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Provost Peter Lange (right) speaks on the findings of the Campus Culture Initiative's Steering Committee



We have one of the most gorgeous quads known to American college campuses



A panel of students and administrators, including Provost Peter Lange, discusses the Campus Culture Initiative report Tuesday night in the Bryan Center.

Students, Provost discuss CCI findings

Admins address student concerns about proposals

By: Naureen Khan

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A number of students voiced their opinions to Duke administrators Tuesday night about controversial recommendations outlined in the recently released Campus Culture Initiative Report.

The CCI town hall meeting, organized by Duke Student Government and held in Reynolds Theater, was part of a series of meetings hosted by the Office of the Provost to gather student input regarding some of the report's widely scrutinized suggestions for undergraduate student life at the University.

"We've already started meeting with a variety of leadership groups on campus to get a sense of forward momentum," Provost Peter Lange said. "It's time... for a conversation to start up."

Lange, John Simon, vice provost for academic affairs, and Susan Roth, vice provost for interdisciplinary studies, answered questions and offered clarification to address concerns raised by students.

Of the six areas of improvement outlined in the report, the CCI's recommendations about social life and dining and residential life sparked the most discussion.

One hot-button issue at the meeting was the CCI's recommendations regarding alcohol, which seek to make drinking less central to social life on campus and enforce regulations consistently.

"Our liquor laws have made every college campus in the U.S. like a brothel during Prohibition," Lange said. "It is one of the great dilemmas of American college campuses."

He lauded recent events on campus, however, in which he said alcohol was present but not central to success, such as *Nasher Noir* and *DukePlays: The Party!* Lange contrasted these to more "destructive" activities such as tailgate.

Several students said administrators should regulate alcohol distribution rather than attempt to eliminate drinking all together.

"We have one of the most gorgeous quads known to American college campuses that could fit the entire Duke community," one student said. "I just find it a tragedy that we can't have kegs on that quad."

Lange emphasized that the recommendations were a work in progress that would have to be discussed and adjusted before they could be put into effect.

"We don't take it for granted that all the ideas captured in the report are good ideas," he said. "The point is to get them out on the table."

Many students were strongly opposed to the discontinuation of selective living groups, as proposed by the report, citing the sense of community and the social opportunities they foster on campus.

Students suggested that their elimination would not automatically translate to unity and interaction on West Campus, given the campus' inherently disconnected structure.

"Physical space matters a great deal for the way communities can build," Lange said. "But it is also true that we do have selective living groups that manage to do well when they come with pre-existing resources."

Others said they agreed that selective living groups have an inequitable control of the real estate on West.

"As someone who has just finished rushing, I totally agree with getting rid of selective living groups altogether," said freshman Priyanka Chaurasia, a member of Brownstone selective living group. "We have two options-to expand selective living or get rid of it all together."

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