

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction and Background.....	8
Summary of Proposals	
Suggestions related to Principles 1 and 4.....	14
Suggestions related to Principle 2.....	22
Suggestions related to Principle 3.....	28
Suggestions related to Principle 5.....	37
Miscellaneous Ideas.....	39
Summary of Feedback.....	42
Conclusion.....	46
Appendix	

**Residential and Social Life Task Force**  
**Report on**  
**The Trustee Student Life Initiative**

**Executive Summary**

The report of the Task Force on the Residential and Social Life Initiative summarizes for the Trustee Committee on the Student Life Initiative and for the senior administration of Dartmouth College the various proposals submitted by students, parents, and College employees in response to the five principles for enhancing residential and social life articulated by the Board of Trustees in February, 1999. The report also summarizes other feedback regarding the perceived substance of the Trustee initiative and the perceived process by which it was determined and announced. An appendix to the report contains each of the 30 formal proposals submitted to the Task Force. The wide variety of creative and thoughtful responses to the principles put forward by the Trustees cannot be fully captured in our report on the proposals, and certainly not in this brief executive summary. We encourage readers who have an interest in particular proposals or issues to refer to the original proposals themselves. Nonetheless, it may be useful, for purposes of general orientation to this report, to provide this “summary of a summary” of some of the significant themes and suggestions conveyed in the proposals. This is not to suggest that the majority of these themes appeared in any particular proposal, or that the majority of individuals or groups who submitted proposals would agree with all of these themes. Some of them may indeed be in tension with others. Rather, these are some of the significant suggestions and ideas that emerged through this process.

**Principle 1: “There should be greater choice and continuity in residential living and improved residential space” and Principle 4: “The number of students living off campus should be reduced.”**

The primary issues expressed in proposals responding to the two principles concerned with student housing are: a) Dartmouth needs more variety and options in the configuration of housing and any new residential construction should be something other than traditional dormitories with bedrooms off a central hallway. Proposals made a variety of suggestions for what those configurations or options should be. Apartments and town houses are a prominent theme. b) Many more beds are needed to accomplish important goals of “decompressing” rooms that have one too many students assigned to them, providing on-campus housing opportunities for students living off campus by necessity rather than choice, reducing uncertainty and anxiety about the availability of campus housing, replacing some unpopular and arguably unsuccessful existing residence halls, and providing for continuity as an antidote to the disruptions of the D-Plan.

Other comments/suggestions regarding student housing are:

- Existing residence halls need improvement by adding amenities, especially more social space, kitchens, activity rooms, fitness rooms, study and seminar rooms, etc.
- Graduate housing on or near campus is a high priority and significantly unmet need for graduate students.
- Students should have the option of single-sex housing (by floor or by residence hall).
- Cluster or concentrate first-year students in housing which would have significant advantages for creating community, building class unity, and providing social and educational opportunities.

- Cluster or concentrate first-year students in housing would cut them off from valuable contact with upperclass students.
- Opportunities for special-interest, academic affinity, or theme housing should be expanded.
- Dartmouth should do more to incorporate older adults in the residential experience of undergraduates because of the benefits of contact with the College's professional staff, graduate students, and faculty members.
- The residential program requires more resources and staffing.
- The role of the undergraduate residential staff should be redefined, clarified, and/or supported more fully with compensation and additional professional resources.
- Some advising and support services could be productively decentralized and offered through residential settings.
- Some residential policies and procedures should be re-evaluated and changed.

In general, people seem to value the sense of belonging associated with small communities defined on the basis of common interest, but they also value the sense of belonging to a class and to the larger Dartmouth community. There appears to be some concern about stressing one kind of belonging at the expense of another. People also value choice, yet at the same time there is recognition that limiting choices, where appropriate, can serve community interests. Finally, there is a strong recognition that the residential experience is a central and important contributor to the quality of the overall educational experience at Dartmouth. The additional needed beds should be provided in residential environments that support community, a vibrant social life, and the educational mission of the College.

**Principle 2: “There should be additional and improved social spaces controlled by students.”**

- A recurring theme in the proposals for creating new and improved social spaces is the need to create a replacement for Webster Hall as a programming space to accommodate 800-1000 people for concerts, performances, dances, cultural events, and other activities.
- A number of proposals also advocate the creation of additional, smaller spaces devoted to student use, accessible late at night, and adaptable to the needs and interests of various groups of students.
- Food is an important feature of social life, and students value access to kitchens where they can prepare meals for a variety of events and for different sizes of groups.
- More venues for showing films is valued.
- Good, well-appointed social space with the appropriate ambiance, is a necessary ingredient for creating and sustaining community in residence halls. Existing social space in many halls is perceived to be inadequate; new construction should attend carefully to this issue.
- A sports facility geared toward fitness and recreation, rather than intercollegiate athletics, with a health-club atmosphere and amenities, would enhance social life for many students.
- Students would welcome more social spaces, including spaces in new kinds of residence facilities, that they “control,” as opposed to spaces they compete for with other College constituencies. The “common house” proposals are a frequent example of an idea to meet this need.
- On the other hand, some proposals also express a desire for more spaces managed by professionals, so that students do not feel so much burden for programming. The College should be more proactive in creating activities and social alternatives.

- Dartmouth could take better advantage of its natural environment and outdoor spaces to enhance social life, making better use of the riverfront, the Green, and the Bema.
- Providing space to academic and other affinity groups would not only enhance social life for students with particular interests but would also create more opportunities for interactions between groups and for building community.
- On the other hand, spaces assigned to affinity groups or the policies for their use should not promote exclusivity.
- Women need and value a sense of ownership of social space, and the relocation and expansion of the Women's Resource Center would help to address that need.
- Graduate students perceive a pressing need for space devoted to their experience and interests.
- A number of proposals express frustration about lack of access to spaces managed by the Hopkins Center and the Athletic Department. Other proposals call attention to the need to make better use of or to improve existing spaces, in addition to creating new spaces.

**Principle 3: “The system should be substantially coeducational and provide opportunities for greater interaction among all Dartmouth students.”**

Most of the reaction to the Trustee initiative focuses on various interpretations of this principle, especially the perception that this reflected plans to eliminate the Greek system. Most of the proposals received also responded to this principle in one way or another, yet only a few directly discussed the implications of this principle for the CFS system. Most of the proposals addressing this principle explain how other changes to residential and social life would support the principle of coeducation and greater interaction. The most common themes among the proposals are recommendations to expand thematic activities

and facilities that would create more social and residential options for all students and increase interactions between various groups of students. This is an example of the considerable overlap between proposals concerned with social and residential space. The proposals responding to this principle include suggestions for:

- Facilities where students can dance
- More pubs and night clubs
- Replacement of Webster Hall
- Academic and special interest theme facilities, providing residential and social space
- A studio for a student-run TV station
- A “common house”
- Venues for viewing films
- More financial support for more co-sponsored and community-building activities
- More amenities in residence halls
- More faculty involvement in residential life
- More integration between academic and residential life
- More businesses to serve students of color
- Upgrading athletic facilities to support fitness, recreation, and socializing
- More space for students interested in outdoor activities
- More dining options, including partially-decentralized dining
- More programming and activity space in residence halls
- More space for legal, safe consumption of alcohol
- A new, residential community service center
- A graduate student center
- More variety in housing options

There are also suggestions for changes in policies and priorities to address coeducation and interaction:

- Ease restrictions on access to space (Hop, Athletics)
- Require more cooperative programming
- More community-education programs
- Less emphasis on alcohol
- Expand opportunities for experiential education
- Subsidize cultural and athletic tickets
- Expand the role and visibility of the Women's Resource Center
- Make changes to first-year orientation
- Create additional social options, especially for first-year students
- Implement a required "Community at Dartmouth" course
- Group students in residential spaces according to class
- Expand the Graduate-in-Residence Program

The proposals that specifically addressed coeducation and interaction in the CFS system called for:

