

February 13th, 2025

Spaces & Experiences

KNOX RESIDENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

3:30 - 4:30 PM

KCR Room, Knox Residence

Meeting Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE

Name	Role
Aisalyn Templin (virtual)	Administration and Communications Assistant
Alim Alarakhia	Occupancy and Admissions Coordinator
Amika Shah	Assistant Dean, Residence Life and Communication
Jasdeep Singh (virtual)	Facilities Coordinator
Jessie Xia	Knox Residence Council member
Michael Fernandes	Residence Life Coordinator
Moervica Prashant	Resident, Knox Residence
Nathan Saunders-DeGuire	Resident, Knox Residence
Sangeeta Jeyakumar (virtual)	Manager of Residence Administration, Finance & Operations
Qixin Guan	Knox Residence Council Co-President

REGRETS

Name	Role
Steve Massee	Dean of Residence and Director of Student Life
Kevin Dancy	Director of Residence Operations

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- 24/25 Residence Experience Survey Results
- Admissions Update
- Grad House Council Updates
- Discussion
- Next meeting
 - March (last meeting for the 24-25 contract period)

Note: this meeting was chaired by Michael Fernandes, Residence Life Coordinator

WELCOME

All participants introduced themselves and participated in the icebreaker discussion topic.

Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

24/25 RESIDENCE EXPERIENCE SURVEY RESULTS

Michael highlighted that the survey presents a great opportunity to gather information about different aspects of the residence experience. Amika presented the most recent survey overview, which went out to 100 residents. Notable elements of the process this year included:

1. A narrowed survey timeline, November 20th to December 16th.
2. Promotions included emails, newsletters, and printed posters.
3. Incentives included a draw to win 1 of 2 \$50 gift cards. There was also a pizza party for the Don community with the highest completion rate (\$200 value).

Highlights from the survey include:

- Almost doubled the response rate from the previous year (57%)
- 98% knew how to contact their RA, most (79%) connect monthly.
- 95% found the frequency acceptable.
- The sizeable population (74%) attends at least one event per semester. For those not participating, the number one reason is that they didn't have time (81%). Second, most common is not wanting to attend an event alone (19%).

- 73% of respondents have made friends and feel somewhat connected. For some students, building connections in their residence is not their main source of friendship on campus.
- 15–30-minute drop-in events are the most desirable option (75%), followed by 1-2 hour events. The desire for recurring weekly or monthly events is 33%
- Non-newsletter emails are the preferred method for residents to receive information.
- 95% feel safe in their residence.
- Satisfaction with Knox Residence maintenance requests remains high (between 88 – 97% for all questions)
- Courtyard and Breezeway were the most used space (82%), followed by the Basement Common Room (52%)
- 89% agreed that living in residence supported their academic success.
- 95% agreed that living in residence made them feel welcome and included in the residence community.

ADMISSIONS UPDATE

Alim Alarakhia presented key updates to the Committee. The population covered in this update includes summer residents, first year guarantee, and upper year residents.

- Summer applications opened February 10th
- 2025-26 First Year Guarantee Applications opened on January 22nd
- 2025-26 Returner Application opens on February 18th
- Summer offers to be sent starting March 3rd
- 2025-26 First Year Guarantee offers to be sent starting May 15th (Tentative)
- 2025-26 Returner offers to be sent starting March 10th

RESIDENCE COUNCIL UPDATES

A student representative indicated there is an upcoming pottery event.

DISCUSSION

A student commented that they prefer short emails that are very clear, even putting action items and key dates in the subject line.

Staff highlighted that we are moving forward with the Wi-Fi project. This is the top priority, as we have regular data drops. The Wi-Fi project is in development.

A student asked if there are updates on the key fobs project. Staff responded that we would like to move to a Honeywell system and remove the bigger keys that we have. This is a conversation that is ongoing, and we are waiting for further instruction.

NEXT MEETING

We aim to have another meeting in March, taking members' availability into account. Michael will be in touch to confirm.