

Campus Life Council Meeting #4

Date: Monday, January 29th, 2024 | Time: 5:00pm | Location: Duncan W246

- I. Introductions
- II. Approval of Minutes
- III. Introduction to Topic: The Sense of Community at Notre Dame
 - A. Daniel Jung: Regarding the sense of community, we are looking at the big student perspective.

I really just want to hear your take on the community at ND. We can even wrap in the next two points: what is working and not working, or what needs to be improved. The ultimate goal at the next meeting is to invite Fr Gerry. If you wouldn't mind sharing, what are your thoughts on the community at ND?
 - B. Isabella Tardio: One that I have noticed and I have talked to a lot of people about is the discrepancy between men and women dorms. It is very apparent that men's dorms have more freedom and less regulations, which makes it much easier for them to foster a community and for them to feel connected with the other people in the dorms. As opposed to a women's dorm, there are so many restrictions that make it hard to feel like a community, and it is also really frustrating.
 - C. Belle Marchetti: Since I am a senior, this is something people have been talking about: the discrepancy between men's and women's dorms. Last year, I was Welsh Fam's hall president and we definitely saw ebbs and flows. Sometimes we would host events and people would buy into it, but others don't. It was frustrating and we didn't know what to do. However, I have talked to my male friends and their events have lots of attendance. I think hall staff played a

huge role. In the years past, our RAs were not the best, though I am not trying to bash them.

But, this year, they seem much better. I'm not sure how we would fix that, but it is just one of the things I've noticed.

- D. Lily Condodina: I would say that this isn't relevant to every dorm. But, I was a freshman in 2020 when JFam was brand new. It was during Covid. It was not easy coming into a new dorm and dealing with the combination of people going into them and that sense of community. In some ways it was hard getting a dorm off the ground. I don't know if that could help the next community going into it. I know it is specific and not applicable to everyone. But, there is a clear struggle of getting new dorms off the ground.
- E. Isabella Tardio: I don't know if any of the rectors have insight, but one thing that seems to hinder the community is the retention rate of rectors, especially female rectors. As opposed to a dorm like Daniel, whose rector has been there for 15 years, I live in Johnson Family hall where we have had two rectors in the 4 or 5 years that the dorm has been open. This makes it impossible to be connected and it almost feels like our rectors are not loyal to our dorm. It is almost as if our rectors see the role as a stepping stone to move up in the Res Life ladder.
- F. Kaitlyn Garcia: My rector is my Queen. We call her a queen. Emphasizing what has been mentioned about having issues with rector retention and turnover, I am only a sophomore but having that consistency within the dorm helps build community. Our rector is really involved and helps everyone integrate into the community.
- G. Louis Cornett: I don't know if this is super helpful, but on the theme of rectors switching, in guy dorms we do not always like our rector. But it is the unification of dislike that bands them together. I don't know if that happens in girls' dorms. It might not be a continuation of a

rector but also a shared feeling towards a rector, whether negative or positive, that helps with community.

- H. Matthew Amante: On the topic of dorms, it is a great way to build community within dorms. But, it feels like there are many isolated pockets of communities. There are very strong communities within dorms, but not between dorms. Small interdorm events would be a great way to integrate and build community. I know for me, at least, a lot of my friends are just in my dorm and I have a lot less friends outside of my dorm. Interdorm events would be a great way to build an overarching community.
- I. Bridget Schippers: As far as the Hall Presidents Council goes, there are lots of events between dorms. Just last month, every dorm had an event with another dorm. It is something we push for. Often people don't know what events are happening. Presidents are putting on programming, but struggling with attendance. We tell people not to worry because the purpose is to give an opportunity to connect even if only 5 people show up. We would love to hear from you guys how you hear about events. We want to build community, but need people to show up. Does your hall council send out an email? Do you go to hall council?
- J. Matthew Amante: Keenan has Hall Council every Tuesday and they send out a PowerPoint about everything spoken. Maybe if organized into a calendar, that could help. A few times I've talked to guys and they just forgot that events were happening. Most people don't go to hall council with a pen and paper. A more unified structure would help.
- K. Kaitlyn Garcia: We have a Google Calendar, weekly newsletter, and hall council. There are safety nets. If you miss hall council, you at least get an email. If you forgot about it, you at least have the calendar. It helps to have three different avenues.