- A new "Social House" system
- Recognition that the CFS system is already "substantially coeducational"
- Creation of more social and residential options rather than the removal or restriction of options
- Pairing of CFS and affinity organizations for social programming purposes
- Expansion of the number of women's and coeducational organizations in the CFS system
- Restructuring the different Greek councils
- Creation of "Brownstones" as a supplementary alternative to CFS houses

**Principle 5: “The abuse and unsafe use of alcohol should be eliminated.”**

There are fewer proposals dealing specifically with alcohol abuse than with any of the other principles, however there is more consistency among the proposals. They called for:

- Greater recognition that heavy drinking is an inescapable part of college life
- A greater emphasis on education as opposed to sanctions
- More support for alcohol-free programming
- The use of professional bartenders at large events where alcohol is served
- More opportunities for legal, safe drinking
- An emphasis on prevention, through the social norms approach
- Increased staffing in Health Resources and Counseling to address alcohol abuse on campus
- Increased substance-free living spaces in the residential system

**Other Themes**

A number of proposals address issues beyond those articulated in the five principles. Those include the importance of:

- Enhancing academic life, especially via smaller classes and further enhancement of Dartmouth’s academic stature
- Enhancements of language instruction through a Japan/Korea academic theme house
- Addressing the disruptions and challenges created by the D-Plan
- Providing more support for including faculty and staff in the community, especially people perceived to be outside of the mainstream in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.

- Improving health services and counseling
- More student mentoring by older adults
- More environmental responsibility in facilities and programs
- More computing facilities for students

## **Introduction and Background**

This report is prepared at the request of the Trustees and President of Dartmouth College, who issued a statement following their February 1999 meeting articulating five principles or goals for enhancing the residential and social experience of students at the College. These principles are:

- 1) There should be greater choice and continuity in residential living and improved residential space.
- 2) There should be additional and improved social spaces controlled by students.
- 3) The system should be substantially coeducational and provide opportunities for greater interaction among all Dartmouth students.
- 4) The number of students living off campus should be reduced.
- 5) The abuse and unsafe use of alcohol should be eliminated.

(The full text of the Trustee statement is included in this report, in Appendix 2.)

In issuing its statement and in subsequent communication about the Residential and Social Life Initiative, the Board emphasized the fact that it had not reached any specific conclusions about how best to implement those principles or achieve their goals. The Trustees invited all Dartmouth constituencies to engage in a process of reflection and

deliberation about how Dartmouth students could experience in the College's residential and social facilities, programs, and policies the same level of excellence they experience in the College's academic programs. The Trustees also put in place a mechanism for involving the Dartmouth community in this discussion. They asked Stan Colla '66 Tu '86, Vice President of Development and Alumni Affairs, to organize communications with alumni. Professor Edward Berger, Dean of the Faculty, and Provost Susan Prager were asked to coordinate involvement by faculty. Dan Nelson '75, Acting Dean of the College, was asked to convene and chair a task force to encourage, collect and report on proposals regarding the five principles from students (undergraduate and graduate), parents of current students, and employees of the College.

The individuals who were appointed to the Task Force are:

Aaron Akamu '01

Melanie Blanchard 'G

Eric Buchman '00

Kerry Bystrom '99

Josh Green '00

Mary Liscinsky, Acting Dean of Residential Life

Andy Louis '00

Dan Nelson, Acting Dean of the College

Sope Ogunyemi '01

Ulf Osterberg, Associate Professor of Engineering

Jaimie Paul '00

Holly Sateia, Dean of Student Life

Josh Warren '02

Josh Warren '02 was added, after the committee's original membership was announced, when a number of students pointed out that a first-year student had not been included. Kerry Bystrom '99 joined the group after Shauna Brown '99 had to step down for spring term because of other obligations. The Task Force also received excellent administrative assistance from Janet Terp, Andrea Colgan, Sandy Weber, and Sherry Finnemore – all employees in the Dean of the College Office.

There was initially some criticism of the method of selecting the Task Force membership (appointment by the chair rather than election by students, appointment by the Student Assembly, etc.), and there was also some initial concern about the extent to which particular constituencies were or were not perceived to be sufficiently represented. For example, a number of students expressed the view that the Task Force should include more students affiliated with a fraternity, sorority, or co-ed organization. The chair and the Task Force tried, we think successfully, to address those concerns by explaining our purpose: to be "a conduit, not a filter" of ideas and proposals, and to report accurately and fairly on all that we received. Members of the Task Force were certainly free (and encouraged) to advance their own ideas and perceptions in other settings on campus. Our responsibility on this committee, however, was to work to stimulate broad discussion, creative thinking and planning, and the articulation of a wide range of ideas for achieving and implementing the Trustee principles. Our goals were to make sure that individuals and groups were encouraged to participate, were provided opportunities for discussing and planning with others, and made fully aware of this mechanism for gathering ideas and reporting them to the Trustees.

Our first task was to write to all students (undergraduate and graduate), all recognized student organizations, parents of undergraduates, and employees at the College to explain our function and to encourage their involvement. We also made use of and advertised a web site and electronic mail bulletin where people could obtain

information and submit comment. We also provided a mailing address. We went on to schedule a series of open forums in a variety of residential spaces across campus (residence halls, CFS organizations, and academic theme houses), held sessions with an architect working on improvements to Alumni Gym and the Thayer dining hall area (the Centerbrook projects), and sponsored a forum with some recent alumni now working at other colleges and universities. The slide show used in the session with the architect was taken "on the road" to several presentations and planning sessions with a variety of student organizations.

Simultaneously, other groups on campus were organizing themselves and meeting to discuss issues relevant to the Trustee Initiative and to develop proposals in response to the five principles. One prominent example of that kind of effort was the organization of the Five Principles Working Groups. The groups were facilitated and sponsored by the Student Assembly, but participation was open to all. Students from a variety of different constituencies convened in groups focusing on each of the five principles (the two principles concerning housing issues were combined) and met regularly to formulate recommendations. (The recommendations were later presented to the Student Assembly, which debated them and then voted resolutions endorsing some but not others. Both the Working Groups' original proposals and the Student Assembly's resolutions are included in Appendix 1, which contains all of the proposals.) The Coed, Fraternity and Sorority Council (CFSC) likewise created a group to develop proposals, as did the PanHellenic Council and several other student organizations.

A number of very committed students devoted considerable time and effort over the winter and spring terms to respond to the challenge and invitation issued by the Trustees. Some groups and individuals were more confident than others that ideas and proposals developed by students would become part of the eventual plan adopted by the Trustees, but most involved students seemed to believe that failing to participate would indeed

guarantee that their voices would not be heard. Many students recognized this process as an extraordinary opportunity for Dartmouth students to participate with the Trustees, the College administration, and other constituencies in shaping the residential and social experience for the future. Graduate students also seemed to view this as an unparalleled opportunity for addressing their longstanding concerns regarding housing, social space, and general visibility in the institution.

It was not only student groups that met in response to the Trustee initiative. In addition to individual responses from parents, we had the benefit of discussions with groups of parents at First-Year Family Weekend, April 23-25, 1999. A number of administrators also responded individually and others convened in groups organized around each of the five principles and then submitted the proposals that grew out of those discussions. As noted earlier, discussions involving alumni were coordinated by the Alumni Affairs Office, and communications with faculty were managed by the Dean of the Faculty and the Provost.

Following its April meeting, the Board of Trustees shared with the Dartmouth community information about the process by which proposals collected by the Task Force and others would be evaluated. From this, a plan will be developed for achieving and implementing the five principles. That plan involved the creation of a Trustee Committee on the Student Life Initiative, co-chaired by Trustees Susan Dentzer '77 and Peter Fahey '68, and included three additional alumni, three faculty members, three administrators, and five students (including one graduate student). Two of the undergraduate representatives were appointed by the Student Assembly, and the other two were appointed by the chairs on the basis of applications solicited from the student body. The Committee chairs, the Chairman of the Board, and the President held an open meeting for students and others in the Dartmouth Community to describe the purpose of this committee, its general membership, and its timeline for reporting to the Board of

Trustees and for involving the broader Dartmouth community in discussions of its recommendations.

