

What follows is an excerpt from the original report delivered to the Board of Trustees on April 3, 2000. Copies of the full report may be obtained from the Alumni Relations Office: alumni.relations@dartmouth.edu

Alumni Voices In the Student Life Initiative Dialogue 2000

Responses from Alumni and the Alumni Council
To the Recommendations of the Student Life Initiative Committee
January to March 2000

A report to the Trustees of Dartmouth College
From the Dartmouth Alumni Council and its College Relations Group
April 3, 2000

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What alumni think

“Mixed” is the most accurate way to describe the reaction of Dartmouth alumni to the January 2000 report of the Student Life Initiative Committee. Within the 300-plus written responses (some representing an amalgam of responses from tens or hundreds of alumni gathered for meetings on the topic), we find the broadest range of opinion possible. These opinions, indeed, are as diverse as the 60,000-member alumni body itself.

Overall, the number of responses to the committee’s report fell far short of the outpouring after the announcement of the five student life principles in February 1999. In general, alumni in 2000 appreciated the wide and well-publicized release of the Student Life Initiative Committee report. With an invitation to participate in a dialogue right from the start, alumni responses in general were more reasoned and less visceral—even as they were divided over the committee’s recommendations.

Perhaps the area of greatest agreement was in the need for better housing, including the construction of new dormitories and the improvement and replacement of existing residential spaces. Many alumni also expressed the need for fairness and the continual involvement of students in implementing changes. Further analysis of the alumni response follows this introductory section.

The Council’s response

The Alumni Council March 4 approved resolutions that reflect the “mixed” opinions of alumni at large.

The Council “strongly” favors both improved residential housing and “higher standards” for fraternities and sororities. But the Council cautions the Trustees on many areas of controversy among alumni, especially regarding fraternities and sororities. Generally, the Council urges even-handed application of policies, student involvement in implementing initiatives and having new social options in place before making changes to the current social system.

In preparation for the March 4 meeting and to fulfill the Alumni Council’s role of representing alumni sentiment, Councilors engaged in nearly two months of opinion-gathering among their constituents.

They read the report in full, submitted questions for and participated in the Student Life Initiative telecast and local forums and provided individual written responses to the committee report, either free-form or guided by a checklist created by the College Relations Group. In late February and early March, Councilors also received a summary and meaningful excerpts of all the alumni opinion as well as a report from alumni of fraternities and sororities.

It was a well-informed group of alumni representatives that convened in New York City on March 4. In a six-hour session, the Councilors considered nine draft resolutions prepared by the Council's executive committee. The Council proceeded to amend and ultimately approve eight resolutions.

The resolutions stand as consensus statements forged by people with different constituencies and personal outlooks. One Councilor likened the exercise to "herding cats." In the end, however, the cats made a statement--not one that every one liked necessarily, but one that participants could live with as a reflection of the representative group. We well could understand the difficulty of the Student Life Initiative Committee's task in producing its report.

Resolutions

Be it resolved ...

I.

Strongly favoring the construction of new dormitories and the improvement or replacement of existing residential spaces with the objective of achieving comparable quality of housing for all students, the Dartmouth Alumni Council generally supports creating a greatly enhanced residential system that provides alternatives for students to choose between cluster and individual dormitory options, and urges the Trustees to:

- A. Keep first-year students in mixed housing with other undergraduates;
- B. Maintain flexibility in design of residential spaces; and
- C. Put a high priority on addressing the inadequacies of the River Cluster and Choate Road residence halls.

II.

The Dartmouth Alumni Council supports the specific goals of the Student Life Initiative Committee recommendation on creating other spaces and programs for general use and urges the Trustees also to consider the following:

- A. Leaving as much of student social planning up to students as possible.
- B. Alternate ways to achieve the goals of the World Cultures Initiative, as alumni opinion about that specific proposal is divided.

III.

The Dartmouth Alumni Council has observed a lack of knowledge about the needs and contributions of graduate students, including particularly Arts & Sciences graduate students, among the College-wide alumni body and urges the College to create programs to promote better general alumni understanding of those needs.

IV.

While strongly supporting higher standards, the Dartmouth Alumni Council is of divided opinion about the recommendation of the Student Life Initiative Committee on making major changes in the Coed Fraternity and Sorority (CFS) Organizations.

The Council urges the Trustees to consider appointing a group of students, faculty, administrators, and alumni to create standards for progress and achievement rather than setting extremely detailed rules at the Trustee level.

In addition, the Council urges the Trustees to consider very carefully the following Student Life Committee recommendations, which are controversial among alumni:

- A. Leaving final judgment about whether houses have met standards in the hands of one person, the Dean of the College, as there is a need for due process to be observed.
- B. Having an undergraduate adviser who does not belong to a house living in that house.
- C. Residency requirements, including no residency for the summer term and the seniors-only policy.

The Alumni Council further urges the Trustees to consider:

- A. Permitting the formation of new CFS organizations.
- B. Re-examining the apparent preference for the coed selective organizations.
- C. Evaluating the financial repercussions of the proposed physical improvements and offering financial support by the College.
- D. Requiring that the review process recommended for the CFS system be required for all campus organizations.

The Alumni Council further urges the Trustees to consider that there are alumni who support the elimination of the CFS system. If the Trustees move in this direction it is important to have an alternative system in place.

In addition, the Trustees should consider proposals to encourage affiliations among CFS organizations, dormitories, and other student organizations to promote a more inclusive social and residential system.

V.

The Dartmouth Alumni Council generally supports the recommendation of the Student Life Initiative Committee on conducting a review of senior societies and undergraduate societies and urges that this review be conducted without bias toward a certain outcome.

VI.

The Dartmouth Alumni Council generally supports the recommendation of the Student Life Initiative Committee on conducting a review of academic affinity houses and programs and urges that this review be conducted without bias toward a certain outcome.

VII.

Recognizing that serious problems are caused by underage drinking and the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, the Dartmouth Alumni Council generally supports the recommendation of the Student Life Initiative Committee on introducing new guidelines for alcohol and other drugs.

Indeed, the Council in 1997 resolved: "That the Council lend its moral authority on behalf of the alumni by supporting the Trustees and the College in their efforts to combat alcohol abuse and binge drinking in particular."

The Council urges the Trustees to consider the following:

- A. Making rules apply to all students and all campus organizations, not just CFS organizations.
- B. Not using academic scheduling as an alcohol-policy enforcement tool.
- C. Emphasizing early and on-going alcohol and other drug education and firm, fair and consistent enforcement of rules and policies without instituting detailed restrictions.

VIII.

The Dartmouth Alumni Council further urges the Trustees to:

- A. Give all of these matters due deliberation, with the first priority being to build new dormitories and social spaces and improve existing places.
- B. Make sure that social alternatives are in place before making major changes in the CFS system.
- C. Continue to put matters of great importance before the entire College community for debate and discussion.
- D. Consider an examination of the Dartmouth Plan with an eye to strengthening both the academic and social experiences of undergraduates.
- E. Institute a five-year review of all student life initiatives, not just those related to the CFS system.

The above resolutions passed by majority vote at a special meeting of the Alumni Council on March 4, 2000, at the Intercontinental Hotel in New York City.

As the Alumni Council's intention always is to include, not exclude, differing voices, the full report contains dissenting opinions to and further thoughts on the resolutions. Contact the Alumni Relations Office (alumni.relations@dartmouth.edu) to request a full copy of the report.

Other considerations

- All of the alumni responses have been made in absence of cost and architectural information. We urge the Trustees to continue the dialogue when such

information becomes available. In this regard, we particularly commend the precedent set by the Hood Museum twenty years ago.

- Two of the Trustees' five principles, notably, "greater choice" and "substantially coeducational," do not seem to have been dealt with in a definitive manner by the committee report. Therefore, they are not directly discussed in most alumni responses.
- While we believe the responses compiled in this report to be a most helpful sharing of alumni opinion, the picture they present is not statistically valid. The last statistically valid survey of alumni was the 1994 Alumni Survey (1200 alumni, randomly selected), which needs to be updated.

We thank you for the opportunity to serve Dartmouth. The College Relations Group and the Alumni Council look forward to assisting in the next phase of the Student Life Initiative.

Respectfully Submitted.

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Summary of Alumni Response

To The

Student Life Initiative

Committee Report

Prepared for Board of Trustees

Prepared by: Lynne Gaudet '81

Office of Alumni Relations

March 22, 2000

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Introduction

This report summarizes the feedback received from alumni through various sources following the release of the Student Life Initiative Committee Report on January 10, 2000. Two-hundred-fifty alumni responded between January 10 and March 17 through various means which included the Student Life Initiative web site, the College Relations Group's (CRG) e-mail address, letters, telephone calls, class newsletters, and discussions at the various sites of the satellite broadcast held on January 19, 2000.

This report includes an analysis of the feedback by dividing each response into one of three categories: Positive, Negative, or Mixed. The responses were categorized as positive or negative only when the individual responding clearly indicated that they were in favor of or against all of the report. The majority of the responses were categorized as mixed, with the individual agreeing with some aspects of the report, while objecting to another section or sections of the report.

A group response (such as the satellite telecast discussion) was typically categorized as mixed, as a result of the variety of opinions voiced during the meeting. This report considers the meeting, when summarized, to be one response. Each individual letter is counted as one response.

In addition, this report includes various excerpts from the letters written. These excerpts are divided into (1) separate sections pertaining to each of the seven recommendations of the SLI report, (2) a section including comments made by alumni regarding the process, and (3) a final section which provides additional suggestions and comments submitted by alumni.

This report is in no way intended to be a scientific statistical analysis of alumni opinion. It is a collection of responses — some of which were solicited, others of which were not. Please read this report with this context in mind.

Statistical Data
(1/10/00 – 3/17/00)

A. Number of Responses Received and Reactions

	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>Mixed</u>
Week 1 (1/10/00-1/16/00)	27	43	33
Week 2 (1/17/00-1/23/00)	7	11	22
Week 3 (1/24/00-1/30/00)	3	3	7
Week 4 (1/31/00-2/6/00)	7	3	14
Week 5 (2/7/00-2/11/00)	0	3	14
Week 6 (2/12/00-2/18/00)	4	3	9
Week 7 (2/19/00-2/25/00)	1	4	3
Week 8 (2/26/00-2/28/00)	1	0	2
Week 9 (2/29/00-3/6/00)	1	8	8
Final 10 Days (3/7/00-3/17/00)	2	2	5

Total Positive = 53

Total Negative = 80

Total Mixed = 117

Total Responses = 250

Summary:

The majority (41%) of the responses was received during the week immediately following the release of the report. Of these initial responses 26% were positive, 42% were negative and 32% were mixed. During the remainder of the month following the release, this response can be characterized as 18% positive, 21% negative and 61% mixed. The final total breakdown of percentages, which includes 68 days of feedback, is 21% positive, 32% negative and 46% mixed. These percentage changes appear to indicate that once the report had been read and analyzed in its entirety by alumni, there was a substantial increase in mixed reaction to the recommendations and a less emotional immediate positive or negative reaction.

B. Reaction By Class and Gender

<u>Class</u>	<u>Gender/Reaction</u>					
		<u>Male</u>			<u>Female</u>	
	Pos.	Neg.	Mixed	Pos.	Neg.	Mixed
30-39	1	1	2			
40-49	4	1	1			
50-59	4	6	22			
60-69	9	10	15			
70-79	8	13	22	4	3	1
80-89	8	13	19	1	2	11
90-99	4	22	13	8	5	8
Unknown	1	4	3	1	0	0
Total	39	70	97	14	10	20

Summary:

Eighty-two percent of respondents were male and 18% were female. Although both groups reported a similar percentage of mixed reactions, there was a discernible difference in their positive and negative reactions. Male responses were 19% positive, 34% negative and 47% mixed. Female responses were 32% positive, 23% negative and 45% mixed.

Another significant difference is reflected in response by class decade. Twenty-four percent of all responses were received from alumni who graduated between 1990 and 1999. The males who graduated during this decade felt significantly more negative towards the report than any other group. Ten percent of these men felt positive, 56% were negative and 33% had mixed responses. Of the females responding from the decade of the 90's, 38% were positive, 24% were negative and 38% had a mixed response.

C. Issues Addressed

The following issues were addressed by the various responses received. As many letters/calls addressed numerous issues, and each issue was documented, the numbers below total more than the number of individual responses.

Alcohol	=	89
CFS	=	170
Dining	=	22
Off-Campus Living	=	6
Residential	=	117
Social Space	=	34
Social Options	=	79
Process	=	31
Other	=	56

Summary:

The CFS system was most frequently addressed, with 68% of all responding alumni commenting on this topic in some manner. Residential life was addressed in the comments of 47% of responding alumni, followed by alcohol (36%) and social options (32%).

Summary of Alumni Comments

The following sections of this report document various comments collected from the feedback of alumni. After categorizing each response along topical lines, a number of observations can be made.

In general, although there was strong concern voiced by many alumni regarding the cost to implement the recommendations, there appeared to be significant support for the construction of new dormitories and the “decompression” of the existing structures. Many alumni who resided in dorms during reunions or had children who attended Dartmouth felt there was a considerable need for improvement in this area of college life. There was also an overwhelming sense that it would be a mistake to house the freshmen class in a separate dorm. Many alumni cited exposure to upperclassmen within the dorms as extremely important to their freshman experience. In addition, alumni were very critical of the recommendation to place the freshman class in the River Cluster or Choates. Those most insistent were alumni who resided in those dorms during their years at Dartmouth. They stated that the feeling of isolation due to the geographic location and the depressing construction of these dorms do not lend themselves to a positive experience for freshmen.

Various alumni recommended that Dartmouth study Williams College if the decision is made to introduce dormitory “clusters.” Numerous complimentary letters described the residential life and dorms at this institution.

A strong sentiment voiced by all three reaction areas (positive, negative, and mixed) encouraged the College, in implementing dormitory programs, to reduce the seemingly bureaucratic role regarding rules implied within the SLI report. The consensus was that “social engineering” will not be popular and/or successful among 18-22 year-old young adults. Many alumni suggested that the College involve students as much as possible in the development and management of the dormitory “clusters.”

Response reflected support for the improvement of dining and social spaces. Alumni response was split fairly evenly in support for either centralized or de-centralized dining on campus. Some alumni felt that although a de-centralized approach might be more convenient for students (regarding meal times, locations, menu options), a centralized location (such as Thayer) would help create unity and socialization among students.

There appeared to be little support for the World Cultures Initiative. Many alumni felt that this subject was not included within the purview of the committee and should not have been included in the SLI report. A general concern was that students at the Ivy League level do not need a department to educate them on diversity. Most alumni commenting on this area indicated negative sentiment towards operational costs to run this type of department, particularly after consideration of the costs to fulfill what they considered other, more necessary recommendations of the report.

The recommendations related to graduate students were strongly endorsed by current graduate students (Dartmouth undergrad alumni) and graduate student alumni who responded. They felt that there is an indisputable need for improvements (particularly in the area of housing). Undergraduate alumni generally supported some changes for the graduate schools, but not at the expense of undergraduate changes. General opinion appeared to support the initial allocation of resources for the improvement of student life among undergraduates. Additionally, a few alumni suggested renovating the River Cluster and Choates for use as graduate student housing, due to its close proximity to some of the graduate student facilities.

By far, the most frequent subject addressed was that of the CFS system, with sixty percent of all respondents voicing some opinion on this issue. Opinions ranged from one extreme to the other. Some alumni felt that the College should cease the operations of all fraternities, while others felt that the College should let the fraternities tend to their own matters. Many alumni raised a concern that, as one respondent wrote, the entire SLI process was “contrived to cover a preordained decision to eliminate the frat system.”

Many alumni from all three reaction groups (positive, negative, and mixed) felt that the changes in the CFS residency requirements combined with the requirements pertaining to physical plant improvements would place such economic pressures on the fraternities that they could not survive. There was a concern that nobody (alumni, banks, etc.) will want to invest in houses’ physical upgrades when houses might be closed following the 5-year review. Among those who supported the CFS system, there was strong opposition to the residence of UGAs within the fraternities and sororities.

The feedback from the alumni of co-ed organizations (Phi Tau and Tabard) indicated that they felt that they already abided by many of the study’s recommendations and therefore, they should not be “lumped in” with the fraternities and sororities for review. In addition, they worried that their weaker membership numbers will be more adversely affected by the residency requirements than most fraternities.

Other alumni who had been members of smaller houses argued that while their houses tended to be more diverse in membership, they would not be able to survive more stringent residency restrictions and financial requirements. They felt their demise would be a contradiction to the committee’s overall objective. Only the stronger, more elitist, fraternities would survive, reducing options for those that were interested in increased diversity.

Some alumnae objected to the recommendation that new CFS houses not be recognized. They feel that the College should recognize new CFS houses while closing some of the “weaker” houses, and that there is a dire need for another sorority on campus. The current lack of parity in the number of fraternity and sorority houses would justify the recognition.

Some alumni wrote that fraternities should be closed, as other options would not successfully develop with fraternities in place. However, many alumni from all three reaction groups felt that the College should not close the fraternities, unless another social option was in place. It was generally felt that this move would be misguided were successful and well-received alternate social options not in place.

A large number of alumni wrote that they felt the College should attempt to create, rather than reduce, social options. They thought the CFS system should be retained as one option (with some revisions), while the College develops other social options for students.

There was also a strong concern among alumni that a reduction of the CFS system will result in an increase in the number of students who drive off-campus to drink alcohol, with related potentially deadly outcomes.

Two individuals wrote about the recent closing of fraternities at Bowdoin College, suggesting that the similarities in size and rural geographic setting, make it a good case for the College to study in considering this issue.

Only one person commented (at the site of a satellite broadcast) on senior societies to say that his participation in this type of organization had been very important to him and to wonder about the effect of the study on senior societies. Virtually no other comments pertained to recommendation 5 (regarding senior societies and undergraduate societies) or recommendation 6 (regarding academic affinity houses and programs).

The issue of alcohol produced another wide range of opinion. Some alumni felt that the College should make no changes current alcohol policies, while others felt that the College should implement a strict alcohol policy to reduce the amount of alcohol on campus.

Many alumni felt that the College should allow the local authorities to enforce the laws regarding the legal drinking age of 21. Many felt that the majority of the alcohol suggestions within the report were too unrealistic and extreme, citing the recommendation that any party of six or more people be registered with the College, as a number that was very low and should be increased if parties are to be registered.

There was also criticism about the implementation of additional rules, with some alumni stating that an increase in the number of rules will lead to an increase in the rebelliousness of students.

Once again, alumni worried that overly-strict alcohol policies throughout campus, may increase the likelihood of drinking and driving to off-campus locations.

Regarding the creation and release of the SLI report, the vast majority of alumni were complimentary. They felt that the dissemination of information was very efficient and commended the communications process. Many complimented the satellite broadcast

and appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback via the SLI web site and the CRG e-mail address.

Alumni continued to criticize the release of information in February 1999, yet most felt the College certainly attempted to reach all alumni regarding the SLI committee report in January 2000.

Some alumni indicated that they would appreciate the opportunity to participate in a chat room or view the total feedback on this topic were it posted on the web site.

Many alumni emphasized the need for the College to continue to gather input from alumni and students in determining the next step regarding the SLI process and the implementation of recommendations.

A variety of additional suggestions were received from alumni, most commonly pertaining to the Dartmouth Plan. Many alumni felt that the SLI report attributed a lack of continuity and stability on campus to the Dartmouth Plan. As a result, these alumni felt that the College should study and evaluate the Dartmouth Plan to consider whether the College's academic and residential schedule should continue to follow this format.

Recommendation 1 - Create a Greatly Enhanced System of Residential Clusters at Dartmouth

The following 48 comments from alumni were selected from 117 responses received pertaining to residential life:

- The “cluster” idea sounds a lot like the house system at Harvard, and the idea that this plan will attract students with higher SAT scores is out of touch—the type of student who chooses Harvard over Dartmouth will not care that Dartmouth is experimenting with some new social system.
- Give as much money as you want to residential clusters, etc. But let students decide ultimately their fate, both in residential and social choices. After all the students are adults. And I would argue that allowing a market to decide will result in the best overall system, rather than one handed down centrally, no matter how many committees are involved.
- I deplore the tendency to counter college problems with construction of buildings. There is less and less open space on campus. We used to solve housing problems by encouraging students to come to the college during the summer term, rather than during the busy fall and winter. Some student complained about how this affected their social life, but I thought I still had a pretty good social life at Dartmouth, and summer there was positively delightful.
- The dorms definitely need updating, and I like the idea of strengthening the cluster concept. When returning from an off campus opportunity, students will feel “at home” more quickly when their residence hall and peers there remain basically the same.
- The administrations repeated attempts to create a Harvard style house system are out of touch with the history of the college, the character of its students, and the realities of being a school without a city. The proposed plan is doomed to smother the special spark of Dartmouth in social engineering and a “nanny” role for the college.
- I question the creation of the freshman dorms at River cluster and Choate. Why punish the Freshmen? Part of my experience as a Freshman was meeting upper classmen and learning the Dartmouth experience through them.
- As a practical matter, I think that grouping the freshman together, especially in remote locations such as Choate or the River cluster, is unwise. I think being upcampus and feeling integrally connected to the school by being so is incredibly important to any student’s adjustment. Just moving to Hanover made most of us feel far from home, but to be far from our classes as well might make the adjustment more difficult. I also remember visiting my sister’s exclusively freshman dorm at Harvard,

before I attended Dartmouth, and was so happy that, when I arrived at Dartmouth, I was able to meet students in other classes right away. There were older students from whom to learn and who could help me assimilate into the school.

- The idea proposed to create a first year set of clusters is a significant mistake. Dartmouth's new students need to be integrated into campus life from their first few moments on campus. The Choates were bad when I was there. The Rivers were bad when my daughter lived there. To subject a large proportion of new students to them would isolate them, give them a bad taste which would be immediately communicated to their friends at home and on other campuses. Bulldoze these two sets of dorms and create some well-designed and well appointed ones to replace them.
- Dorms are too small. Make housing a selling point not the negative it now is. Dorm quality is quite varied. If one gets a "bad" random number each year, then that person never gets to be in a "good" dorm. Make all dorms equally attractive. It will take money, but what is the endowment for anyway?
- The cluster idea is what really caught my attention and gains my approval. My primary reason for concern is that my son will be matriculating at the College next fall. We made a very difficult choice to send him to Phillips Academy, rather than the public school at which I teach. One reason that Andover was more attractive than Exeter was its cluster program and first year housing of freshmen in separate houses. Both made the school smaller and easier to adjust to the twin demands of being away from home and being a "small fish in a big pond." Despite the tremendous credentials the College rightly brags about, a similar system will benefit freshmen in their adjustment. After all, these are students just out of high school.
- Is it wise to start the housing initiative designed to spread the first year student throughout the housing system by banishing them en masse to the River cluster which is undeniably the most inhospitable housing available? Having spent a lifetime one winter down there I would not want to see a whole class of students to be subjected to that experience.
- I believe a high-quality, de-centralized dining system would do much to improve the student quality of life at Dartmouth. Dining rooms, not snack bars, should be considered for the residential clusters.
- I would also like to record my opposition to the recommendations regarding first-year dorms and cluster living. Has there been vocal student opposition to first-years living alongside upperclassmen? I always thought that fostered our sense of community and further contributed to Dartmouth's uniqueness. In this case, being unique is definitely a good thing.
- The most important point regards the new social spaces that may be affiliated with dormitory clusters. Dartmouth's campus is surely a monument to and physical manifestation of the College. It should not be marred by additions to dormitories or

squeezing new buildings between them. Putting all new social spaces affiliated with existing dorms either inside their current structures or in entirely separate locations (far from those dorms in some cases) may require scaling back ambitions regarding these new spaces and the strength of sense of identity some may hope the clusters will one day have. In short, any effort to make Dartmouth more like Yale, Harvard, and Princeton in this regard may not be feasible.

- Equality in housing is fine, but sounds expensive and may not be necessary. I have no problem with students roughing it a bit for part of their four years, as long as they can move up to better digs as they gain seniority.
- I think the majority of the proposals are excellent barring the idea of freshman-only dormitories. The freshman gain perspective on living as adults and doing their work by virtue of the fact that they are residing with upperclassmen. Furthermore, as a 3 year River resident, I can attest that psychologically the River feels far away from the rest of Campus and to encourage a bunch of young 18 year olds to live in isolation from the greater community would do a real disservice to them.
- The constructive ideas for creating new social choices that are well-funded to draw people away from the fraternity system are good. New dormitories with attractive social spaces can help balance the system. However, the primary draw of fraternities is that Mom and Dad aren't there. Nothing is more uncool than a party at a dormitory, with a band picked by the Dean, serving Kool-Aid. College students don't want the authorities circulating through their parties any more than we adults want uniformed police on the dance floor of our favorite nightclub. In short, I think draconian regulations are an inappropriate way to effect social change.
- Forcing students to live in a cluster for an extended period of time does not further the unification of campus OR the social lives of students. What happens junior winter when your friends all leave campus and you cannot change dorms to be with the friends that are there? Sure, you meet new people by you'd meet new people living with your friends but when your friends come back in the spring, there's a good chance you'll hang out with them and not with all of the new people you met in the winter. So that didn't really help anyone, and you were wishing your friends were in your dorm anyway. Students spending time in their cluster will spend time in their cluster, or in their friends' clusters, and will not associate with other students any more than they do now.
- Why not assign/integrate the CFS houses with the proposed clusters, say 2 to a cluster. The members of the cluster could program the use of the houses for their social and residential purposes. They might even wish to maintain say one fraternity and one sorority, but the decision would grow out of the preferences of all of the members of the cluster. In this way the CFS houses become a democratically-determined social and residential extension of the cluster system.

- I think enhancing residential options is critical to providing a more meaningful Dartmouth experience. Most importantly, I wholeheartedly endorse the elimination of the River Cluster dorms. I only lived there one term, but the isolation and cinder blocks depressed nearly everyone I knew who spent more time there. The Choates, I recall, at least had a bit more camaraderie amongst their residents, but I would suggest a complete renovation or removal.
- I applaud and support strongly the effort to reconceive residential life at Dartmouth and to link it more strongly with the intellectual mission of the College.
- As a Russell Sage 'shmen who was banished to the River cluster for sophomore year, a few comments: No amount of dressing up the River Cluster or placating students with special programs will make it a wonderful place to live. It is too far away to give undergrads the sense of really being “on campus,” and its room layout is that of a motel, not a mini-community. Also, the idea of making the River Cluster or any cluster into a freshman cluster, even temporarily, is a mistake — you will create the equivalent of a coed freshman frat-house, a freshman zoo. All freshmen should be in class-integrated dorms, to connect them to the larger student community from the start, as well as to a particular cluster with which they can remain in subsequent years.
- Without truly distinct architectural entities, I fear the new clusters will be little more than shared dining facilities. It will take huge expenditures and major architectural changes to make the college system take root culturally.
- I spent four years in Hinman (three with the same room and roommate). I was shocked by the lack of residential continuity as described in the Committee Report, and I suspect that many of the other symptoms of social unrest relate to that lack of roots. I would encourage my sons to consider Williams first if they were qualified and interested in an Eastern liberal arts education. Dartmouth seemed to take its isolation as an excuse to live without a strong societal conscience, whereas Williams used a similar isolation as a reason to develop its own strong society. I would hope that Williams’ residential system would have earned strong consideration as one way to modify Dartmouth’s system. Reinvention of the wheel can be an exceedingly inefficient process!
- The “enhanced residential cluster” sounds a lot like the Choate Cluster, which was the result of an earlier experiment in social engineering. I lived in Brown Hall freshman year, and found it quite inferior to the traditional dorms. You can’t create a social group simply by creating “social space” nearby.
- I find considerable merits in making the River Cluster and Choate Clusters housing just for first year students. No expenditure or planning will change the fact that the River cluster is far-removed from the rest of campus. I lived there all but one term. I hated it. Those assigned to the River Cluster should have the opportunity to escape after one year.

- Although recommendations #1-3 call for many new facilities, there is no concern expressed for their impact on the environment, including Dartmouth's unique setting and atmosphere.
- Students should be allowed to change their minds. They may want to live in one cluster for awhile, but may later want to switch to another. You need to ensure sufficient flexibility in the rules so students can adjust their lifestyle without undue hassle.
- It is my sense that housing improvements that give students better common areas are good. Students may CHOOSE to live in these facilities. Those RULES that restrict choices (like the setting of high [in some cases prohibitively high] standards for the CFS) are bad. If a student opts for CFS living, that is CHOICE.
- Forcing people to stay in cluster for 3 years will not make them friends without a shared experience that goes beyond simply being present on the Hanover plain. There will be little bonding and the school will be poorer for it. The way you can succeed is by failing. If the students don't like the dorm mothers, the party monitors, the social redtape and the student governors trying to get them to do what they don't want to do, then they will unite in opposition. So perversely if you fail, you will have a more united, but more unhappy student body.
- I was particularly pleased to see the carefully constructed emphasis upon shifting the balance of social activities from fraternities to College-built residences.
- Because of your reforms in the area of residential life, Dartmouth will soon be a much healthier, much more constructive place for a student to get his/her college degree.
- Building more dorms for undergraduates and graduate students is long overdue and great. I am class of 66 and we were crowded then. My son is there now in the class of 2001 and it is even worse as you may know.
- I am very concerned about the suggestion to create first-year housing clusters separate from upper class students and creating residence clusters that would house students in one dorm for the majority of their time on campus. Although this clustered approach works at an institution like Harvard which is large, decentralized and very impersonal, I worry about the results in a community-based campus such as Dartmouth. Several studies show that contact with other students, including upper class students, has a very positive effect on student retention.
- In order to cement long standing friendships small groups of 5-10 must be formed. In order to encourage them, facilitators from students themselves or faculty should be in place at each cluster groups to be focused according to subject of interest.

- The idea of segregating freshmen in the River Cluster and Choate is simply god-awful. I well remember the sense of isolation people living there had, especially in the dead of winter. Part of what I enjoyed most about my Dartmouth experience was the interaction with upperclassmen (and women) in my dorm. If I had known I would be segregated into a freshman ghetto. I would probably have gone to Princeton. The reason I object to the dorm-centric approach to socialization is that it is fundamentally involuntary. It essentially imposes on people a default social group. I would much rather see the College provide some facilities and let people form their own social groups centered around interests (music was mine). This is facilitation, not coercion.
- When I was at Dartmouth (84-88) there was a cluster system in place, along with a faculty-in-residence program. This system worked fine for those who chose to participate in it, and is a good anchor for freshman, but upperclassmen and/or non-student-council types are left cold by attempts to “manufacture” community.
- The College administration is still trying to force the students into a social life that revolves around College-controlled clusters rather than letting students decide with whom they will associate and giving them the freedom to set up their own social groups.
- Our group did not see the value of freshman only housing. We all felt that our experience as freshmen living around upper classmen was valuable. Dartmouth already has one of the strongest “class identities” in the country (witness 40 years out and people still identify themselves as a ’60). If we are short housing, build it (but please make it look nice).
- I will strongly endorse recommendation 1 to add 2-350 bed dorm clusters and move to a cluster concept for the whole college. The College should look to see if more beds may be needed. The de-compression and social space construction may take so many existing beds that further construction is needed, and this doesn’t address the River or Choate dorms. The move to allow students to stay in the same cluster will require some “spare” beds to account for ups and downs in attendance. I don’t know where this will fall, but certainly, 700 new beds are needed now. The “cluster software” recommended by the committee seems to me to be pre-mature now, wait and see as clusters firm up with social space. I’m not sure that Dartmouth needs a whole new infra-structure to oversee cluster social planning. I think that the present student organizations should be left alone to see how they may expand and fill the need on their own.
- We need to see an architectural vision to accompany all the construction plans.
- Having “all freshman” dorms is not a good idea. It penalizes freshmen and makes them wait a year before really becoming a part of the College. See what goes on at Williams if you want to see why it is a bad idea. Williams does have a good idea in its senior townhouse facilities at “Poker Flats.” This is worth emulating.

- Very supportive of a system of providing greater continuity among the students as they wind their way through the Dartmouth plan. Some concerns about the dollars involved, comments as to how past administrations could let so many students that want to live on campus be poorly served by the College, and special concern about the suggested bureaucracy with the clusters and the isolation of the freshman class. This latter point may be a function of the fact that as the class that entered in 1952, we were not segregated by class and seem to feel - even today - that we benefited from the experience of the upper classmen. However, the class saw it imperative that a building plan to house 350-400 students be started as soon as possible.
- There was consensus among all in the room that Freshman-only housing was not consistent with the Dartmouth Experience and many cited mixed housing as one of the main benefits of attending Dartmouth.
- There was widespread support for all of the proposals except the proposal to segregate part or all of the freshman class. The consensus of the Board is that Dartmouth already instills strong class identification in members of each entering class, and that there is much to be lost by diminishing social interaction between freshman and more mature upperclassmen. While I recognize that at Harvard and Yale, for example, freshman are housed separately from upper classmen, there is ultimately strong identification with specific residential colleges (e.g. at Yale undergraduates are assigned randomly among the residential colleges and know during freshman year the college at which they will spend the balance of their undergraduate years). Assignment to a specific cluster or college is likely to be beyond the scope of the Dartmouth residential proposal, and, absent this element, segregation of the freshman class from the balance of the student body seems questionable.
- I think creative and significant changes in the residential and social system on campus will improve recruitment.
- Undergraduate housing has been and continues to be substandard-both quantitatively - not enough - and qualitatively - just sleeping warehouses. This was true when our class was in college and I am not aware of any meaningful and significant change since then. Any additional housing (some of which was built on the cheap) has been soaked up by higher enrollment. The Report understates the shortfall of "high-quality" (wording from the Report) beds. My feeling is that the number of high quality beds is much closer to 2,000. Most consider River Cluster and Choate as slum housing. Many rooms in other dorms have three occupants and were designed for two, and so on. My feeling is that the need is for close to 1,000 new high quality beds. Residential clusters need to be more than just sleeping places. They need to be and have places for social activity. Dorm rooms are supposedly a place to study. As a practical matter, this often does not work. Are there or will there be sufficient alternative study places available - in the dorms and elsewhere?