- L. Daniel Jung: One interesting thing that I haven't heard yet is about the amenities. There is a world of difference between Isabella's JFam and my Steds. Do amenities play a role? Rectors, I'd love to hear what you think.
- M. Lily Condoncina: It depends. There is a huge sense of community based on other things that has nothing to do with amenities. It is a bond with other people and identity. Amenities are a positive, but I don't think it is enough to make someone stay in or switch dorms. In JFam, we have super nice amenities but I would love for a community to grow.
- N. Kaitlyn Garcia: Amenities are great, but they don't build a community. As for Cav's amenities, other than a central location, amenities are not there. We rely on hallway hangouts. You make due with what you have.
- O. Eric Styles: The most important thing is being well welcomed in the beginning. Whatever concepts they have about the physical building will be a potential factor. But, they feel connected because they've been well welcomed and, within a year, they feel good. When I got here, Dunne and Flaherty were just opening. That was 8 years ago. Before that was Ryan and Duncan. A shift they made, from what I was told, was that Ryan and Duncan had really large student rooms. They made the decision to make the rooms smaller and hallways larger. The problem was people are less likely to leave their rooms when they have everything they need in their room. Even with parties, it required being in that social network and in that room. It is counter-cultural when we are competing with schools with residence halls that are more like apartments without shared spaces like bathrooms, kitchens with limited random social interaction. If everything you need is in the room, you won't leave the room. You can't build the community you need to build without shared spaces. Even with Fischer Undergrad,

students still need to have one year in a dorm. Moving from an old hall to a new hall, in an old hall, people complained when they got there, often wealthy students with no experience having roommates who thought it wasn't good enough, but after a year they loved it. It is not about the place. When there is a hall struggling with things like cleanliness, halls push for that. The basic need to be there. But, dorms are ultimately a way for building relationships.

- P. Kaitlyn Garcia: I agree. The amount of conversations that come from just talking and being able to meet people is helpful. If you hang out in a very spacious common room, that is less likely. In a four room quad, those whole point is to have the common room be a welcome space where people can hang out. That couldn't happen if everyone had their own huge room.
- Q. Eric Styles: Even Duncan and Ryan halls are built for communal living. We are not moving towards apartments. Even in apartments at other schools, students don't share a bathroom. I went into a student room and saw how small it was. It shifts the way that we think when we have to change clothes and know someone can see me half dressed. It shifts the way you relate to that person.
- R. Louis Cornett: That is an interesting question. Dorm living can foster community. But, how many people would prefer an apartment after two years? Most seniors immediately go off campus. Freshman year was great. What about an apartment for the last three years? It is easier than having to live with whole dorm environment.
- S. Belle Marchetti: I can answer that for the off campus community. It seems like off campus students miss being on campus. They like being off campus, but they miss being on campus. They are more intentional to see friends and reach out to underclassmen. Getting feedback from people, all seniors just come to Duncan because we know we will find people there. That

sort of social network was because of the three years living on campus. Now seniors are off campus and have their own lives, but we still come back to campus and will see each other.

- T. Daniel Jung: I think we have said a lot of valuable things so far. But, for the sake of time, I want to keep moving with the agenda items, so let's talk about community in the classroom. Paul, not to put you on the spot, but to what extent do you think the classroom should be for learning or building community?
- U. Paul McGlinn: That would depend on the discipline. I joke with my class sometimes because the desks are always arranged so differently. Especially in engineering, if we interact with people, it is outside the classroom in tutorials or office hours or lab. I spend a lot of time talking with kids in the lab. I can ask, what are you doing? How are you doing? It is much more than in a lecture class because when we finish, we get that kids need to run to another class. You can't get a lot done except for students who are more willing. It is a totally different world in Arts and Letters. Off topic, but I see the communities at ND being divided into 4 communities: residential, academic, research, and athletic. I have very little interaction in athletics, but there's a whole big community there. The research community is totally different and students make up a small segment, but the whole community is here year-round and it brings more than \$200 million to the University and lots of other parts don't understand the research community. We don't take time off. The academic community has little to no interaction with the residential stuff. When I was here years ago, we had quality community space, and only 15% of seniors would choose to go off campus. If one person had a TV, everyone shared it. I look at ND now and it's like where spontaneity comes to die. Now, everyone is on a little regimen. Each dorm has a signature event. We used to do things on the

fly. One year, Keenan decided to do the Revue. Now, there are no more off campus parties where everyone goes. It is totally different that way. We used to have events that you couldn't have anymore. I remember my daughter was doing a celebration outside for some class of hers and they had a piñata. But, then security showed up. Everything is much more regimented. There is so much more now with the Internet in each room. Why do people even need to leave their rooms? In the basement of Flanner and Grace, we had a huge room with pinball and food sales. Your point is right on. We need to design dorms to force interaction between people. Getting out after one year is not what ND wants. Then it is a state school and it's a totally different university. You learn so much being forced to interact with nimrods.