Shortly thereafter, the Task Force sent another reminder to students about our purpose, about the very broad guidelines for submitting proposals, the May 24 deadline for submissions, and about the Trustee Committee to which this report is addressed. Information was also posted on cluster blitz bulletins and forwarded to the CFS leadership. Later in May, we took out a series of advertisements in *The Dartmouth* to remind students once again about the opportunity to submit proposals and the various ways in which they could be sent to the Task Force for inclusion in its report. Because student members of the Task Force are involved in drafting the sections of this report concerned with the five principles, and because our drafting/reporting period overlaps with final examinations and Commencement, we set for ourselves a deadline of June 24 for submitting the final version of the report.

In our drafting process, we divided ourselves into groups of 2-3 Task Force members, including both students and employees of the College, each of which had the task of summarizing proposals related to one or more of the Trustee principles. (The two principles concerning residential space were combined, reflecting their close relationship and the propensity for people to combine them in their proposals). In each of the sections concerning a principle, various proposals are identified by a number assigned to the proposals in the order in which they were received. All of the 30 proposals received are included in Appendix 1. Anyone wishing to read a specific proposal in its entirety can turn to the relevant section in the appendix. We also received hundreds of brief e-mail or web-page submissions commenting on the principles or on the process by which they were perceived to have been determined and announced. To the extent those communications contained specific ideas for addressing the principles, we have

attempted to note those ideas in this report. We have also attempted to summarize what we received by way of reactions to the principles and process.

Many, if not most, of the proposals address more than one of the principles, so individual proposals are described in more than one of the sections of this report. Also, because specific ideas put forward sometimes address more than one of the principles, the same suggestions are often described in multiple sections of the report. Because different sections of the report were drafted by different individuals, there are some differences in style and organization. Nonetheless, we have attempted to be consistent and conscientious in providing a faithful summary (rather than a complete description) of the proposals submitted. If those who read this report concur that we made appropriate and energetic efforts to engage students, parents, and employees in this process, and that the report fairly and accurately conveys what we received, we will have succeeded in our task.

**Principles 1 and 4: “*There should be greater choice and continuity in residential living and improved residential space*” and “*The number of students living off-campus should be reduced.*”**

All of the principles have a certain amount of overlap, but there is a particularly significant relationship between Principles 1 and 4. Realizing this, the Task Force has chosen to combine proposals that addressed either of these and report on them together.

The Task Force received 21 proposals concerning Principles 1 and 4. Twelve of these came from students (eleven from undergraduates, one from graduate students), three from administrators, and six from mixed groups (students, faculty, and administrators). Thirteen general ideas concerning student residences were also submitted: six from parents, one from an alumnus, one from a faculty member, and five from students. The Task Force found that these general ideas were all addressed within the formal proposals that were submitted, so we have not cited them directly in this report. These ideas focused on providing adequate numbers of beds, appropriate lounge spaces, expanded housing options, residential dining, and the establishment of first-year housing. The proposals fall into five main categories, as listed below. In attempting to capture the essence of the proposals, we have focused on their primary themes and overarching concerns. It is important to note, however, that many of the proposals go into great detail (describing how living units should be configured, what types of amenities should be provided, etc.). We have therefore cited the number of each applicable proposal within the main categories to enable the Student Life Initiative Committee to refer to detailed information.

**Facilities**

The most common themes concerning residential facilities are a) the perceived need for more variety in the physical configuration of housing options (something other than rooms along a traditional corridor) and b) the need for additional residential space.

For undergraduate students, proposals addressing these needs advocate:

- townhouses or apartments (2, 9, 13, 20, 20A, 22, 25, 27)
- social, theme, or special-interest houses (5, 7, 9, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 26)
- residential brownstones (similar to townhouses) (9, 10)
- academic-affinity houses (3, 27)
- increasing the number of suites (9, 20, 20A, 27)

Residential space that is conducive to social interaction should be provided for first-year students. This can be accomplished by having common bathrooms, room doors that can be left open, and large, comfortable hallways (9). One group mentions that because Massachusetts Row is so popular, that space should be maximized by linking the three separate buildings into one (20). On the other hand, the relative unpopularity or perceived unpopularity of the River and Choates clusters prompts two groups to suggest demolishing these clusters (20, 20A), though one of these groups also suggests that the beneficial aspects of these two clusters should be incorporated in newly-built structures (20A). One proposal recommends that any new residences that are built should be placed on the northern part of campus and be clustered around a student center (9).

Some groups also feel that residential facilities could be improved by increasing the number of common-area spaces (including lounges, study rooms, kitchens, and offices), providing a large social space in each cluster, and improving the aesthetic and practical appeal of such spaces (2, 9, 10, 13, 20, 20A, 21, 27). Certain standards and amenities should be established (as per proposals 6, 9, 10, 13, 20A, 21, 27), including:

- one-room doubles should be eliminated or used only for first-year students<sup>1</sup>
- wider hallways
- music and dance rooms
- photography labs
- residential office space for student affairs staff and faculty
- snack bars
- improved and expanded kitchen space
- improved and additional vending machines for food and health products
- more VCR/TV equipment

The establishment of fitness facilities in residence halls is also mentioned by several groups (2, 13, 18, 21, 25). Such facilities might provide fitness equipment, health information, and space for instruction and group activities, such as aerobics classes. Two proposals also suggest the construction of seminar and classroom spaces in each cluster (2, 21). One proposal suggests that residentially based dining be provided around campus or in a few halls to build community and provide convenience and flexibility to students (2).

Graduate students submitted a great deal of information and documentation concerning the need for on-campus housing for graduate students (19). They request 75-100 living spaces in a variety of units (studio and one- and two-bedroom apartments) that are located on or near campus. Their extensive proposal includes a historical review of graduate housing at Dartmouth, and it provides a rationale and possible floor plans for new graduate housing.

Some proposals note that in order to provide options for graduate and undergraduate students and create more social spaces, the College would need to be

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<sup>1</sup> This is currently a component of the Office of Residential Life Capital Project Schedule.

prepared to build space for many additional beds, perhaps more than had been originally anticipated. They observe that this would be necessary to address continuity and decompress the more crowded rooms on campus (10, 20, 20A).

Finally, one proposal suggests that the Office of Residential Life should be housed together in a central campus location rather than being spread out between the basements of two buildings (2). This would make the Residential Life offices and staff much more accessible and visible to students, unify the Residential Life staff and enhance their ability to work collaboratively, and provide the necessary space for the additional staff that will be needed to implement many of the ideas that have been proposed.

### **Housing Options**

While the issue of housing options is included in the previous section on residential facilities, the ideas that we received went beyond the creation of apartments, townhouses, and additional beds and suites. One popular idea is to expand special-interest housing by creating theme halls, floors, or wings for which student groups (possibly with a faculty/administrative advisor) could apply. Such theme housing would allow residents to focus on an area of special interest through the programming, discussions, lectures, and resources that are provided in the theme hall. The themes or interest groups assigned to these spaces could be reviewed and rotated on a regular basis to ensure that various special interests can be accommodated and that the space is being used effectively (2, 18, 20, 21, 25, 26). Suggested themes include community service, outdoor activities, and gender perspectives; a complete list of all of the proposed themes is included at the end of this section. Some proposals also recommend that the College provide single-sex housing options within the traditional clusters (20, 25) or in a separate cluster (13). Proposal 27 suggests that students have the opportunity to live in houses by

academic major (e.g., one house would have students from the Government department, the house next door may house students from Biology, and so on).

