision is better for the dorm.
- xlvii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- I don't disagree, but when we did that students were angry. People say that it is not fair that there are gender differences between dorms. When I interviewed for this position, what I wanted to see is unified diversity. In the culture of res life, I said I would like to imagine that

the halls are unified in that there are hallmarks that all students count on. They are different based on the traditions unique to the hall. We struggle with the right amount of diversity.

- xlvi. Keegan McArdle- Why not have a lax interpretation of the rules?
- xlix. Heather Rakoczy Russell- I don't care. The charge is to keep seniors on campus. I don't have the ability to say go with the language of more relaxed.
1. Thomas Davis- I don't think that the rector supervisor is a good way to go about doing things. I think that stifles the process. My friend who is moving off is a center point of Dunne Hall. He was a key component of interhall football. Do you think it's fair that the rector should have to go to another level? Also, exceptions are not allowed into a living document. The smallest hole in a document can lead to large problems. Basing a policy off of exception applies an uncertainty.
- li. Heather Rakoczy Russell- I don't think that the rector supervisor needs to be the calibrator of consistency. I don't want a lot of bureaucracy. I want the policy to be nimble and fair. If they have another system, they should build it. To the second question about the student playing football, we believe the rector is in the driver's seat. If your rector thinks he should be the captain, then he will be the exception. In terms of exceptions as problematic, I don't know where this will land with you and the parliamentary procedure. It's not a perfect way to write a policy, but the policy is going on. I can only control what's in the policy. We are trying to allow for exceptions and allow for

possibilities to work with students. We hope it has made an impact on the community. I can tell you that it's not perfect, but everyone who is still here as a rector has come closer to the center. The only topic that has not been addressed is how we cultivate the spiritual life of the dorm.

- iii. Heather Rakoczy Russell- The next step that is happening after today's meeting is the week of the 9th. After today, if there are loose ends, send me an email. The week of the 16th I will work with you again before rolling out the final policy.

Dear God,

We thank you for our opportunity to serve Our Lady's entrusted community. May we, members of the Student Senate, be servants of hope and instruments of great change. May we listen and lead with humility, kindness, courage, and love. May we develop a community that inspires all to engage in our daily vocation to be the truest brothers and sisters we can be. Through our dedication, may we call this community our family and this university our home.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen