Random Hall Room-Assignment Action Plan

1. Please describe, in detail, your house’s updated room-assignment process for first year students. This should include details of the process over the summer and the process during REX and Orientation.

Starting in the summer, there will be detailed email communications from the President and Room Assignment Chair (RAC) of Random to incoming first-year students regarding move-in and the room-assignment process. Enhanced communication will include flyers detailing the room-assignment process and floor exploration that will be placed on each first-year room’s bed.

During REX, the President and RAC will hold an office hours event where first-years can ask questions about Random’s room assignment process. Following REX, there will be an opportunity for floor exploration. Each floor will be available to talk to first-year students and answer any questions about their floor’s personality and culture. Floors bake cookies and have small events (i.e., puzzles) that they feel are relevant to their communities. Shortly after, first-years will gather in our main lounge to submit an online form that contains their room preferences as well as their roommate preferences. By having them come together to submit the form we ensure that they won’t forget to complete it and that they have an opportunity to talk to potential roommates while submitting the form, but the online system gives them privacy to not share their room preferences if they would prefer not to.

On the form, first-years can also indicate if they have strong feelings about single-gender floors and cat floors, and there will be a text box on the form to explain their room ranking (e.g., are their top choices all roughly tied, or is there a clear preference?). The RAC will run an algorithm to match students to rooms optimally, and then may make specific swaps in the output of the algorithm based on non-personal factors (e.g., gender balance, quiet/noisy floors, additional student preferences expressed on the form, etc.). The Assistant Director/Area Director will be present during this process.

Since Random is a small residence hall, it can be difficult to accommodate roommate requests, but we hope to alleviate this by offering an option to either prioritize getting the room they want or the roommate they want. If they choose a roommate, it is almost guaranteed that the two will be paired.

After the optimization process is run and rooms are announced, there will be a house-wide celebration welcoming first-year students to their new floors.

To encourage exploration and mitigate the stress of moving to one’s permanent assignment, we will host a “moving/pizza party” in which upper-level students are encouraged to help first-years move.

2. How does the process allow for students who are overwhelmed to opt out of exploration and moving?

Students who feel extremely overwhelmed or stressed at the prospect of moving can express this to Random’s RAC or President, or a member of the House Team. If they approach the President, RAC, or a Graduate Resident Advisor (GRA), the AD or a Head of House will be included in the discussion. First-years will not need to specify the specific reasons for wanting to opt-out of the process. This will be communicated to students over the summer via emails from the President and RAC, as well as in flyers that are placed in each room.
3. **What is the level of upper-level student involvement? Are the first year students being assigned through an algorithm or another way?**

Upper-level students will be involved in the process, but they will not have any say as to who joins their floors. They will help first-years learn about their floors and communities, welcome them in during the welcome/celebration event, and help first-years move into their new room assignments.

First-year students will be assigned through an optimization algorithm.

4. **Please describe your house’s upper-level student room-assignment process. This description should include any information about mid-semester room switches.**

Create a list of priorities from their first-year room assignment (upper-level students who received their top choice will be at the bottom of list, randomized, and vice-versa). We have a priority list that changes as students move rooms (if a student moves rooms, they will be lower in the priority list for their class year).

The RAC typically does not move students during the year; new openings are generally for transfer students or are reassigned during the fall.

Mid-semester room switches are considered for urgent reasons (flexible threshold for what constitutes “urgent”).

5. **What is the role of the AD in these processes?**

The AD will be there to support the student leaders and RAC running the process. The AD is present during floor exploration, the welcome/celebration, and the intra-dorm move day.

The AD will help the RAC and President write the communications to go out during the summer to provide a non-student perspective.

The AD will be present for the optimization process and will assist first-years with the opt-out process.

6. **What forms of evaluation are being considered for assessing the effectiveness of the new process? What ideas do you have for evaluation?**

We will send out a survey to first-year students post-REX, as well as one during the second semester (February 2020) asking how students felt about moving rooms during REX (would they have stayed in their room if they could have?).