First-year housing is proposed by six groups (2, 13, 20, 21, 22, 25) and suggested as an idea by three parents. However, a Blitzmail survey of the first-year class that was conducted by the '02 Class Council found that a majority of respondents oppose all-first-year housing by a margin of 130-97 (28). At least one of the proposals in favor of first-year student housing mentions the importance of affiliated seminars; another mentions that although first-year students should be “concentrated” in certain residence halls, these halls should not be composed exclusively of first-year students. While all proposals concerned with first-year housing mention the importance of new students having some interaction with upperclass students, they also note that having first-year students in one place would increase a sense of community and improve the first-year experience for students. Some also suggest that first-year housing should integrate academic and social life by providing student-faculty interaction, professional advisors, student advisors, in-house academic resources, and in-house seminars taken in common with other residents (2, 13, 21). Ideas for increasing student-faculty interaction include developing an “adopt-a-professor” program, providing incentives for faculty to eat with students, and developing a “faculty-in-residence” or “faculty fellow” program that would provide each hall with a faculty member to do programming and hold office hours (2, 13, 21). It is also advised that greater attention and financial resources should be given to the residential curriculum to address pertinent first-year issues and needs (2, 13, 21), and that first-year residence halls should be configured in such a way as to make them more conducive to social interaction (9).

Several proposals suggest that the College should focus more on the needs of upperclass students. For example, one proposal advocates that the sophomore- and junior-year experience should be enhanced by providing more social opportunities, more

academic and career advising in the residential system, more funding for large-scale residential programming, appropriate staffing, and greater continuity (13). Upperclass halls would have councils that would review applications for housing in each hall and coordinate social and educational programs to address upperclass student needs (13). Seniors would be placed in apartments to provide more of a post-college experience, with adjoining faculty and graduate-student apartments to promote undergraduate-faculty-graduate interaction (13).

One proposal's "1-2-1" plan addresses aspects of first-year housing and upperclass halls (22): according to this proposal, all first-year students should live together, then be assigned to sophomore/junior houses. Seniors would live with only seniors. This was presented as a means of addressing the unique continuity issues presented by the D-Plan.

A variety of theme/academic-affinity houses are suggested. They are:

- Gender Perspectives House (14): This would be a space for students who are interested in "an environment supportive of gender equity." It would be closely linked with the Women's Studies Program.
- Community Services Living Space (13, 17): This space "will give interested students the option of a living environment dedicated to the discussion and promotion of social activism."
- Common House (5, 7, 9, 18, 26): The common house would provide social space for all Dartmouth-recognized student organizations to host programming events and dinners. Residential spaces would be provided in this facility for students who would be responsible for the administration of this program (which also addresses the need for student controlled social spaces). The various proposals provide detail on how this might be organized. It is important to note that the common house concept was proposed in 1997 in the *Task Force on Social Life* Report (Lucke, Canavan).

- Five Principles Working Group (20): More substance-free housing is another housing option. This would require a larger location farther away from Webster Avenue than Butterfield (its current location). Hitchcock was suggested as a possible option.
- Sustainable Living Center (1): The Organic Farm would be the location of a center that would provide social and educational space and house 12-20 residents who are interested in practicing sustainable living.
- Japan/Korea Affinity House (3): This house would serve a social and academic role and would provide language instruction, lectures and discussions, a resident-fellow program, and social opportunities.
- Outdoor Affiliation House (7, 13): Residents of the house would be responsible for managing the house and providing workshops as a resource for other students who have an interest in outdoor activities. The house would provide sufficient facilities for workshops and instruction, preparation for trips, and the maintenance and storage of gear.
- Brownstones (9, 10): Brownstones would serve as an alternative to involvement in Greek organizations. They would encourage student interaction and would have a faculty advisor to further the academic experience of residents. First-year students who apply for this type of housing would be randomly assigned to one brownstone and would then have priority for that brownstone if they opt for this type of housing again during their college career.

## **Staffing**

Staffing is a significant theme in some of the proposals, and there are several staffing issues specific to residential life that are identified.<sup>2</sup> The first is that the size and configuration of the residential life staff should be examined. One proposal recommends the creation of a smaller, better-trained and paid student staff supervised by additional professionals (2). Other proposals suggest that there should be more student staff and that their responsibilities should be redefined so that they play a more vital role in their communities. As their role becomes more important, their compensation should be increased accordingly (13, 20, 20A, 21).

Another common suggestion is to have professional staff manage and supervise the residence halls directly in order to facilitate improved performance and accountability among the undergraduate staff and to enhance students' residential experience. An additional area director is suggested as a minimal improvement (21), and several proposals assert the need for post-baccalaureate full-time staff in residence in supervisory capacities in place of student area coordinators (2, 13, 20, 20A, 21). A total of eight proposals note the importance of having more adults in residence, whether they be graduate students, administrators, or faculty (2, 13, 17, 19, 20, 20A, 21, 25). It is argued that adults would be able to provide effective and accessible advising, enhance the learning environment of the residence halls, give close direction and support to the student staff, and hold students accountable to a higher standard of behavior. Another common suggestion is the expansion of the Graduate Associates Program (2, 13, 19, 21).

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<sup>2</sup> The Residential Life live-in staff consists of two masters-level professionals, 6 graduate students (who are not in supervisory or managerial roles), and over 100 undergraduate staff members, 11 of whom are in a supervisory role. Students also benefit from the presence of 6 live in faculty or grad students in the academic affinity programs, and a cluster associate in the East Wheelock cluster.

## **Continuity**

One proposal recommends limiting the number of students living off campus to 10% of the student body (2), while another asserts that off-campus living is a viable and desirable option for seniors and should not be limited (9). A variety of housing options have been suggested to provide continuity, such as giving students the option to return to the same building all four years, each year, or during a combination of years, such as the first and second years (2, 9, 13, 27). As mentioned above, the 1-2-1 plan suggests a mechanism for combating the discontinuity inherent in the D-Plan.

## **Other**

There were a variety of other issues that were raised, specifically:

- Expand the grouping option (25).<sup>3</sup>
- Students should have more options available to them when listing their housing preferences on their housing applications, and the assignment process should be less random, perhaps by making it similar to the class registration process (9).
- Sufficient residential space should be built to allow students to claim “squatter’s rights,” which would allow students to leave their belongings in their room when they have an off term (10).
- A judicial process—such as a student board—operating in and specific to the residential system (2, 21).<sup>4</sup>
- All of the existing rooms on campus should be renovated (27).
- Expand cable to include diversified programming options (27).
- The academic affinity program needs to be evaluated on a variety of levels (21).
- Room rent amounts should be reevaluated (20).

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<sup>3</sup> The Grouping option allows up to eight students to request living arrangements next to each other. Begun in the fall of 1997.

<sup>4</sup> This type of process currently operates in the East Wheelock Cluster.



**Principle 2: “*There should be additional and improved social spaces controlled by students.*”**

Of the 30 proposals received by the Social and Residential Life Task Force, 23 proposals list recommendations that specifically address Principle 2. These 23 proposals were submitted by 16 individual students and student groups including 1 graduate student group, 6 individual administrators and administrative committees, and 1 faculty/student committee. The proposals are extremely creative and present many unique perspectives. Several common themes emerge that reflect the perceived deficiencies in Dartmouth's existing social system. The common themes include: replacing Webster Hall with a medium-sized programming space, thereby creating new late-night entertainment and social venues (sometimes with responsible alcohol provision); creating new residential spaces that also function as attractive social spaces, particularly on the main campus and by the river; constructing social spaces centered around fitness and dance, independent of the athletic complex; improving current social spaces in the residence halls, Collis Center, and throughout the campus; and improving student access to existing spaces on campus that could be used for social events

These themes are reflected in many different ways with various modifications. Here, we have tried to provide a general description of the most common themes and to provide references to specific proposals that discuss a theme in particular detail or in a particularly inventive way. The references are by no means the only places where these themes were mentioned.