- After some reflection, I've decided I really like the idea of housing clusters - it has many of the advantages of the Harvard/Yale house system while preserving the unique Dartmouth flavor of the dorm system. My only real concern about the cluster proposal is the danger that the College administration will become too bureaucratic about the social aspects — UGAs are fine, social directors are fine but the bureaucracy proposed in the report seems much too much and much too heavy-handed (G-D it, you students WILL have a spontaneous social life here even if we have to plan every minute of it for you!). I also think that the River Cluster and the Choate dorms should NOT be used as a first year ghetto of sorts. In fact, the River cluster should either be refurbished and given to the grad students or simply razed, even before replacements are ready. The rooms there were mediocre in the '60s and abominable ever since - the low point of my 25th reunion was the decision of the College to house my classmates who wanted to stay in the dorms in the River Cluster. Even those who otherwise had a wonderful time complained strongly about that decision.

Recommendation 2: Create Other Spaces and Programs for General Use

The following 28 comments from alumni were selected from 135 responses received pertaining social space, social options and dining:

- I fully support more social spaces, a better Collis, more performance spaces, more recreational spaces (I was very disturbed when I was a student by the unavailability of gym time and space to the general public), centralized dining (although I think there should be more healthy options), and other recommendations that give students MORE options instead of taking them away.
- The additions of new living spaces, rooms and social spaces, is certainly needed. Improved dining, social and fitness facilities make sense.
- I believe a high-quality, de-centralized dining system would do much to improve the student quality of life at Dartmouth. Dining rooms, not snack bars, should be considered for the residential clusters. Centralized dining service at Thayer or the north end of campus - even if upgraded - is still mass feeding and not conducive to conversation and other positive social experiences that can be centered around good dining.
- There appears to be a need for new facilities and social spaces on campus. Let's raise the money and do something about it. It seems to me that what is NOT required is a massive, wholesale, "reengineering" of the life and culture of Dartmouth College.
- The World Cultures Initiative should not be part of the Residential and Social life plan. If some group-perhaps a committee reporting to the dean - creates a reasonable plan, and funding is available, then the World Cultures Initiative should be approved. However, because it is a poorly thought-out response to an alleged problem that cannot reasonably be affected by it, it might color perceptions of the entire residential and social life plan. The world Cultures Initiative seems to reflect an impulse that SOMETHING must be done about the alleged lack of inter-group understanding or some similar alleged problem. No one can seriously believe that individuals who attitudes need changing will change them in response to attending such programming voluntarily, or, worse, involuntarily. Some detractors see the entire Student Life Initiative as having a similar character. That is, some see it as a poorly thought-out response to an alleged problem with overtones of political incorrectness. The World Cultures Initiative, if adopted as part of the general plan, will further the conclusion that the whole plan is an attempt to put appearances first, however foolish may be the notion that the means of creating those appearances will actually improve student life. To reiterate, a World Cultures Initiative, if and when it is well thought-out would be a good idea of itself.
- I enjoyed that availability of classrooms and libraries for studying. In North Fayerweather the lounge and kitchen were helpful. If using more kitchens you might consider nutritional education and/or cooking education.

- Increased social spaces for clusters of dorms is also a good idea since they are pretty far out of the way.
- Quit trying to play around with Social Engineering and put your money and effort into education. If you have eliminated “mystery meat,” it’s not necessary to make the Dining Hall another McDonalds.
- I feel the recommendations fail to address two significant possible consequences of encouraging a “snack” based diet: 1) The issue of student health. I am not a nutritionist, and don’t feel qualified to discuss the issue in detail, but my impression is certainly that there is a significant health dimension that needs to be investigated. It would be reasonable to assume that additional “snacking” facilities could have a significant impact on student’s diets, especially if they opt for snacks over regular meals. I therefore feel it would be irresponsible for the College not to investigate this further. 2) The social aspect of dining. If students are likely to make use of the “snack” facilities as an alternative to meals, I believe it will cause more damage than good to the Community. Snacks tend to be individualistic, whereas meals are almost inherently social activities as you almost always seek to engage in them as a group. I think it would be detrimental to the Community’s social dimension if there are too many ways of opting out of having a meal and the interaction it brings.
- Instead of spending vast sums on utopian social environments, spend that money on that which Dartmouth should be doing best: providing the best teachers and the best educational programs available.
- It is not the responsibility of the college to provide social alternatives to students. The college’s responsibility is to teach.
- Little pockets of food scattered around campus are a proven way to enliven the overall social atmosphere of a campus and to strengthen campus-wide social fabric, as are common areas at dorms which people naturally would pass through to get to their rooms.
- It will always be a terrible mistake to interfere so overtly and fundamentally with the social system of a college. The students are mature enough to make their own choices.
- I was particularly pleased to see the carefully constructed emphasis upon shifting the balance of social activities from fraternities to College-built residences.
- If attracting students from urban areas requires making Hanover more urban, forget it. There could never be the social options there that are available in cities. Its location and ambiance are attractions - and should appeal to some who wish to escape urban life.

- Putting dining halls in residence clusters will most likely serve to create a segmented sense of community rather than a sense of community as a whole.
- The underlying text of the Student Life Initiative is this: Dartmouth students are not socializing in an appropriate manner and we must therefore control how they socialize. It's tremendously insulting, not just to the current students, but to all of the alumni who apparently managed to graduate from Dartmouth socially stunted.
- The SLI report recommendation #2, titled "Create other spaces and programs for general use." I refer to Pres. Wright's letter of Feb. 9, 1999. There is no mention to "programs for general use" in the original tasks of the SLI committee. I refer to the SLI update of Sept. 1999, which makes no reference to this expansion of the committee's tasks. It seems that somewhere the committee has chosen to expand its tasks.
- I think central dining should continue at Dartmouth. As a student, I did not eat at Thayer, after Freshman Commons in old College Hall, but now, I think it would have enhanced my college experience. Eating habits have changed drastically since my UG years, but central dining should stay. I also believe additional central dining space is needed. The location of additional central dining should be part of the College's ongoing study on the future physical shape of the campus. Presumably, this will result in the new "North Campus."
- I think additional "snack" facilities need to be provided at two or three locations across the campus. The "snack" facilities in Collis are excellent and well used. These facilities can provide light meals, snacks and "coffee house" atmosphere. They need long hours, today's students stay up all hours and a social space to meet these hours is important. I believe a large flat-floor assembly hall is needed. Presently, the west floor at Alumni Gym seems to be the usual venue.
- The "World Culture Initiative," I believe is not part of the SLI committee's task. But, I don't think we need a new department, permanent staff, funding and space to tell students they are part of the world full of diverse cultures.
- I believe new space is mixed. Performance space should be in part of the new social space in the dorm clusters. Rehearsal space should be part of the respective humanities department.
- Probably additional recreation and fitness facilities in Alumni Gym and possibly some on new north campus. I think most of the balance of the recommended additional sports space should rightly be the purview of the committee reviewing changes in Alumni Gym.
- There is total support for this initiative and total support for doing everything possible to make sure that the space is provided for "dining together." Not much enthusiasm for the World Culture Initiative.

- Regarding social spaces, let me point out that there is no such thing as a “truly diverse, multicultural, multiethnic, multiracial environment.” What is the point of making this statement? It is not only redundant, it is pure folly. Is the committee saying that the College must provide some kind of comfortable little nest of ethnicity for each and every self-described group that identifies itself on campus? I say, let the students find their way. Don’t help create ways for them to avoid interaction, and socialization, in the name of diversity.
- I think creative and significant changes in the residential and social system on campus will improve recruitment.
- On social space issues (dining facilities, social gathering places, etc.) I also think CSLI was mostly on target, although I would suggest a second 1,000+ person gathering place, not just one, and I would suggest strong efforts to give control over the Hanover Inn and Hopkins Center spaces to the new social space coordinating body.
- There seem to have been several eruptions of “political correctness” in the report which I hope will not be seized upon by opponents of the report to vilify its contents and conclusions. I’m specifically referring to the “World Culture Initiative” section and the reference to a magazine article that warned gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered” prospective students away from Dartmouth and several other institutions. Both of these brief references in the report appear quite possibly to be a sop thrown to one or more members of the committee - they just don’t seem to fit either in tone or in content with the rest of the document.

Recommendation 3: Improve Residential and Social Life for Graduate Students

The following 10 comments from alumni pertain to this recommendation:

- I would like to voice my support for the recommended student life initiatives regarding graduate students. I am appreciative of the recommendations, as they highlight much needed improvements in the lives of graduate students. The symbiotic relationship between graduate students and the College will be greatly strengthened when the recommendations come to fruition.
- There was no discussion on this point since many of us that attended Tuck, Thayer, and the Medical School still felt very much a part of the undergraduate scene. It was mentioned that this ought to be a lower priority than the “fixes” to the undergraduate residential life.
- I can discern no support whatsoever for devoting any substantial resources to graduate student housing, particularly if such resources would otherwise be devoted to enhancing the undergraduate experience.
- I think the reccos for the improvement of residential and social life for graduate students – i.e. more graduate housing, a graduate center - are timely and good. They would solve real needs.
- The River Cluster should either be refurbished and given to the grad students or simply razed, even before replacements are ready.
- Why should the College be in the business of providing on-campus housing, especially for grad students? Where is the data for demand for on-campus university provided housing?
- Does the committee really believe “social options” are significant factors that grad students consider when applying to schools? It certainly wasn’t the case among my MBA classmates.
- Why not turn it (the River Cluster) over to graduate students, who have had their “undergrad experience” already, and who may wish to be near the Thayer School anyway? Better this than building all new graduate housing. Why not put some grad students in with the remaining undergrads until the new undergrad housing is ready? Give undergrads large singles until the full transition is made.
- I am writing to you today to express my strong support to the Student Life Initiatives, especially regarding the Graduate Student Community. If you think it is hard for undergraduates to live in the middle of nowhere with 4,000 others, imagine how difficult it is for graduate students whose age ranges from 23 to 30 years old and 600

others. I am really happy to read that you seem committed to improve this situation and I really hope the committee won't let the report rejoin the numerous others written in the past for graduate students, that I personally filed last year as President of the Graduate Student Council, and that never led to any action.

- We applaud the recommendations of the Committee on the Student Life Initiative to include the needs of graduate students, specifically, the building of apartment-style housing for 100-150 graduate students (taking into account the needs of those students with families), the construction of a graduate student center, and the creation of new transportation options and travel pathways. Adequate housing, social space and transportation for graduate students are desperately needed at Dartmouth, not only to improve the well being of the students who are already here but also to insure that the graduate programs remain competitive. No matter how well-regarded Dartmouth is academically, it is very difficult to attract top graduate students with the current lack of affordable housing. Many graduate students cannot afford a car and some foreign students do not know how to drive, making the lack of housing and transportation a major drawback to those considering Dartmouth as their graduate institution.