- V. Koryn Isa: The academic community is what I appreciate most about being here. Over winter break, the Club of Hawaii in Hawaii had a reception for early admitted students in Hawaii and had lunch. People who coordinated it asked us all to share our favorite part of ND. Overwhelmingly, people said it was the sense of community at ND in academics. It is very collaborative, though most of the students answering were in the College of Engineering or College of Science. The main thing across the board was that ND does a great job helping you to take steps towards goals versus pushing each other down.
- W. Kaitlyn Garcia: I would agree. My favorite part about the academic community is that I never felt like someone was competing against me. Everyone here wants to learn more and advance their own careers. I am an ACMS and Econ major. If someone hears about my majors, they ask what you're doing and they want to help. It has never been about trying to get ahead and leave you behind.

- X. Paul McGlinn: They stress that when people come up for tenure, teaching matters a heck of a lot. If you are a great researcher, but a bad teacher with bad Cifs, you won't make it. That is why we have centers here to promote teaching. Why does someone come here to ND? To learn. So, teachers are here to help.
- Y. Isabella Tardio: I definitely agree that there is a difference based on the discipline. I am in both Mendoza and Arts and Letters and I see a significant difference. Because of the curve in Mendoza, there is significantly more stress and competition, but the nature of classes having lots of group projects and being more difficult somewhat forces people to have to work together. Obviously there is stress with Investment Banking consulting and things like that, but the shared difficulty really brings the community together. But, in a different way, Arts and Letters is significantly less stressful, in my opinion, but there is also more excitement about the material and the classes because there is less worry about getting an A or competing with people about getting an A, rather the focus is on learning and exploring interests.
- Z. Daniel Jung: This is an interesting segway because every semester, Aidan, Collette, and I present to the Board of Trustees. This past semester, we did a presentation about academic culture. Our general thesis is that ND isn't competitive. When working on group projects, students are always willing to help other students. But, it is comparative. You are always looking at the person next to you and their extracurriculars, gpa, and internship. There are lots of problems that come from it. This is not an ND exclusive problem. It is a wider, nationwide problem. It starts before ND and continues long after ND.
- AA. Paul McGlinn: We look at things like we can tell the effect that Covid had on students in terms of the Covid-heavy class. In discipline, we usually see people that become natural leaders in

their group. We see kids emerge. The number of socialization aspects we usually see in the class was lost. Everyone spent time in different settings. It is a benefit to the group because people are in classes with each other, rubbing elbows for three years. Community within a discipline includes people from different dorms that are separate from different kinds of communities.

BB. Eric Styles: You say students who experienced Covid, but which students. Do you mean students who came here to campus and who lived here during the masked year. Then there are students who came to campus after being at home for a year.

CC. Paul McGlinn: That was not distinguished. Looking over however many years, we see a change.

DD. Eric Styles: I think there are distinctions on that level. People who were here benefited from being here.

EE. Belle Marchetti: Interestingly enough, yesterday I was talking with a friend who is in the College of Engineering. They said there were issues with first years that can't work in groups, which is an issue they never saw before. First years went through all of high school with covid and they don't know how to work with people.

FF. Paul McGlinn: Even with math skills. People have less skills because they did not learn as much when they were at home. There are a bunch of effects that play out.

IV. Perspectives on Community at Notre Dame

A. Rector/Division of Student Affairs' Perspective

B. Professors' Perspectives

C. Students' Perspectives

V. Where Community is Thriving at Notre Dame

VI. Where Community is Deficient at Notre Dame and What Can be Done

- A. Daniel Jung: Among particular student groups, organizations, colleges, where do we see pockets, gaps, or areas where we can improve?
- B. Paul McGlinn: One this is in the religious realm. 20% of the Student Body isn't Catholic. I don't know if they feel a difference in terms of the community.
- C. Eric Styles: It would be useful to check out the Climate Survey. That would give data to all of these questions.
- D. Matthew Amante: As a non Catholic, it feels a bit isolating when you have 80% of the student body being Catholic and when most of the religious services are obviously Catholic. It is hard to find people that are non catholic and to have their own religious services. It could be better. We need to find a way to find the non Catholics. Every once in a while, you find people who are also non Catholic. This can be helpful even for people that are less Catholic than others.
- E. Kaitlyn Garcia: For the groups that I belong to, including Hispanics, women, and Catholics, all of my communities are pretty solid. To your point on building community, there are clubs tailored towards people of other religions. Iron sharpens Iron works to build relations with different religions. There are also a bunch of things on campus. It is a tep in the right direction. There are different communities that are trying to do the same thing and build communities for people that don't feel super included.
- F. Paul McGlinn: Another group to talk to is the grad students. They have their own things, but they acknowledge that the whole university is designed around undergrads. They have their own sub communities. Indian groups will have events and Chinese groups will have events. Then there are things for grad students. It is a whole different world. When they come here,

they know that undergrad things are different and they only really involve themselves for football. It would be good to get a hold of someone in the Grad Student Union.