**Replacement of Webster Hall and the creation of other social venues:** Proposals 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 27

In the diverse proposals dealing with social space, the need for a medium-sized, centrally located building to replace Webster Hall is a recurrent theme. This space is often envisioned as a multi-level structure that would allow events like concerts and performances for 800-1000 people, with good lighting and sound system (5, 14, 20, 7, 9, 16), dance-clubs with night-club atmosphere (14), miniversity classes, and cultural events. The proposals describe a building that would cater to the social needs of a wide range of students, and each level of the building would have a specific “mission.” To encourage responsible drinking, alcohol could be served to students over 21 years of age, while allowing under-aged students to enter.

Students and student groups often wish to organize events around food and beverage. However, the costs of catering services appear to be a major factor that discourages student organizations from using spaces like Alumni Hall and the Top of the Hop. It is often mentioned that a kitchen, spacious enough to welcome large groups, would be greatly appreciated to organize community dinners and render events more affordable. Also, many organizations find it difficult to show movies due to the unavailability of existing theaters such as the Loew or Spaulding Auditorium. Therefore more movie-oriented space (TV settings or even a small movie theater) are needed (Proposal #6). Most proposals expressed the importance for any new or renovated space to be as multi-purpose as possible.

For example, the undergraduates’ 5 Principles Working Group envisions a multi-level space with functional side areas surrounding the main programming space. The main programming space would have a stage with movable, stackable seating for concerts and performances and would be able to accommodate events like dance-clubs, miniversity classes, and culture-nights. The functional side areas would include social areas, study space, and technical and audio-visual support rooms. On the upper levels, the perimeter space could contain offices for student organizations.

Similar to this proposal from the undergraduate committee, the graduate student proposal suggests the creation of a graduate student center with many of the same features including a common room, offices, kitchen, multi-purpose hall, and informal social areas organized throughout the building on different levels.

**Improving Social Spaces in Residence Halls:** Proposals 2, 9, 10, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27

In all these proposals, one important issue is often raised: No real sense of community will be achieved without increasing interactions between students in residence halls. Desire for more inviting social spaces within the halls is a common theme. The proposals suggest that in the majority of the residence halls, lounges are not at all attractive and would require some renovation. In most cases renovation would involve adding “cozier” furniture, better lighting and more equipment such as refrigerators, stereos, VCRs, and televisions. Many students and the Office of Residential Life staff also felt that more social spaces should be added in each residence hall and that they should be centrally located (not in the basement as is now the case for many halls). These social spaces should be versatile enough to allow a wide variety of programming events to take place and, yet, spacious enough to host large scale parties. Hallways have also been described as a tool to foster more floor interaction and socializing: bright, wide and well carpeted hallways inspire neighbors to interact informally (13).

**Creation of a Fitness and Recreational Sports Facility:** Proposals 7, 10, 16, 18, 20, 23, 24

Another type of space that is frequently mentioned is one devoted to fitness and recreational sports activities that would be created separate from the athletic complex.

The focus of this facility would be to support the lifetime fitness of students and to provide outlets for recreational activities separate from the facilities created to support our intercollegiate sports program. By providing amenities such as: juice bars and snack bars, a spa, improved locker room, more outdoor basketball courts, televisions in fitness areas, improved exercise equipment, free access to athletic events for all students, and a more extensive rental equipment program, the fitness facilities could provide many more options for social activities for all students at the College (10).

**More Student Controlled Social Space:** Proposals 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 26

While many proposals call for large- to mid-size social spaces, the lack of more “intimate” spaces is a frequent theme throughout the proposals. The idea of a “common house” that could be reserved by any campus organization, is often submitted as a solution. The common house would be inhabited by a small group of students responsible for the organization of events in the house and the maintenance of the programming area. Most of these proposals describe a common house: a large programming space on the first floor, a small lounge with home-like features, once again a large kitchen and also television rooms. Events would be designed to enhance diversity on campus and could include overnight retreats, art exhibits, and community dinners (7, 5, 9).

**Outdoor Social Spaces:** Proposals 18, 20, 23, 25, 27

Even though winter is particularly long in Hanover, informal outdoor spaces are also needed, according to several proposals. Ideas concerning the design of this place vary from an informal space with picnic and game areas to an outdoor common house, or

an outdoor amphitheater for concerts and performances (18). This type of space might be located close to the Connecticut River to take advantage of the waterfront (7).

Examining and revising current policies governing the use of the Green and the Bema, so that they could be used more frequently for social events, is also mentioned.

**Social Space for Affinity Groups:** Proposals 1, 3, 4, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23,

Many groups advocate for social spaces that are connected to their curricular and co-curricular interests such as the Organic Farm, Japanese/ Korean Studies, DTV, Film Society, Swing Kids, Outing Club, Ledyard Canoe Club, Dartmouth Community Services, Gender Perspectives, and Graduate Student Council. The sustainable living center at the Organic Farm would include housing for 10-20 residents with a large common space for socializing and relaxing, and classrooms for courses in conjunction with the farm program.

DTV is requesting some dedicated space for the quickly-growing television station containing a large room, a technical production/editing room, and an office/viewing center. Swing Kids, a campus dance group, suggests the construction of a dance hall for dances and recreational options. The space should be large enough to accommodate increased participation and regularly available for use with a stage area, a hardwood floor, good sound system and efficient ventilation.

The different organizations are often asking for their own private space to facilitate the organization of their own events and to avoid having to go through the process of reserving a room in Collis or other buildings already heavily programmed. However, in each of these proposals, there is always an anticipated possibility for other organizations to use their space when needed. Overall, the need for more social space to enhance awareness of diversity and develop a real sense of community is a common feeling.

### **Women's Social Space:** Proposals 9, 14, 20, 25, 26

Finally, the need for a women's social space on campus is described. In several proposals, this is often associated with creating more spaces that are controlled by women. Relocating the Women's Resource Center to a more central area and creating a safe building containing convenient social spaces to host awareness programs and discussions is also mentioned.

### **Final Thoughts**

Other suggestions for social life improvements include:

- a beauty supply store for students of color (13)
- a formal dining space to encourage more faculty/student interaction and provide student groups with a place to dine with visiting speakers and performers (18)
- a graduate student social space (19)
- a bowling alley
- an expanded waterfront recreational facility (including an outdoor heated pool)
- more campus pubs (such as sports bars, urban-techno dance clubs, and late- night coffeehouses or snack bars)
- a campus bookstore/café
- shuttle buses to local shopping and other attractions or to urban centers such as Boston
- air conditioning for Thayer and Collis so they can be used by large groups year round
- and a student-run graphic-design space.

Of the twenty three proposals dealing with social space, proposals 7, 13, 18, 20 and 26 are particularly relevant because they respond specifically to Principle 2 in great detail. There are also several other points made in the proposals that should be

underscored. For instance, although there is a clear need for the creation of new and increasingly varied kinds of social spaces on campus, many proposals call for the enhancement of existing spaces. Improving students' access to those spaces (particularly the Hopkins Center, movie theaters, Leede, the Green, graduate student spaces, etc.) and adding amenities (such as large kitchens, etc.) to better accommodate the sorts of events that student groups plan is often suggested. Also, if the Trustee committee decides to assign space to affinity groups, care should be taken to ensure that the allocated space has sufficient impact on the entire campus in order to eliminate the possibility that the groups assigned spaces would become agents of exclusivity themselves. Finally, it should be noted that while students have overwhelmingly called for more student-controlled social space, they also recommend a need for professionally-run social spaces on campus. Having this sort of space available offers some relief to student programmers when their first priority must be their academic work (during mid-terms, reading and exam periods) or to provide programs at the beginning of each term when students are just getting back to the campus. Finally, the need for social space is one of the most common themes in the 30 proposals.

**Principle 3: *“The system should be substantially coeducational and provide opportunities for greater interaction among all Dartmouth students.”***

Twenty-three of the thirty proposals received by the Task Force deal with plans to achieve a more substantially coeducational and inclusive social and residential system. Proposals suggest plans for altering the current system in terms of student social space, student education and programming, student residential space, and projects to foster greater interaction among students, faculty, and staff. By and large, the coeducational aspect is mostly addressed through expanding thematic activities on campus for which gender, race, etc. naturally is of no importance.