Recommendation 4: Make Major Changes in the Coed, Fraternity and Sorority (CFS) Organizations

The following 65 comments from alumni were selected from 170 responses received pertaining to the CFS:

- There was considerable skepticism expressed about statement from the panel that the recommendations are not a disguised effort to banish fraternities by “raising the bar too high.” Several of us wonder how the Committee members can seriously believe the fraternities can finance the very significant repairs, while at the same time systematically limiting the sources of fraternity revenue to pay for the construction (delayed rush PLUS having to subsidize members PLUS no residential income during the summer PLUS paying people to proctor parties AND FINALLY suggesting a policy to eliminate residential fraternities in five years.). Who would loan money to the fraternities to finance massive repairs if there is a reasonable chance the fraternities may lose their primary source of revenue to service the debt in five years? Why does College recognition depend on the success of the latest sophomore rush and not on some other measurement more directly related to economic viability?
- Since the May meeting of the Alumni Council I have been highly skeptical of the whole SLI process. I, like many others, need a lot of assurance that the SLI process hasn't been contrived to cover a preordained decision to eliminate the fraternity system.
- Don't destroy the CFS system by choking it off until most of the construction is done and we know whether the cluster system is really providing a viable social alternative that most of the students accept. Remember, fraternities came into being by student initiative. Further, until the new housing is built, we need the CFS beds.
- I was disappointed that the tone of the report reflected such “anger” at the CFS system and took the tack of needing to “punish” these student-run activities. The College, at every level, has the right to establish rules and policies and the desire to enforce them. I think that we have pretty reasonable rules and policies today, but lack the desire to enforce them.
- In spite of the fact that a large percentage of the classmates in attendance were members of fraternities while undergraduates, this section of the report elicited a surprisingly small number of comments. I think that this was largely due to the fact that a classmate who can be particularly outspoken had already addressed this issue in a positive fashion and had indicated that a recent meeting in Hanover since the issuance of the report had convinced the members of the Alumni Board that there was a genuine spirit of negotiation on the issues of CFS governance. Classmates were truly concerned about whether an existing social system - even with its problems - should be disbanded prior to the creation and testing of an alternative.

- I do not see a need for every selective social organization with a residence to have a UGA. First, they are not members of the house. Second, since they are not members, they do not have any incentive to “serve the needs of the entire organization.” Third, it puts a social and financial burden on the house as the UGA takes the place of a dedicated, dues-paying member. Fourth, social tensions may arise between the UGA and the members - is this UGA an employee of the organization, subsidized by the College, sent to tell them what to do and organize their organization? What exactly are the parameters of this position?
- Giving Safety and Security and other College officers free access to all residence-based organizations basically turns the College into a police state where no place is private. Some sort of privacy protocol needs to be established, such as a house officer being notified one hour in advance.
- I do not support the idea that CFS houses become non-residential during the summer. Joining a house and being in it sophomore summer gives young house leaders a good opportunity to learn the ropes and it also fosters a great sense of community within house members. Many repairs are done by house members in the summer, and if people didn't live there, it would be difficult to get people to do these repairs. Instead, certain rooms could go unoccupied during the summer on a rotating basis.
- Registered parties should be able to take place in the basement as well as on the ground floor of selective residence-based organization's facilities due to size constraints. Also, this would enable some houses to keep at least part of their houses clean.
- Fraternity life and the fraternity social scene, at least at the fraternity I joined revolved almost exclusively around drinking and conversations about sex and who had sex with whom. I don't think that allowing teenage boys and young men unlimited access to alcohol in an all-male setting with no supervision can lead to much that is positive. I have little doubt that the fraternities at Dartmouth help to foster homophobia, sexist attitudes about women and even sexual assault, and an odd sort of elitist “rebelliousness” which amounts to little more than an obnoxious entitlement and irresponsibility. Thus, I support the recommendations of the committee. I know that the committee has not recommended doing away with the fraternity system at Dartmouth, but it seems to me that at some point, this is exactly what needs to be done.
- I believe these frat systems often create an environment that encourages young, vulnerable, insecure incoming students to actively choose to not take care of themselves as a false passageway to adulthood. They can thus impair their development of the personal wisdom these young people so need in this important, beautiful time of their lives which will have so much to bear on their futures and is such a time to be savored fully. For indeed, outside the frat system, Dartmouth has so much to offer with the Nature and connected activities, the art facilities, the amazing student body, the high number of female professors, the interesting courses which beg

one to grow, the composition center, etc. It is a rich space and a valuable time, let us provide the best we can and more of it, and take away some of the easy pitfalls incoming students will encounter, namely the frat system.

- The Report missed the mark in characterizing the nature of Coed Houses on campus, instead grouping them in with the single-sex organizations. I pointed out that the Tabard had, throughout its history, embraced change at the College, enacting many reforms voluntarily that were later mandated by different administrations: being among the first houses to break from the national charter because of black and Jewish exclusionary policies; moving to coeducational membership at the start of coeducation at Dartmouth; elimination of selective rush in practice since the mid-80's and in policy since the early 90's; elimination of hazing; full membership privileges for members from the day they pledge, including equal Corporation voting privileges; a statement of purpose on our web site since 1997 embracing the principles of community BEFORE their creation, the disabling of the tap system and its planned removal this spring; a committed and active Corporation leadership (which includes alums, College employees and area residents, as well as undergraduates); and a diversity of membership for many years that matches or exceeds that of the College in general with regard to race, gender and sexual orientation. I concluded by stating that the Tabard has, by its very nature and track record, proven that it supports and embraces the Report's stated objectives of the Initiative and the Principles of Community, and that we are willing to work the Administration in achieving these goals. To put us on the same rung as the fraternities and sororities seems to be inconsistent with those goals.
- A minority of alumni expressed reservations about a number of the rules and regulations which would be imposed upon CFS houses. Although I believe there is widespread support for removal of "taps," there is some concern that many of the rules and regulations would be cumbersome, if not "bureaucratic," and difficult to enforce. For example, I believe that there is less support for installing a UGA representative at each house than for surprise inspections of each house.
- There is widespread, albeit nowhere near unanimous, perception that at least some of the proposed regulations, which will decrease revenue and increase expenses, are intended eventually to topple many, if not all, of the houses now on campus. Some alumni applaud this result, but most do not. In addressing these issues, one question and two comments surfaced repeatedly. First, many who tend to support continuation of CFS houses ask how any house can justify hundreds of thousands of dollars of expenses to comply with standards imposed under the student life initiative in the face of substantial uncertainty that the house will even exist five years in the future? Second, many alumni, whether they applaud or oppose reduction in the number of CFS houses on campus, emphasize that it is imperative that other social arrangements are operational before, not after, at least some CFS houses inevitably close. Third, there is also widespread support for the notion that substantial student input is indispensable in devising new alternatives to CFS houses. Many alumni

believe that, without such input, newly devised alternatives will work well, if at all, only by accident.

- I get the distinct feeling from the tone and sense of the full report that there is an overwhelming conviction among the Administration and faculty that “selective social organizations” (aka fraternities and sororities) need to be eliminated as both residential AND social organizations, but that doing it immediately would cause too divisive a firestorm and would further complicate the housing problem. Therefore, while converting and building needed new clusters and better quality dorm rooms during the next five years, the decision was made to impose a set of profoundly restrictive new interim rules to micro-control the situation during this transition period, with the penultimate decision a foregone but unwritten conclusion to scrap fraternities and sororities altogether in 2005.
- “Reducing” Greek life by eliminating the so-called “weak houses” will have the opposite of the desired effect. Since the “strong” houses, as judged by membership size and financial security, tend to embody the worst that the fraternity system has to offer (i.e. elitism, sexism, alcohol abuse), “reducing” Greek life in the manner proposed will in fact reduce the options available on campus for social outlets and increase the alienation of students who are looking for formal social bonds but can find them neither in teams (perhaps because they are not athletes) nor the so-called “strong” houses. In sum, in addition to adding to social option, the college should be trying to increase the number of individual fraternities and sororities, not decrease them by killing off the “weak” houses.
- I agree that alcohol is an issue at Dartmouth as at many colleges. The fraternities have a long tradition of drinking as their hallmark and that is a difficult thing to break. I am glad that the committee has recommended its changes to the CFS system as described. Although this may just push alcohol consumption further “underground” it should help to ease its hold on the CFS system and open the door for more responsible social activity.
- This is clearly and end-around play to end the Greek system - not as we know it, but as it exists at all. Eliminating summer residence in houses and postponing rush by themselves will destroy the Greek system.
- Why should members of fraternities and sororities carry a heavier load of “voluntary” community service than other students? It reminds me of the Soviet Union’s “voluntary” work days when they sent students from classroom to the collectives to help bring in the harvest.
- My opinion is to make sure the social option is there, but make frats less of a refuge for the under-achievers and those with low self-confidence, and more of a co-ed environment of inspiration among peers who are fired up to make a difference and change the world.

- Over the past five years, I find the applicants I have interviewed concerned that fraternities played too big a role at Dartmouth.
- One size does not fit all. Student life must have many options - the “Greek” option just one of them.
- I believe that the Greek system overwhelms the campus with its seductive alcohol-oriented social life, such that it is difficult to realize how much else the college has to offer. It would be wonderful for incoming students to have a visible alternative to keg parties!
- On the whole, I thought that CSLI cleverly finessed the CFS issue - greatly strengthened standards, tougher enforcement, draining the basement swamps (requiring registered parties to be on the ground floor of houses and closing the basements to drinking was a great touch) all should work. I would predict, though, that many of the houses will meet the new standards and that, when the 5 year review comes along, there will still be about 20 or so houses around and that they still will form a strong (but not as strong) part of the social fabric of the College.
- There may be a paucity of options outside of the CFS system, and the CFS system can be improved upon, no doubt. But the committee is trying to destroy one system as it builds another. Rather, I would propose having various social systems/alternatives compete, and letting the students decide.
- I was not a big fraternity person myself, but believe that college is both an important time for students to have fun, but also organize themselves socially, and learn to live without smothering “adult supervision” whether from parents or the college. Fraternities and sororities help make college fun, but also help students grow up and build close social bonds. I believe the admirable principles of the effort could have been met by working with and strengthening the fraternity/sorority system rather than trying to replace it.
- Not allowing greek houses to be residential is a very double-edged recommendation. Without the income from rent the houses will immediately be unable to meet their financial obligations. Other than being a fun place to live, affiliated housing also provides practical reasons for being valuable: housing in greek houses is a couple of hundred dollars cheaper per term than college housing. A couple of hundred dollars can mean a lot to a student with a large financial aid package. Also relating to financial aid, greek organizations can directly provide students with funds. Through my fraternity I was able to obtain \$1000 a year in scholarships directly for my educational expenses. Having the college add another \$1900 per year (housing and scholarships) to my already huge student loans would have been extremely burdensome.
- Use of CFS spaces for social activities has a long tradition. Some aspects of which are unhealthy and foolish. Refurbishing them and monitoring them more closely may

well be superior to driving “parties” off campus. My fear is that efforts to totally drive alcohol use into College run establishments might well create new and more deadly outcomes. Think things through more fully as this alternative may have potentially serious and unwelcome consequences.

