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DSG president Elliott Wolf said he was disappointed in the CCI Steering Committee's confidentiality policy.

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## Reps: CCI lacked undergrad input

### focus on | Campus Culture Initiative

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Several students who were involved in the creation of the Campus Culture Initiative said this week they were disappointed by the lack of student input integrated into the final report.

According to the CCI report, Steering Committee members met with 20 student groups between Aug. 30 and Dec. 7.

Leaders of some student organizations and student members of the CCI committee said, however, that the handling of these meetings restricted student input from reaching the report, which was released Feb. 27.

CCI committee members communicated with students through other efforts-such as a town hall meeting Oct. 25 and various one-on-one communications-but some student leaders said the committee failed to reach out to the organizations that could be directly affected by the report's proposed recommendations.

Elliott Wolf, Duke Student Government president and member of the CCI Steering Committee, said the CCI committee's confidentiality policy forbade discussion regarding the report's possible suggestions, denying students the context needed to offer valuable suggestions.

"I was extremely disappointed that we were not allowed during those meetings to discuss certain topics," said Wolf, a junior. "Students were forced to answer nebulous questions about campus culture that didn't elicit much of a response.... How can you have a discussion on campus culture if you're keeping the content of the discussion a secret?"

Campus Council President Jay Ganatra, a senior, said the questions Larry Moneta, vice president for student affairs and vice-chair of the CCI Steering Committee, asked at his meeting with Campus Council in September 2006 did not generate discussion that would allow student voices to influence the findings of the CCI report.

"I do feel that the questions were leading," Ganatra said. "The questions lead to one thing-selective

living does lead to a divide on campus. The way the questions were posed, they were aimed to get the negative aspects of selective living. There were no questions to get the positive aspects."

Ganatra said the committee did not speak to the housing organizations representing students who live in selective living sections, which the CCI report recommended be disbanded.

"We have about four or five [Campus Council] members that live in a selective living group, out of 20," he said. "If [selective living] is going to be a major recommendation, you should talk to a group like Selective House Council.... You have to talk to the people who are going to be living with these recommendations."

Moneta met with the greek honor society Order of Omega Oct. 18, but the organization's president Zach Bencan, a senior, said separate visits to governing councils would have given Moneta a more thorough understanding of how greek life contributes to overall campus culture.

"While the Order is comprised of all four of the greek councils, it's hard for me to say that we represent all of them completely," Bencan said. "I'm sure there are opinions that aren't represented in my organization. In something as crucial as this, it's good to hear from people that aren't usually heard."

Moneta also hosted a open session with greek students Nov. 6, but Ivan Mothershead, Interfraternity Council president at the time of the meeting, said talking to IFC and other fraternity members would have been more effective.

"I doubt whether it was at all helpful in terms of channeling information to the CCI," said Mothershead, a senior. "No one was taking notes, so the information may or may not have been presented."

Moneta said the interactions committee members had with students provided an adequate amount of student input as the committee drafted the report's recommendations.

"We talked to hundreds of students in a variety of settings, from formal to informal," Moneta said. "We talked to enough students to get a clear sense of what was important. [The meetings] were extremely effective. The report was written directly from the perspective given to us by the students."

CCI Steering Committee member Trisha Bailey, a senior, said the committee accessed enough resources beyond student groups to incorporate student opinion into its recommendations.

"The student input we were given was at the forefront of our attention," Bailey said. "When people say, 'No one's listening,' I say, 'You weren't there when I read the 300 pages of everything you wrote.'"

The four undergraduates on the committee provided a voice for the student body during the process of compiling the report, Robert Thompson, chair of the CCI committee, dean of Trinity College of Arts and Sciences and provost of undergraduate education, wrote in an e-mail.

"The students were full participants in the work of the CCI Steering Committee and made substantive contributions, not only by expressing their individual views, but by offering perspectives that other students were likely to have on the full range of issues that we engaged," he said.

As the administration considers whether to implement the recommendations, Provost Peter Lange said, he will solicit student responses to the CCI report through ongoing discussions with student groups and by holding public town hall meetings. "We are far from having had a thorough discussion with students, having had only an initial part of the meetings we plan," Lange wrote in an e-mail. "The CCI report and its recommendations is the starting point for our further examination of how to address the issues it outlines in our campus climate and we are moving forward from there."

Wolf said the increased level of student engagement encouraged by Lange will ensure that student

opinion factors into the decision of whether to enact any of the CCI report's proposed changes.

"The process being conducted right now should have been the process conducted earlier, but it wasn't," Wolf said. "They are committed to full transparency, which is a huge first step. It'll reveal the flaws in some of the suggestions and the positive aspects of others.... Students are now the main component of the process that Provost Lange is introducing."

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