A recurring theme in many of the proposals is the need for a common house “owned” by the students. The importance of lounges in the residential halls for socializing, studying, and interacting with faculty is also emphasized in many proposals. A Dartmouth community course for 1<sup>st</sup> year students is also suggested by many as a way of educating the students about coeducational living. It is important to note the many comments about the importance of single-sex living and socializing for individual growth and confidence building.

**Student Social Space**

- To enable men and women to interact in a safe and alcohol-free environment, Swing Kids (16) recommend the construction of a large social facility which would include a new, large dance facility. Current spaces are inadequate because of lack of stage space, storage areas, proper acoustics, ventilation, etc. The facility would also include a non-dance related space to encourage many different student organizations to interact within one building.

- To increase interaction within the actual social spaces themselves, the Dean's Area Working Group (18) recommends the creation of small multi-purpose venues such as pubs or small dance facilities, along with the creation of larger venues such as more appealing auditoriums or large social spaces to replace Webster Hall.
- To bring together diverse groups of students in a social environment that encourages safe alcohol use, the Five Principles Working Group (20) recommends social space to replace Webster Hall which would be student-controlled, durable, and multi-functional and the creation of a student-controlled night club in the former Hovey Grill space. To increase fluid student interactions in and increased accessibility to these spaces, this group proposes the connection and expansion of central campus spaces and relaxing restrictions on use of social spaces.
- The Five Principles Working Group also proposes a "Social House System" (SHS) as an attempt to reform the current Greek housing system while maintaining and capitalizing on its strengths. In particular, the SHS could facilitate the formation of strong personal bonds, create a sense of community and continuity despite the D-Plan, foster alumni/ae loyalty, and preserve some single-sex space. To fulfill these criteria, the Five Principles Working Group suggests that housing be organized through relatively small, student-run houses. Furthermore, the SHS should have a governance system, much like the present CFS organization. This governing body would be responsible for creating and enforcing policies as well as overseeing programs. To make this happen, the Five Principles Working Group recommends parity among male, female, and coeducational houses. This can be achieved by incentives and through attrition, the immediate creation of a new coed house, an open, inclusive, and synchronized rush process, programming activity standards, and strict enforcement of the College code of conduct.

- The Dartmouth Organic Farm (1) suggests building a Sustainable Living Center at the farm. The center would have large common spaces for socializing and relaxation. These spaces would also be used for gatherings, speakers, workshops and farm festivals. Additional space would be created for retreats, community service activities and concerts.
- To better serve students interested in Asian and Asian-American studies, with emphasis on Japan-Korean cultures, Washburn, et al. (3) suggest the creation of a Japan/Korea affinity house. This house would serve as social space for Japanese and Korean students and native speakers as well as for various Asian-American student groups to hold formal meetings and events.
- Dartmouth Television (DTV) (4) asks for a substantial increase in their space. This space would be a natural social space for all student constituents on campus for making and screening of films which in itself cuts across all borders.
- To make students feel more at home the Programming Board (5) (like many others, 5,7,9,13,18,19,20,26) suggests the creation of a “common house” which has the space for both large programming area activities as well as smaller spaces with pool tables and televisions. The board also points out that Webster Hall needs to be replaced as well as greater access to existing venues such as the various theaters within Hopkins Center.
- The Dartmouth Film Society (6) points out the importance of creating many more spaces for viewing movies around the campus. With new digital technology, it is substantially cheaper to view movies than it used to be.
- To reduce the student feeling that “the College runs all student events,” the Gabfest (7) proposal suggests the construction of a common house for a variety of student organized events (large and small). They also suggest a major plan of changes for the use of the Connecticut River for outdoor as well as programming activities.

- The Panhellenic Council (9) believes that “substantially coeducational” means that “75% of a student’s activities should be in a coeducational environment.” Based on this “definition,” they consider the College to already be “substantially coeducational.” To make it more coeducational, they suggest: create a “common house,” allocate more money for campus-unifying events, require Greek House programming to be outside their respective houses, hold retreats for new Greek system members, and sponsor a Brain Bowl about the Greek system.
- The CFSC (10) proposal has many ideas related to Principle 3. They suggest a clustering of Greek and affinity organizations on a term-wide basis for events not involving alcohol to improve on the diversity of the interactions occurring within the Dartmouth Community. A portion of their proposal discusses the importance of reorganizing the Greek system to encourage a greater degree of student choice between the different types of Greek houses now in existence. They suggest that there be an equal representation of different Greek houses, financial incentives to phase out alcohol and that the different Councils related to Greek living be restructured to create a greater degree of cooperation. Additionally, they recommend that athletic facilities on campus be upgraded with snack and juice bars, a spa, and improved locker rooms.
- Being a substantially coeducational organization which does not revolve around alcohol, the Dartmouth Outing Club (15) suggests they be given centrally-located social space. This space would house a media resource room, large kitchen and dining/entertaining room, as well as rooms and tools to work on outdoor equipment.
- From a group of administrators, Dean’s Area and Others’ Working Group\_(26), the following suggestions were made to implement Principle 3: Offer experience-based programs that would provide for greater interaction among all Dartmouth students, subsidize HOP/DCAD tickets and PE courses, create a “common house” run

by students and ORL, implement coed theme housing, keep single-sex organizations but make them non-residential, formalize a role for the WRC, and establish a Community at Dartmouth Course/Program.

- The Afro-American Society (27) proposes that the college bring more diverse business to the Hanover area to better serve the needs for students of color. They also suggest a student center for the arts (to replace Webster Hall) and improved facilities for basketball, roller skating and bowling. Additionally, they point out the need for more shuttle buses between Hanover and surrounding towns.
- The Women's Resource Center (14,25) proposes, among other things, that: First-year orientation needs to be redesigned by including more options that better coincide with the diverse student body, more and different late night socialize options should be created, Webster Hall needs to be replaced, and dining and socializing options should be expanded and decentralized.
- The Palaeopitus (13) proposal is organized according to first-year experience, second and so on. For first year students, they suggest programming space in residential halls, programming money, increased options for 1<sup>st</sup> year students on weekend nights, and reduced ticket prices for the HOP and athletic events. For senior year students, they emphasize the importance of large common spaces where alcohol is permitted, snack bars, barbecue facilities and an on-campus bar to provide a location for responsible drinking. Additionally, they suggest the building of a common house to encourage interactions between different constituencies on campus.

### **Student Education and Programming**

- To build community and understanding through social, educational, and intellectual programming, Dartmouth Community Service Council (17) proposes the creation of a community service residential space to accommodate 25-30 students and “extend

beyond the day to day volunteerism.” The space would include a residential component for those students, a library, student offices, and space for community service fellows. Students in the space would provide programming for the entire campus and organizational support for DCS. All community service programs except one are coeducational.

- Graduate students (19) call for a graduate student center to decrease the relative isolation of these students and tie them to the undergraduate network. Their proposal suggests that this center is necessary for the graduate community and the Dartmouth community as a whole. The student center would include common areas, conference rooms, offices, a kitchen, a library, a café, and social space. It would facilitate the exchange of ideas among all students and greater interactions. In comparison to other comparable universities, Dartmouth’s graduate student facilities are limited and the creation of more spaces may thus draw a more diverse graduate student body.
- To increase education awareness of gender issues and to create a safe space for discussing such sensitive issues as sexual abuse, the Five Principles Working Group (20) calls for a new and improved Women’s Resource Center. Such a center would require adequate funding for campus-wide programming and facilities to accommodate the various groups which might meet there.
- To educate the Dartmouth community about sustainable living, the Dartmouth Organic Farm (1) suggests that new classrooms and laboratories be built as part of the Sustainable Living Center to facilitate the integration of the Farm and its technologies into the curricula.
- A Japan/Korea affinity house (3) would create more needed language classroom space that could also be used for programming activities such as screenings of films, lectures and demonstrations of various aspects of Japanese/Korean cultures.