- The report addresses straightforwardly and clearly what I perceive to be the most important issue, the status of fraternities and sororities, and seems to outline appropriate standards and expectations for their continuance.
- By not eliminating the CFS structures out of hand, but making them raise standards and adhere to stricter rules, they should become closer to the ideals expected within the College.
- Under the guise of a review of the residential and social environment at Dartmouth, it promotes a full scale assault on the CFS system. It alleges that the CFS is the root cause of a poor social environment; a culture that fosters alcohol abuse; a lack of concern for diversity; and host of other problems — including the fact that the Upper Valley lacks the amenities of an urban environment. To address these problems, the report recommends a massive capital investment in bricks and mortar to create residence clusters and a standards-driven dismantling of the fraternity/sorority system.
- These initiatives are long overdue, and I can only wish you the best of luck in implementing them. I was not a member of a fraternity as an undergraduate. I know that some fraternities were responsible, but those that set the tone for undergraduate life were unfortunately very irresponsible. The ordinary excuse offered for base behavior was that there were no social alternatives; that claim was partly true, but much abused. Those of us who truly desired some stimulating and interesting social activities away from frat row found ourselves at a loss - to our own great dismay and eventual dissatisfaction with the “Dartmouth experience.”
- Instead of arbitrarily demanding a large membership, residential/social organizations ought to be judged on real virtues such as responsible social programming, inclusive membership practices, community service, and the like. Small, unique organizations should be fostered, not stamped out.
- I was extremely sorry to see that the report left frats and sorority houses in existence. Williams, Amherst, and other selective liberal arts colleges abolished frats years or decades ago. Why, pray, are we dragging our feet on the issue?
- The report recommends adopting the almost irreconcilable goals of placing all interested students in greek houses while refusing to recognize new ones. There is a crying need for at least one more sorority on campus, as the current system cannot accommodate all interested women. The recognition of new sororities, but not fraternities, could be justified by the fact that there is no parity now.

- Only some of the CFS reform recommendations are required to curtail the CFS influence. Stricter physical plant and membership standards will result in thinning out. Because these other measures would decrease the number of houses and the wildness of parties, some of the more invasive recommendations are unnecessary. I object to two in particular: a) Conversion of basements into study or kitchen areas, etc. where alcohol is not allowed. The basement is sort of the fraternity's den. It is where alumni forged bonds of friendship and like to return. b) Live-in non-member UGA's. Why would each house need a full-time programming assistant or advisor, particularly if all residents are seniors or the highest ranking officers?
- As a student (who as a senior was heavily involved in residential life as an Area Coordinator), I saw the harms of the CFS system, ranging from exclusivity to alcohol abuse to encouragement of demeaning if not criminal sexual practices. As an administrator (in the Admissions Office), I saw the damage the system did to Dartmouth's national and international image. As an alum, I see what I consider the continuing legacy of CFS system - blind allegiance and an inability to consider the system dispassionately. As long as Dartmouth is producing a student body that cannot consider all matters critically, it is failing its educational mission.
- By leaving even part of the CFS in place, and yet requiring less exclusionary rush, does the plan not contradict itself? In other words, if a significant number of CFS houses are eliminated, but student interest in the CFS system does not immediately decrease, would this plan not be promoting greater exclusivity? I believe the only way to solve this problem is simply bringing an end to the CFS system.
- The concern I have is with the restriction on students who can live in fraternities to seniors only, except for junior officers. I fear that some houses may not be able to meet their requisite numbers from their senior class membership alone, and still maintain recognition by the College. Age itself is no guarantee of good judgment.
- The de-emphasis on the Greek system is wonderful; I just don't understand why you don't phase it out entirely as the regulation of hazing, etc. will create a response of more extreme underground practices by the students in subverting the 'rules.'
- I agree that something needs to be done about the fraternity mentality. I just think that introducing police and UGA's and inspectors isn't the answer.
- As far as the regulations about housing in the fraternity houses, I was struck by a conflict in the summary statement about the Committee on the Student Life I received. The statement states that residence in CFS houses would be permitted only for seniors and juniors who are officers; residential organizations would have sufficient membership to consistently fill their beds. The fraternity houses are usually filled with an equal split of juniors and seniors. Some are officers and some are not. In order for houses to be viable and to pay their mortgages and insurances, they need to be able to generate revenue. In order to do this, they need to fill their

houses. I believe that this regulation that only junior officers and seniors would stress houses to fill their rooms and would ultimately limit the funds that houses would have to utilize. This would limit their ability to comply with physical plant maintenance or upgrades.

- I am concerned about the proposed changes to Greek house residency. I would like very much to have President Wright specifically address this issue and explain in clear terms how this proposal (allowing only seniors and junior officers to live in a Greek house, and yet still require houses to fill all their beds) supports the five principles? As an alumnus of Phi Tau Coeducational Fraternity, I fail to understand how these proposed residency changes to the Greek system would be in any way beneficial to the College or the Greek houses, and it seems to me to be just a thinly disguised plan to destroy the Greek houses, coeds first.
- Let's face it, this is all about the endemic misbehavior of certain fraternities. Just punish them if they have some hope of reforming, if not, revoke their charters as an example to others.
- I was not a member of any socially separated group - like a fraternity - while at Dartmouth, unless you consider the denizens of the Kiewit basement to be such a group. But you know what? Those people I knew that were part of fraternity life were also part of the fabric of my life, and part of the cultural diversity of Dartmouth. They had freedom, even though it was sometimes abused (is it not sometimes abused everywhere?). That is a good thing. Specifically, leave the fraternities alone. Be bold, even daring: let freedom have its way, and let students choose as they wish. Place your ideas on student life in the free marketplace of ideas, along with the alternatives you do not respect, and let the student choose. If your ideas are compelling, will you not win in a free market? And if they do not win, do you not still have freedom, yourself, not to participate in fraternity life? That is, after all, what each student will be doing the rest of their lives: making free choices, each of which has consequences, both good and bad.
- While I do not dispute that changes to the Greek system are required, why not redirect to the Greeks some of the significant capital that will likely be invested in new dormitories and "social" spaces that historically students have never used. Why not direct efforts to improving the Greek system rather than imposing conditions for survival that are impossible to meet?
- I propose bulldozing the frats and extending Occum Pond.
- I'm glad you're doing this. The first announcement that fraternities would be abolished caught me off-guard and appeared very underhanded. Personally, I benefited greatly from the fraternity experience and still maintain close contact with the friends that developed through the fraternity system. Hopefully, this dialogue can help to provide the faculty with a more balanced perspective regarding the value of fraternities and their significance to Dartmouth.

- Have the guts to do what the UVM Trustees did with the hockey program: SHUT THE FRATERNITIES DOWN! There is no amount of “fine-tuning” that will change a decadent fraternity system. The drunkenness and anti-woman bias are endemic. Any concept of “brotherhood” is a myth.
- I only fear that the new restraints put on fraternity culture will not prove sufficient to meet the report’s overall goals; a reorganization of current fraternities as sets of new - and open - residential cluster (as Williams did thirty years ago) would have been a bolder step still.
- I now know a little of what it must have felt like to live in Stalinist Russia. The CFS members will be watched closer than the party watched its people during this period. This committee simply does not believe in free choice. If they believed that their Residential Life recommendations were truly the centerpiece of their proposals then the destruction of the CFS organizations would not be necessary as the free choice of the students would determine what social alternatives would be enjoyed by all. More choices are better than fewer. Is that not the real reason the CFS organizations have been the dominant force on campus for over 100 years? I guess that obvious reason never occurred to this group.
- Same-sex fraternities and sororities seem to me anachronistic, a vestige of an older, less-enlightened time, inconsistent with the kind of inclusive, education-enhancing structures the Trustees are hoping for. I can see that simply banning them would be problematic, possibly even counter-productive due to the passions it would stir up. So I’m not surprised that the SLI Committee didn’t recommend such a ban. But I would like to see the Committee state more clearly that it seeks to make fraternities and sororities unnecessary, and undesirable.
- I disagree with the “co-ed at any cost” mentality. Some people may not WANT to live in a co-ed situation, or may come from a country where there are taboos against it. Everybody should have the choice to choose a same-sex environment. This holds true for males as well as females.
- I think that offering more social options is a great place to start, but I am concerned that if the college takes away the CFS option before establishing other options that students will readily accept, the system will fail and nothing will change. You can’t change the fundamental attitude of students at the college overnight. When you take away CFS, there will still be the 11-keg parties. Students will just move them to where Safety and Security has no jurisdiction.
- Fraternities are often sexist, elitist and exclusionary, but they also offer a sense of community and bonding on a small scale which is chosen by the individual. These lifetime bonds are not going to be formed by a college wide social organization staffed by college employees.

- The report and plan are totally outrageous, as was expected. The College should have the spine to simply ban fraternity membership outright and fade the heat from students and alumni, since that obviously is the end goal. The College rode out the outrage over ending coeducation, and it'll ride this one out too. Not that fraternities should be banned. It's extraordinarily arrogant, even for college administrators, to try to stamp out fraternities when the overwhelming majority of students and alumni support them. I'm also quite interested to see how long after drying out Webster Avenue it will take for drunk-driving incidents to outpace any formerly perceived problems with fraternities. There undoubtedly is underage drinking and drinking to excess at fraternities, but students WALK to and from fraternity parties, which is highly preferable to the inevitable alternative, which will be for underage students to go off campus to get alcohol.
- It appears that immediate elimination of fraternities and sororities has been replaced with a "five year plan" to push them out or document why they should be thrown out. I get the impression that the administration and the trustees are not happy with what Dartmouth was in the past or what it is now. Rather, it seems they want to redesign it along the lines of another Yale, or make it conform to their idea of what a politically and socially correct university should be. I think the students should be given more choices, not fewer. It is possible to have a diverse student body where respect for others prevails without imposing homogeneity of life styles.
- The Student Life Initiative continues the administration's decades-long attack on fraternities. This attack is unwarranted. The fraternity/sorority system provides necessary social outlets for Dartmouth. From my experience, fraternity/sorority parties were well-attended by members and non-members. In general, the parties were open to the entire Dartmouth community. By contract, the administration-sanctioned and funded events often were not well-attended. Moreover, those parties often were targeted to very narrow segments of the community thereby excluding the mainstream.
- As for housing, let's be realistic that with only seniors and junior officers living in these houses, most CFS organizations will have to fold. Rather than laying down these rather arbitrary and strict guidelines, why not allow the CFS organizations to work on improving the quality of their members, not the quantity? Require any student living in a CFS house to maintain a certain GPA and contribute a certain amount of community service. This would also have the added benefit of creating some degree of peer pressure in the house for its residents not to party too much for fear that a member's GPA might fall below the standard and thus deprive the house of a semester of rent money.
- I am disappointed that the committee did not ban fraternities and sororities outright. As a UGA my junior year, I had to deal with a sobbing, suicidal 18 year old who had been rejected from a fraternity that every one of his friends (4 of them) had got into. A "less exclusive" rush is still rush, and it is still exclusive. Feelings will be hurt and young souls will be crushed.