- G. Daniel Jung: Provost McGreevy is very focused on the graduate students.
- H. Isabella Tardio: I don't know if we necessarily need more clubs. It seems that the real issue is how to get people to go to clubs that exist. It is not hard to go on the CCC website and find out which clubs are out there, but people are just scared to go to a new club.
- I. Daniel Jung: That is a good point. I believe that there are over 500 clubs at ND. People are just scared. How do we show students that you are welcome here and we are happy that you are a part of this?
- J. Koryn Isa: As the Hawaii club president, we don't do a whole bunch to broadcast to the student community. We reach out to them before they get here, but there are also not a lot of Hawaii students. We don't do much at the club fair because it is overwhelming to freshmen. But, we don't really open up. If you want to join, you totally can. But people not from Hawaii only really join because they do know someone in the club. Isabella is right, though, because there are so many clubs and we want to figure out how to get people to not be as scared. If clubs did a better job about advertising and having more events, it could lead to a more inclusive, broader campus community.
- K. Eric Styles: Yes, but if the group was not majority Hawaiian, that is a problem. Hawaii clubs are supposed to combine people and give a shared space to certain groups. Once that tips, we have a problem. Smaller groups need to be that if they want to be productive.
- L. Kaitlyn Garcia: I remember at the freshman year activities fair I signed up for lots of emails. I still get emails and may think "that's fun" but when it comes down to it, I question if I should

go. I think it is so far into the semester, it must be too late to join. I don't know of a potential solution, but we should think of a way to get clubs to be more welcoming. No one says you can't come, but students are hesitant.

M. Daniel Jung: I think the problem is students get into habits so quickly. At the start of semester, there is a good three weeks to figure out what you want to be involved in, and then you are locked in. After that, it is less common for people to try new things because they get into a routine.

N. Rebecca Shaffler: I like the discussion about how clubs could be exposed to the broader campus, as opposed to just small clubs. As VP of PRISM, our sub-committee is doing really well and interacting. It is great to see, but not everyone feels community at ND. One this PRISM does is try to plan group joint meetings with other people. It is the same meeting, but gets people involved in more discussions and allows them to know more people in sub groups who can talk about their experiences.

O. Megan Moore: We should also consider the transfer students. I don't know if the lack of community is just at the beginning, or if it lasts the whole year, but there is not a place for transfer students to have an easy doorway into all things ND like we do for first years.

P. Bridget Schipeprs: Transfer students definitely feel excluded. Last year, there was a serious issue with them getting off campus housing because there was not enough space in dorms. This is an issue because it is core to social life on campus. I think this year they made sure that the issue was fixed, but I really hope we do so every year going forward.

Q. Emily Orsini: Yes, that is the goal. There is an option to live on campus.

R. Eric Styles: Are they required if there is space?

S. Emily Orsini: Yes, if there is space, but there is more than enough space now.

VII. Next Meeting + Adjournment

- A. Daniel Jung: I will be inviting Fr. Gerry to the next meeting. I hope he can come because he has lots of great things to share. I will research non-Catholic groups on campus and even see if those student groups can come and share. I will potentially be reaching out to the graduate student government as well as transfer students, though Fr Jerry will have more insights on transfer students than I could from tracking down students.
- B. Emily Orsini: I have a lot of feedback for transfer students because I do a survey every year during welcome weekend, so I can share that with you.
- C. Daniel Jung: Thank you, that would be great? Is there anything I missed or things you would like to see at the next meeting? If not, we just need a motion to adjourn.
- D. The meeting is adjourned.

List of places where community can be found among colleges?

1. Residence Halls/Dorms
2. Student Organizations
 - a. Faculty/Staff Organizations
3. Sporting Events and Other Big Campus Events (Speakers, Concerts, etc.)
4. In the Classroom
 - a. Academic Groups
 - b. Honors Programs
 - c. Study Abroad Programs
5. Dining Halls
6. Religious Groups
7. DEI Spaces
8. Career Development Spaces
 - a. Consulting Connect
9. Recreational Activities
 - a. Intramurals
 - b. Yoga classes/health classes