- The Women’s Resource Center (14,25) suggests a required course called “Community at Dartmouth” for all first year students. Additionally, they suggest a 24-hour study hall with an adjacent coffee shop.

### **Student Residential Space**

- To foster greater interaction and coeducation within residence halls, the Five Principles Working Group (20) proposes improved assignment procedures that would allow students to choose to live on single-sex floors.
- To increase interactions among first year students, to address the issue of discontinuity in residential life created by the D-Plan, and to create a more diverse residential experience, Rohit Ricky Joshi ‘01 (22) suggests a “1-2-1 Plan.” Such a plan would enable freshmen to live together for that first year, sophomores and juniors to live in the same dorms for those two middle years, and then seniors to live in apartment-type environments. This would foster greater interaction within the residential environment.
- To expand the presence of graduate students on campus, facilitate interaction with undergraduate students, and more adequately meet the housing needs of these students, graduate students (19) propose more graduate student coeducational housing. These housing options may be in a single-sex apartment layout or shared apartments. They must be appealing, relatively inexpensive, and contain kitchens.
- To encourage diversity through living, creating a connection among students, the Dean’s Area Working Group (18) proposes intimate housing options based on common interests. This type of living environment would foster interaction among a diverse group of students who share a particular passion.
- To provide the opportunity to immerse in a sustainable lifestyle, the Dartmouth Organic Farm (1) recommends developing housing for 12-20 residents at the Farm.

- Washburn, et al. (3) also suggests that the Japan/Korea affinity house would have space for 10-12 students in a combination of doubles and singles.
- An outdoor oriented residential house is suggested by the Gabfest proposal (7). This dorm would house 10+ students and be a resource to all students. It would have space and equipment for maintaining outdoor equipment and social space for events related to outdoor activities.
- The Afro-American Society (27) proposes that it is important to have continuity of housing, more personable living spaces (primarily created through smaller dorms), higher standard of the individual rooms, higher standard of general facilities in the dorms and an expansion of the cable network (in particular access to the Black Entertainment Television Network). They also want additional snack bars in the residential facilities and larger central dining facilities to decrease overcrowding.
- Providing upper-class students with the option of smaller residential units and building freshman housing linked with first-year seminar courses are two suggestions from the Women's Resource Center (14,25). They also propose theme houses and better lounges/common spaces in all residential facilities.
- To facilitate social interactions within the dorms, the CFSC proposal (10) lists a number of suggestions such as: Cluster central spaces with snack bars and study lounges, set up DA\$H capability for vending machines and laundry, and allow students can keep their dorm rooms during their off-terms.
- The Palaeopitus proposal (13) suggests freshmen housing with institutionalized upper-class contacts. They advise that 1<sup>st</sup> year students should be in charge of programming events in their own residence halls. For 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. They recommend that 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students live in/affiliate with a specific dorm for the rest of their college tenure. These dorms would be restructured to foster more floor interactions, they would have at most 35-50 people, they could be designed based on

themes, and they would have ample funding for programming events within the residential hall. Seniors should be able to choose from more apartment like dorms, where the apartments are organized around a courtyard to ensure interactions between the students.

### **Greater Interaction Among Students, Faculty, and Staff**

- Dartmouth Community Service (17) recommends a residential program (as aforementioned) that would not only serve to increase interactions among the Dartmouth student community, but would also serve as a “forum for the interaction of Dartmouth students, faculty, and staff of varied backgrounds.” By providing space for community service fellows, the space would also serve to connect the Dartmouth community with outsiders.
- The Dean’s Area Working Group (18) proposes formal dining facilities so that “students, faculty, and staff and others could join together over meals in a formal setting.” These facilities would provide a more intimate atmosphere for student-faculty interaction and would enable Dartmouth students to prepare for the types of interactions which occur in these settings in the “real world” outside Dartmouth.
- To increase the interaction of faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and administrators in residence halls, thereby increasing the residential community, the Office of Residential Life (21) proposes a faculty involvement program. This program would encourage formal faculty participation to increase these types of interactions outside the classroom. Faculty might help freshmen by serving as advisors or a larger sector of residents by establishing a relationship with a particular interest group.

- Outreach programs for both the Dartmouth Community and Upper Valley residents would be part of the Sustainable Living Center as proposed by the Dartmouth Organic Farm (1).
- The Japan/Korea affinity house (3) would have a resident fellows program in addition to a strong commitment to hold special events for educating the campus on Japan/Korean cultures.
- The Women's Resource Center (14,25) suggests that more and better connections between academic areas and student life have to be established, as is done in the E. Wheelock cluster. These connections can be based on themes such as women studies, technology and computing, ecology, and earth science, etc.
- The Palaeopitus proposal (13) suggests coffee houses in 1<sup>st</sup> year residence halls to encourage professors to drop-in, adopt-a-floor program with a faculty, and a revamped advisor system. For seniors, they recommend designating small meeting rooms for seniors and thesis advisors, creating apartments for faculty in the senior clusters, and an expanding graduate advising program.

**Principle 5 : *"The abuse and unsafe use of alcohol should be eliminated."***

The proposals are largely complementary of each other with no real disagreements in how they view the current state of campus use and abuse of alcohol nor in the general methods for reducing it. Most people feel that the image of Dartmouth as a Greek drinking school has become a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy and other than Butterfield, the College has done little to combat this thus far.

The proposed reforms can be split into three types:

**1) Those dealing with education**

The College needs to take a more active stance on educational programs as opposed to punitive actions. A popular time for future education initiatives is during first year orientation. It is also suggested that more effective educational programs must continue throughout the year, but there is disagreement as to the specific vehicle. Some suggest the possibility of alcohol abuse education in conjunction with the UGA program or DAPAs. Additionally, staff members devoted to alcohol education could be created in the departments of Residential Life, Health Resources, and Counseling and Human Development. Attention is given to the influence of Dartmouth students, particularly seniors on younger undergraduates. Because of this socialization, seniors should be given outlets where they, as students of legal drinking age, can act as models of responsible drinking for younger students. Dovetailing with the changes in policy, perhaps academic departments could have functions with students where alcohol in moderation is provided.

**2) Those dealing with social space and programming**

Alcohol use on campus has its links to the Greek system, with many of the more popular functions at Greek houses involving alcohol. Many of the proposals call for more college support of non-alcoholic events within these spaces. Several proposals mention the possible positive effects on social drinking if the College would subsidize professional bartenders to serve alcohol responsibly. The overall consensus is that the college social system on the whole should include more venues that encourage safe and responsible consumption of alcohol. The idea was raised that the College should invest in reforming current spaces to be more conducive atmospheres for responsible social behavior, for example, paying to carpet the basement of a Greek house.

As for non-Greek social spaces, overlapping with other principles, there is a cry for student controlled social space and the safe use of alcohol to be allowed in that space. Finally, several proposals encourage more substance-free housing on campus.

### **3) Those dealing with policy**

The College should take the stance that alcohol will always play into the lives of college students, especially for those over the age of 21, they there is room for education and better avenues for responsible drinking. Some proposals acknowledge that the social norms currently pressure students to drink, and they excuse excessive drinking as a harmless and common occurrence. These social norms need to be proactively addressed and the myths of drinking need to be reformed in order for other measures of alcohol policy to truly be effective. If the CFSC houses maintain a presence on campus, the “minimum standards” requirements regarding alcohol and other drugs should be reevaluated to encourage “standards of excellence.”

In addition, policies regarding alcohol adjudication and parental notification should be reexamined and possibly reformed to promote a sense of social responsibility.

Additionally, the current student and Department of Safety and Security monitoring procedures should be expanded to the entire campus.