- The committee should be commended for addressing the objectives without taking a demolition approach to the CFS system. Now that the committee has given the CFS another chance, I sincerely hope the current and near future leaders of the CFS take real steps to eliminate the bad that taints the CFS system and Dartmouth.
- Stop trying to alter the Greek system. It was created by students for students, not for administrators and teetotalers. It is not the responsibility of the college to provide social alternatives to students. The college's responsibility is to teach.
- Most conclusions seem to be based on anecdotal input and not fact. I do not believe the study properly separates cause from effect and the recommendations put forth for the CFS system seemed structured to assure their demise instead of constructively directing them to be a continuing viable part of the college.
- Regarding the Student Life Initiative, I happen to teach at a college - Bowdoin - that decided three years ago to abolish fraternities. Contrary to the fears expressed by many, the move did not generate the outcry one might have imagined, perhaps because it came at the end of a very well planned and comprehensive survey of every single angle of the issues involved. I don't intend to defend the new policy, or to imply that Dartmouth's fraternity system has exactly the same problems encountered here, but I can testify that Bowdoin's decision has changed the profile of the student body, and - in most people's eyes - improved it. Bowdoin students still get drunk and misbehave, as do all college students, but not in the same numbers, and not to the degree that their social life seems out of control.
- I'd like to report on an interesting phenomenon at Bowdoin, where my son is a first year student. Bowdoin, of course, has abolished fraternities, and this is the last year the last fraternity (Psi U) will fly its flag. The college has established clubs, mostly in a set of the old fraternity houses, and assigned students on a random basis. I draw a couple of conclusions from this, although I have only my son and a visit to a club to rely on. (1) Clubs where kids are randomly assigned, like dorms, are not very effective social structures for undergraduates. (2) Kids will tend to form groups of their own, and party together. They need some voluntary association, and sense of kinship. (3) That association probably doesn't have to have Greek letters in its name, although they're not prima facie evidence of depravity. (4) Moderate college drinking is possible, and maybe even desirable. (5) the real problem for Dartmouth is to decide whether college-supported social institutions or fraternities (I know, they're partly college-supported), should prevail, and whether the former can allow kids to select their own peers, in any way.

Recommendation 5: Conduct a Review of Senior Societies and Undergraduate Societies

This is the only comment received pertaining to the review of senior and undergraduate societies:

- One alumnus asked what role senior societies will fill in the future. Apparently, his view of the role of such societies is vastly more important than I had ever understood their role to be. If that role is significant, the future of such societies should be addressed expressly. If not, perhaps this comment can be set aside.

Recommendation 6: Conduct a Review of Academic Affinity Houses and Programs

There were no alumni comments pertaining to the review of academic affinity houses and programs.

Recommendation 7: Introduce New Guidelines for Alcohol and Other Drugs

The following 31 comments from alumni were selected from 89 responses received pertaining to alcohol and other drugs:

- I think the idea of having Thursday morning exams and harder class loads to discourage drinking is the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard of. Students drink because they're stressed out by their schoolwork and they need to relax and have fun. Adding more class work is NOT going to solve the problem, and, I would guess, increase the chance of stress becoming unbearable, resulting in drug abuse or potentially suicide.
- Future summaries should include among the highlights of the plan the proposal for expanded opportunities for legal drinking of alcohol on campus. This is of great importance, because restriction of alcohol consumption on campus creates a risk of increased alcohol consumption off campus, which is considerably more dangerous.
- Just because you tell students they can't drink, doesn't mean they won't. The more severe you make the penalties for breaking the rules, the more students want to break them and the more clever they will be in finding ways to do so. I am definitely concerned about the amount of alcohol that is consumed on campus, but I think there has to be a better way of encouraging students to do the right thing, rather than punishing them severely for breaking rules.
- In its zeal to solve a serious alcohol problem that exists with young people all over the country who are under 21, the recommendations seem to trample the freedom of association that is so fundamental to a free society.
- Alcohol and drugs must be dealt with logically and firmly to ensure a healthy and productive student life. Kids will be kids, but their activities must be monitored in a positive direction because some do not know their limits and the subsequent consequences.
- The academic measures for controlling alcohol abuse are the equivalent to putting a hole in the bottom of a beer glass so you do not drink so much. Eliminate this statement and stick to what really is important, education, rules and regulations.
- Recommendation 7, concerned with new guidelines for alcohol and other drugs, is generally reasonable. I take exception to only two provisions. One goes against the general proposition that the rules will apply to all campus organizations, all students, and all academic-oriented campus events to which students are invited. A special rule would apply to selective social organizations: registered parties in a selective resident-based organization's facility could only be conducted on the ground floor.

The need for this exception is not spelled out. I'd prefer to drop this special rule, or adopt it for all registered parties as well, thus making it a general rule. The second exception relates to the suggestion that administrators and faculty consider the use of "academic measures" to break current alcohol habits. The purposes of the academic enterprise lie elsewhere.

- "Academic measures" cannot be used as tools for social control without degrading and distorting their fundamental objectives.
- The general consensus of our group was that this was the weakest part of the report - given the seriousness of the problem both at Dartmouth and at college campus' throughout the United States. One classmate likened it to the federal government's "War on Drugs." Lots of rhetoric and ideas with little chance of success. It was also agreed that there are no easy solutions, but that suggestions such as restricting the number of people that can drink without a server are idealistic and will probably do nothing but drive the students off campus.
- The recommendations for alcohol reform is absolutely imperative and should stand on its own - quite apart from the CFS reforms.
- One other concern has been voiced consistently. Alcohol will be consumed by undergraduates in any event. The College must focus on programs to support responsible drinking. Some alumni are concerned that, if alcohol is unavailable in most large gatherings or social events, some undergraduates will drink to excess in the privacy of their dormitory rooms, thereby exacerbating the existing problem of alcohol abuse. Some thoughtful alumni indicate that the College must further publicize and support both education and treatment with respect to alcohol abuse. It is important to communicate that seeking treatment for alcohol abuse is supported unconditionally by the College; that student confidentiality will be protected in all events; and that seeking such treatment or assistance will not form the predicate for subsequent disciplinary action.
- Does the plan call for no more kegs or no more kegerators? If I'm not mistaken they tried to abolish kegs once; the only thing that happened was that the recycling bill for thousands of beer cans went through the roof it didn't slow anyone's drinking at all — in fact, it's faster to open a can and give it to someone than it is to pour a beer.
- Flagrant and repeated cases of binge drinking should be harshly dealt with as patently anti-social and disgracefully wasteful of Dartmouth's precious resources. All students and parents must be explicitly informed that incidents of binge drinking will be immediately reported to parents (and others) and that repeat offenders will be suspended or expelled. Dartmouth cannot afford an extensive substance abuse intervention and counseling program and should not embark upon one.

- Many of the respondents see a need to deal with the abuse of alcohol. The committee's recommendations drew no criticism, at least from the group with whom I spoke.
- I am an alcoholic who has not had a drink for years. I am certainly not motivated by a romanticized view of booze or unaware of its dangers. I just think the college has no sense of proportion when trying to deal with the problem. Moreover, the more I read their report the more intrusive and paternalistic it seems. The proposed "alcohol police" might borrow their handbook from the religious police in Saudi Arabia. In my opinion, what the College is trying to impose is a very illiberal regime based on one group's idea of what is good for the other.
- That the committee recommends on page 36 that registered social events "be required to end by 2:00 am on any day with no classes the next day, or 12 midnight on any day with classes the next day" is insulting to Dartmouth students. If 100 legal students want to drink until 5 am on Tuesday night, let them. This isn't high school. If they're 21, then they're consenting adults.
- The idea that the college will decide whether 20 year old men and women will have a beer or glass of wine during their social interactions is a joke. They are going to lead their Dartmouth life just like they lead their semester abroad. The result will be an increased amount of off campus activity which is not what you want. There will be more viewing of the administration as an opponent rather than an ally. Sounds like a prep school rather than a University full of young adults learning about life.
- To the extent alcohol abuse is a social and/or health problem, it should certainly be addressed. But the draconian responses to violations of the proposed alcohol code belies a puritanical, not a public health, response to those who do not conform. It also raises the question of why the College does not rely on the existing state authorities to monitor and enforce public laws regarding alcohol and social order. And then the report recommends the College should go into the business of selling booze! If alcohol is such a scourge at Dartmouth, this would be the height of hypocrisy!
- Unless the existing alcohol laws are enforced, the social/residential designs are tentative. I do not believe the administration can design its way past the alcohol problem. If the present laws and regulations cannot be enforced because of the concern of becoming "a police state," what is the impetus that changes that concern in the enforcement of a large number of additional regulations? It seems to me that the offenders should be held responsible for the consequences of their actions in addition to sanctioning the fraternity. If the alcohol offense is serious and the offender is found guilty he/she should be expelled.
- I would suggest going even further, by requiring that all persons who drink at parties be carded by the bartender, like in bars, and that frequent inspections of fraternity parties be conducted. Perhaps all organized, permitted parties should end by 2:00 am, again, like in bars and in the adult world.

- One of the best (and least naive) ideas among the recommendations is the addition of alcohol-serving locations like the Lone Pine Tavern. It would behoove the college to make at least one of these locations more conducive to student music and art performance than LPT.
- College is a time when kids rebel and stretch the limits of their mind and body. Trying to control this drive will only make them focus more on the rebellion itself rather than the positive character-building experiences that grow out of it. They will congregate in large numbers. They will drink. They will use drugs. By putting these choices in THEIR hands, you allow them to learn FOR THEMSELVES that some of them are good, and some of them are bad.
- Alcohol is a problem on most, if not all, college campuses. Deal with it.
- Dartmouth is a first rate institution - it gave me the greatest opportunities of my life, and I loved it and continue to love it. However, it has its faults, and they should be addressed. In my view, this is particularly true of what seemed to me to be widespread abuse of alcohol. As nearly as I could tell, it was only the grace of God that prevented several of my friends and acquaintances of dying in various alcohol-related incidents.
- Addressing alcohol abuse is long overdue.
- The requirement of the removal of tap systems from the basements of fraternities is the single most significant step taken in the history of the College in its battle to moderate student use of alcohol.
- The SLI goal of seeking greater responsibility in alcohol consumption is hard to dispute. To state the obvious, since the legal age for alcohol consumption in New Hampshire is 21, failure to address this issue is just asking for trouble.
- Why no recognition of the dangers and very real risk of increased off-campus binge drinking? How many students will die because they are in cars rather than walking, and what will you tell their parents?
- The other obvious area where I would disagree with the recommendations pertains to alcohol. I didn't drink when I was at Dartmouth and haven't touched a drop since I graduated. Nevertheless by mandating a moral standard (or what the College feels is "good for the student") rather than a legal standard, we are not permitting the student to make a CHOICE.
- I also thought the entire set of policies for dealing with alcohol on campus were well thought through.

- The recommendations designed to curb alcohol abuse are also generally good, if a little touchy-feely and fuzzy, although I would expect that the most practical and effective recommendation is one that got relatively little play - ganging the academic schedule to require very popular courses to meet early on Thursday and requiring professors to schedule at least some quizzes etc. on Thursdays. These ideas will only work, of course, if the houses are required to keep Wednesday as their meeting night.
- I am in total agreement on alcohol policies. Having spent a career in the military, largely supervising young men and women, away from home and away from their parents, with peer pressure and other pressures, it is far too easy to over-indulge in alcohol. The consequences, whether they be health or safety, are enormous. Everything possible should be done to de-glamorize drinking! Enough said.

Process

The following 23 comments from alumni were selected from 31 responses received pertaining to the process:

- There were no end of compliments for the satellite broadcast and the forthrightness that came across from all of the participants. This was a winner and direct contrast to the alumni unhappiness as a result of the February '99 experience.
- Importantly, the Report was rapidly and effectively disseminated to the entire Dartmouth community, hopefully setting a standard for all future significant communications from Hanover.
- Alumni/ae are not professionally equipped or charged with governing the college. Trustees and the President are, and should carry out their duties. Let's not encourage 50,000 graduates to run the college. Asking Alumni Councilors to complete 25 question surveys seems like make work (actually a little nuts). The nature of the questions, and alums' background to answer them knowledgeably, is in great doubt.
- The college made a big B00-B00 when the announcement was made "not a referendum," which was sort of rude and almost an "alumni be damned" kind of thing. This was followed by months of back-pedaling to try to smooth the feathers of the decent alums who had been offended. The job of smoothing out the situation was well done. However, the alums still feel that things will progress as originally planned.
- Thanks for soliciting feedback. Do not act too quickly. Think things through as every change will result in both expected and unexpected outcomes. We do not want to have the unexpected ones destroy what 236+ years has created.
- He pointed out that being so frank about devious behavior of students could damage the College's image and that putting such information in the report may overstep the boundary of good judgment. The report was more or less in his opinion a nightmare.
- With 22 years experience watching the Federal regulatory process, I am more than skeptical about the process of "public notice and comment;" it is largely a charade to provide cover for decisions already made.
- A quick note to thank you for sharing this information via the Internet. Although the Student Life Initiative has gotten lots of press and public radio coverage, it was your web site (and the email alerting me to its existence) that connected this alumnus to the issues in depth. Thanks!
- Thank you for all your efforts at collecting and sharing this information.

- A member of the class of '97 criticized the Administration for the general lack of consultation with Alumni/ae before the first announcements were made in February 1999. He felt that the College was missing out on a golden opportunity to consult with alums, and had been doing so over the last decade or more. He stated that this upset many alums and continued to question the different Administrations' motives for doing so.
- In the spirit of open thought and discussion, I hope that part of your broadcast involves an opposing viewpoint as well - perhaps two- both from current students and alumni. This is a significant development which, if it moves forward, will change the history of the College, and the College would be wise to broadcast both an official viewpoint (which is being done quite well) and viewpoints which do not necessarily reflect the "official" viewpoint.
- Thank you for your extensive effort to inform and involve us.
- Congratulations on a job well done. I had been concerned about the knee-jerk quality of President Wright's initial comments last winter, but these recommendations appear to have taken Dartmouth's unique circumstances into account.
- President Wright's initiation as leader of the College did nothing to defuse my impression of this tendency for stridency. One should never confuse stridency with political courage. The end result of the President's initiative may be moderate and extremely constructive, but its launch was still another alienating, foolish, immoderate stumble into public relations hell. The administration has been backpedaling ever since.
- I applaud the process and (so far) the outcome of the Campus Life initiative.
- Since the May meeting of the Alumni Council I have been highly skeptical of the whole SLI process. I, like many others, need a lot of assurance that the SLI process hasn't been contrived to cover a preordained decision to eliminate the fraternity system.
- I was surprised and disappointed with the composition of the panel for the telecast. It did not reassure me about the integrity of the SLI process. The positions of Jim Wright and Susan Prager on the SLI are already known. Dean Larimore was not the best representative of the committee to include in the telecast. It would have been more informative and meaningful to hear from committee members who represented other constituencies other than the faculty and the administration. I'm glad Trustee Chairman King participated, but even his assurances don't convince me that what we are doing isn't intended to create an appearance of process after the outcome has largely been decided.

- Thank you for the excellent Alumni Council College Relations Group Report on the SLI. This is the first bit of good sense I've seen come out of this whole discussion since the administration's bombshell. I look forward to strong alumni influence over this process ...
- The College claims to have consulted widely before laying out its program. I personally do not know anyone who claims to have been among those consulted. I have heard but do not know that the sample among alumni totaled 200* and that it was highly selective. Also happens in private enterprise when management wants to claim that focus groups support (what in truth it had already decided) the program it is unveiling. *for a university of 55,000 alumni a sample giving 95% reliability must number 475 and also be random.
- I hope that you will listen to the students in deciding how you will implement these policies, but based on your actions thus far, I see no reason to believe that you will choose to do so.
- I am impressed with the process and the way the committee is involving the larger community.
- What has been terribly frustrating is that I know no one at the top is listening to me any more than they did when I was a student and attended all of the numerous "speak-outs" regarding Student Life. The tune has not changed since my first trip to Webster Hall, back when I was young and stupid and thought my voice made a difference. I have written numerous letters to various administrators and made several calls to my alumni affairs coordinator. My only response has been a rather scolding letter from the President, the text of which made clear that he had not read my letter with nearly the same care that I took in writing it.
- My conclusion is that the committee did a very good job of comprehensively evaluating the issue.

Additional Suggestions from Alumni

The following 21 suggestions/recommendations were received from alumni:

- Make certain clusters predominantly first-year students and allow the incoming students to decide if this type of arrangement is best or if they want to be intermingled with upperclassmen.
- There was an almost unanimous concern - among those of the class who were most familiar with the issues - that the Trustees have an enormous job ahead of them in crafting an action plan in time to be voted upon at the April Trustee meeting. As a result, we all agreed that the Trustees should not hesitate to delay the decision making to either their Summer retreat or their Fall meeting. The report was delayed in its release by 6 weeks and as a result, the December Alumni Council was not able to provide the coordinated input that we think is invaluable. While we are aware that there will be a special Council meeting on March 4th, at best, it is a compressed time frame for making sure that alumni input is complete and well summarized and presented for the Trustees consideration. Given the fact that this report and ensuing recommendations could establish the pattern for much of the future of Dartmouth's residential life, and given the fact that the range of opinions on many of the issues are widely divergent, our class hopes that the Trustees will not hesitate to delay if they are convinced that such a delay may result in better decisions.
- Very fast first reaction. I was surprised not to find a full discussion on the impact of the D-Plan on the quality of residential life, especially the stability and continuity aspects. Did I miss something?
- No single element of undergraduate existence is more disruptive to continuity, stability, well-being, comfort, and convenience than the Dartmouth Plan, which notably has not been adopted by other colleges. Notwithstanding some educational benefits, the Dartmouth plan should be abolished as soon as there is sufficient housing. Cutting fall-term enrollment, even as a stopgap, is precisely the wrong way to go.
- In addition to the Committee recommendations on student dining, the many persistent shortcomings of the DDA must be recognized and dealt with. A commercial contractor may be the best solution.
- Dartmouth is widely viewed as the "most wired" campus in the nation. This advantage must be maintained and enhanced, so that undergraduate and graduate students alike may conveniently and fully exploit — for both in-classroom and out-of-classroom purposes — the opportunities that future technological developments will provide.

- Universally there is a concern or question about how all this will be funded, the committee's admonition notwithstanding. The concern is near the top of the list of reactions to the report.
- I have one additional question: Is there a "chat" or otherwise discussion area where we can see others' opinions?
- In my view it is imperative that the College offer within this very "Feedback and Discussion" area of its web site an open, threaded on-line discussion area in which members of the College community, including alumni, can share our views. Sharing one's views on a one-way, private (indeed confessional) basis with the Committee or the Trustees is simply NOT a discussion.
- Why don't you make the feedback public and post it on the web site instead of taking it under advisement in secret like some kind of communist government. What are you scared of?
- When I attended Dartmouth, there was serious de facto segregation by parental wealth. I stayed in Topliff and College, which housed the sons of those on financial scholarships and others with parents from the "humbler" occupations. The sons of the "captains of industry" tended to reside in the "Gold Coast" more expensive housing. President Kemeny still was faced with this situation when I discussed this with him many years later. It would be great if the rent was to be low enough for all to mix in dorm life.
- The solution is to involve the alumni more at the school. For instance, and I think there are many possibilities, why not initiate a second opinion program for alumni at the medical school? Many of us live in fear that some day some quack is going to perform unnecessary surgery on us which results in death, or that we will receive the wrong diagnosis, etc. We have also come to associate competence with Dartmouth. In short, have a series of programs that use the services of the school to the mutual benefit of alumni. How about the Tuck School, Thayer, etc...? It seems crystal clear to me that such an initiative would go a long way toward dissolving school-alumni differences.
- One of the key reasons cited for the housing problems on campus, and for the feeling of instability, upheaval, and rootlessness among Dartmouth students, is the 4-term Dartmouth plan. Yet nowhere does the Committee suggest that the Plan should be re-evaluated or changed.
- I will make two suggestions. Some of the large amount of money to be spent in this process might be spent to offer free or very low-cost coffee, hot cocoa, etc. of high quality at pleasant places around campus. We can be nearly certain that this sort of thing will, at low cost, provide a pleasant social outlet that will in fact be well-used. Secondly, academic departments might, at relatively low cost, create social spaces in their buildings which are open to students; this wouldn't be quite the same as a

campus-wide evening social space with music, but would serve a good purpose nonetheless, particularly if faculty actually “hung out” there occasionally during the day.

- One way to give the students a sense of having direct control is to let them take the responsibility directly. A number of campuses, including Stanford and USC, have facilities, which are owned and managed by the students. These facilities are part of Student Enterprises. I could see Tuck students or Seniors as part of a Coop or a Corporation that leases space from the College and offers an Over/Under Bar situation, for instance. Except for rental issues the students make all of the decisions on decor, hours, entertainment, charges, security, insurance and legal compliance.
- You need to be careful with how this is perceived off-campus. If Dartmouth is perceived as being Puritan, beyond the fringe, over-regulated, and fascist, then you will stop getting good applicants. Based on the media I’ve seen, this is where the off-campus perception is headed. Nobody wants to go to a grumpy, no-fun campus. It is fine for Dartmouth to be on the cutting edge in genetics, computer science, and engineering, but it does not need to be on the cutting edge of student regulation. I suggest you take a good look at how peer institutions are addressing these issues and make sure that you are in the main stream with these other institutions. Or, if you are going to err, err on the side of being liberal, rather than being too dogmatic or rigid. Give students enough rope so they can hang themselves if they want to.
- Rather than try to find a “corporate” solution for this issue, why not let each frat/sorority submit a proposal for how it plans to meet the college’s objectives. Let them change themselves, and if they fail, then turn it over to the group think massive mobilization of public involvement yadda yadda. If student controlled spaces is key, and student based, student relevant is key, then give them a shot. Maybe one house will take responsibility for intramural sports, another for Tucker type stuff, another for crazy art performances. The proposals have to be radical, inclusive, and meet the targets that the committee has established.
- My proposal is to make participation in Greek life at Dartmouth an elective graded class. Fraternities and sororities would be graded by a selected group of faculty/administrators/others. These “graders” would be given a set of guidelines from which the fraternity/sorority grades would be derived. These guidelines would give positive marks for socially responsible behavior and negative marks for socially irresponsible behavior. Graders would meet periodically over the trimester with their “students” to exchange feedback. Only behavior which could be attributed to the “Greek” activities would be considered in the grading system. Here is the rub. At the end of each trimester, each house would receive a “grade” and that grade would be factored into each house members’ grade point average (only those who were on campus that trimester).

- Why not consider an increase in undergraduate enrollment? To better balance diversity, coeducation, legacies and the College's responsibility to the increase in American and global society.
- Would you provide all of us who respond some sort of summary of the responses you get. I ask because one of the things I am sensitive to is that although the trustees have invited dialogue they have not provided a meaningful way for those of us remote from the college to have a two-way discussion. I have posted a response on the College's Web page after reading the whole report and asked that the trustees also tally alumni and student feedback so we know when they do whatever they decide to do we at least know if they had the support of the majority of alumni and students.

A thought for recreation options: a bowling alley. Very few people are any good at bowling, therefore this lack of talent among otherwise talented folks is a recipe for fun and frivolous frolic. A little hokey for some, but hokey can be