## Miscellaneous Task Force Ideas

Although the majority of proposals submitted to the Residential and Social Life Task Force pertain directly to the Five Principles as outlined by the Board of Trustees, there are a number of noteworthy suggestions that should be brought to the attention of the Trustee Steering Committee and the Board. Seven of 30 proposals, in addition to two letters, address issues outside of the scope of the Five Principles. These include academics, the D-Plan, improving campus climate, upgrades to health services, examining the student support network, environmental recommendations and improved computing facilities.

Academics is the number one issue addressed outside of the Five Principles in terms of numbers. The following ideas are proposed, although it should be noted that some of the topics addressed in regards to Principles 1 and 2 relate directly to academics:

- A senior believes that the average class size at Dartmouth is too large and faculty accessibility is hampered as a result.
- An alumna suggests smaller average class sizes, more accomplished faculty and more university-caliber course offerings would improve the academic reputation of Dartmouth.
- To provide needed space to extend language instruction beyond the classroom, Washburn, et al. proposes the creation of a Japan/Korea Affinity House (3). The proposed affinity house would have a variety of additional uses including screening of films connected course offerings and providing long term residential space for visiting scholars.

Two students address the D-Plan by providing feedback at the Residential and Social Life Initiative website. An affiliated senior cites the strength of the Greek system as a direct result of the D-Plan and the inherent discontinuity in the residential and social

lives of students. A junior claims the D-Plan impairs student's intellectual maturity, because students do not have proper amount of time to study and reflect on their learning.

In order to make the Dartmouth community friendlier for those faculty and staff not belonging to mainstream groups, an administrator proposes the idea of hiring one to three new staff members to focus on community building and retention (12). These staff members could be responsible for providing a comprehensive orientation program, conducting exit interviews and providing some social programming for faculty, staff and their partners. Although these new positions would not directly involve students, the benefits are obvious.

Three proposals (7, 11, 13) mention improvements to the current health services not related to alcohol as those suggestions are covered in Principle 5.

- To assist students who obtain local medical and dentistry services, an individual suggests compiling a list of local medical practitioners and experiences other students, faculty and staff have had with each (11).
- Recognizing that first year students may have difficulties adjusting to college life, Palaeopitus requests greater availability and accessibility to counseling programs for first-year students (13).
- On a related note, the Gabfest proposal recommends implementing a study to see if students believe that they are receiving the support that they need from older adults on campus (7). Based on the results of this study, a new program could be created to make sure that students have someone to turn to when they need assistance.

The Environmental Studies Division of the Dartmouth Outing Club makes a series of recommendations concerning the environmental impact of future renovation and construction at the College (8). These recommendations include the following:

- Use of local building materials and the minimization of waste
- Renovation of existing building instead of expansion when possible

- Use of alternative energy sources as well as more efficient light bulbs, light sensors and timers
- Reduce the amount of waste produced in Collis and the Hopkins center dining facilities through the installation of dishrooms and the use of reusable materials
- Extend composting to all dorms

Recognizing that there are currently insufficient computing resources at the College, especially when it comes to group projects, the Ledyard Canoe Club proposes the creation of a centralized group computing and graphic design center (24). Their suggestion requests a center with 20 - 25 computers clustered in groups of 2 - 4, appropriate software, printers, scanners and other equipment. They suggest that an attendant be on duty to assist students. They also mention the Collis/Robinson/Thayer complex as possible location for this center.

## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

The Dartmouth College web page offered a site for electronic feedback on the Initiative. More than 350 responses were received, most within the first few weeks after the Initiative was announced. Some were long and thoughtful commentaries on the Initiative, others were just a line to express an opinion. The responses were first sorted by the authors: Dartmouth students – on campus, Dartmouth students – off campus, Staff and Administration, parents, and other students. As the comments were read, major points were tallied subjectively and compiled in Table 1. Because some respondents offered multiple perspectives on the Initiative, their feedback appears in several categories. However, the General Summary reflects the overall tone of each feedback form and matches the total number received.

The majority of comments were negative, either about the 5 Principles or the process by which the Initiative was conceived and announced. The main focus of the criticism was about the process.

*“The decision to make sweeping changes without consulting the students at large is despicable, sneaky, and irresponsible.”*

*“We left our parents at home. Why is the Board suddenly trying to reassert some paternal role, telling us who we can and can’t hang out with...?”*

*“Is there a switch somewhere? If so, would someone please flick it to the democracy position.”*

Even if there was an acknowledgement that the goals of the initiative were appropriate, the process was criticized.

*“I fully support the decision of the trustees. I would argue that the announcement was abrupt and inflammatory, unnecessarily creating a hostile situation.”*

Of all the principles, it is the perceived threat of change or elimination of the Greek system that generated the most passion. Many commented on their positive experiences within the Greek system, noting that the CFS system already satisfies the Trustees' goals. For many students, the Greek system was significant in choosing Dartmouth over other Ivy League schools. Some were upset enough to threaten to withhold any donations to the College.

*"My fraternity experience has become the most significant aspect of my Dartmouth experience, although I am involved in many other activities and organizations."*

*"Bonds of friendship and fellowship are established at these fraternities, relationships that last a lifetime. If that's not community, I don't know what is."*

*"The reason I came to Dartmouth was the Greek system. That is what sets Dartmouth up above the rest of the premier colleges in the nation."*

*"Until the Trustees reconsider their proposal, my family and I will be unable to provide any support to the College in the form of donations or contributions – now and at any point in the future."*

A small group was totally positive about the Initiative, offered their support, and, frequently, suggested an idea for implementing the 5 Principles.

*"What you are doing will not be appreciated for a long time to come, but do not let that deter you from doing it."*

*"I would like to congratulate both President Wright and the Trustees for making such a gutsy, important, and righteous decision in the face of the formidable opposition which will undoubtedly arise."*

All of the comments are on file at the Dean of the College office.

## **Conclusion**

As members of the Task Force, we appreciated and valued this opportunity to contribute to a process aimed at making the residential and social experience for undergraduate and graduate students at Dartmouth the very best that it can be. We recognize, and we have been reminded in reading these proposals, that excellent social and residential facilities and outstanding programs are not ends in themselves, no matter how much they contribute to students' high levels of satisfaction with their Dartmouth experience. As highly as we value student satisfaction, the more significant test of excellence is the extent to which facilities and programs support the broad educational purposes of the institution. We hope that the discussion and reflection we have tried to stimulate, along with the various proposals we have collected and attempted to summarize, will assist the entire Dartmouth community in being able to articulate more clearly and thoughtfully answers to questions like these: What do we want students to learn as a result of living together in Dartmouth residential facilities and taking part in social activities and organizations? What kinds of living and social arrangements or facilities promote that learning better than others? How can we support and organize residential and social life in a way that preserves our highest values and aspirations as a residential community of learning, especially considering the challenges associated with the D-Plan? What is the right balance, for Dartmouth, between sustaining a vibrant sense of a broad, strong, and all-inclusive Dartmouth community, on one hand, and recognizing the importance of more intimate, and self-defined smaller communities on the other hand? What is the right balance between aspects of residential and social life defined and managed by employees of the College and aspects of that experience that should be defined and managed largely by students? How can the experience of graduate students be supported in a way that is comparable to our traditional concern for the quality of the

undergraduate experience? What role or roles should faculty play in students' residential and social experience? Does our current array of dining facilities and programs support our residential and social objectives to the highest possible extent? To what degree should specific administrative areas in the College adapt their policies and facilities to enhance the undergraduate experience in ways defined by student interests? The list of questions such as these could be expanded considerably, but we cite them as examples of the kinds of significant issues that emerged for us in our reading of the attached proposals and our own reflections on the principles articulated by the Trustees.

We want to conclude by thanking the many students, employees, and parents who responded so thoughtfully to the challenge and opportunity occasioned by the Trustee initiative. We believe the outcome of this process will be a Dartmouth residential and social experience that preserves what is best about Dartmouth's traditional strengths and values as well as one that is appropriate for Dartmouth's strengths and aspirations for the future.