

Charles Drew Memorial Cultural House Constitution

I. Statement of Purpose

The Charles Drew Memorial Cultural House is named in honor of Charles R. Drew '26. Dr. Drew was an outstanding surgeon who discovered the chemical method for preserving blood, and later became the director of the first American Blood Bank. Dr. Drew suffered an untimely death in 1950 as the result of a car accident.

This house has been named for Charles Drew not only in honor of his outstanding achievements, but also as a testament to the continuous inspiration and example that Dr. Drew is to us. Our mission as a house is to sponsor events that will celebrate the achievements of black people such as Charles Drew and explore the cultures of Africa and the Diaspora at large. This house was founded as a space where members of the Amherst community can engage in intellectual debate, social activities, artistic expression, and all other endeavors, which highlight Africa and the Diaspora and the accomplishments of its diverse peoples.

II. Admission

A formal application must be completed and submitted to the current House Cabinet in the spring preceding in the intended year of residence. Applications are available online at the Amherst housing website. All applications are to be read by all admitted members of the House. After the applications are read, qualified applicants are contacted for an interview. All interviews are to be scheduled personally; for purposes of confidentiality, a list of interviewees and interview times are not posted. Interviews are to be conducted by those persons who read the preliminary applications. No later than one week after the interview process is concluded, all applications are to be put on file with the Office of Residential Life. A list of accepted students will be provided to the Office of Residential Life who will confirm their acceptance via email.

There are twenty-seven (27) spaces in the Charles Drew Memorial Cultural House, fifteen (15) singles and six (6) doubles. The House Cabinet must fill these spaces with qualified applicants from the pool of interviewed students and place all other qualified applicants on an ordered waiting list which will be provided along with the list of

accepted students to the Office of Residential Life. By order of the College Council, no one may live in Drew House for more than four semesters, unless there is space that remains available after the regular application procedure is completed. Additionally, if members travel abroad in the spring, House vacancies for the spring semester will be filled through the application process. At this time people who have lived in the House for four semesters may apply for the remaining space. Those who decide to live in Drew House after their fourth semester are still bound by the Constitution, and must participate in and attend House discussions, attend House meetings, and complete House projects. In the event that a space should open in Charles Drew House and the waitlist is empty, Amherst College students may apply to live in the House. These students will go through an abridged version of the admission process held by the Evaluation Board (See Section VI for more on the Evaluation Board). The year(s) spent in the House as an RC are not counted under the four-semester rule due to their appointment to the House by the Dean of Students Office.

In the spring semester, once all residents have been selected and notified of their acceptance, Drew will conduct a room selection process that will determine where residents will live within the house. Accepted students will be notified of the room selection date and time via their campus email account. Returning residents will pick a number at random in order of seniority and room selection will take place according to the numbers, from lowest to highest. The same process will occur for first-year residents. It is imperative that upon picking a number, each resident makes their number apparent to all other residents at the room draw process. For residents who are not able to attend room draw (they took a semester off or are studying abroad) and have not sent in a proxy -- who is a trusted individual to choose on your behalf -- a member of the House Cabinet will select the number for them. It is the responsibility of the resident(s) not available to attend room draw to contact ResLife and the House Cabinet through their Amherst email to notify them of the identity of the proxy. The proxy must arrive on-time with their Amherst College photo ID and a written record of your ranked room preferences. All room selections are final upon their initial choosing.

III. Residential Responsibilities

It's implicitly understood that students interested in living in Charles Drew Memorial Cultural House have read the House Constitution, as well as all pertinent information on the theme house webpage, and in submitting an online application, do so with the full understanding that they agree to and will abide by the rules and process set forth in it. In accordance with the Statement of Purpose, all residents are expected to attend

House meetings. All admitted residents are expected to organize an intellectual and cultural activity (i.e. House discussions, film screenings, lecture/art trips). All residents are required to organize and attend House Projects which celebrate and uplift African and Afro-Diasporic cultures and connect Drew House to the Amherst community. The following categories serve as guidelines for acceptable projects, which are events which aid in the restoration/preservation of Charles Drew House. Though all events must first meet the guidelines, it is expected that each house member initiate one event per year that further the House's mission (See Section VIII for review process and expulsion procedures).

All residents are responsible for kitchen maintenance and ensuring that all left-over food is utilized in a prompt and non-wasteful manner.

The House should participate in a year-long education-based or community service program.

Charles Drew House is an alcohol-free house. This means that no alcohol may be consumed in the common areas of the House. This includes the entire first floor, the kitchen, all bathrooms, the laundry room, all stairways and hallways. Alcohol is allowed in these common areas of the House only when approved by the House members, RC, and student security in accordance with college rules and regulations.

IV. Guidelines for House Projects

1. House Projects should be approved by the House within the first two House meetings of the semester. (See Section III for appropriate project topics).
2. All projects are allowed two date changes: one for personal conflicts; one for programming conflicts – i.e. scheduling conflicts, facilitator absence, etc.
3. All events must be campus-wide. While community events are encouraged, they will not count towards the completion of the fulfillment of residential responsibilities.
4. House members should discuss and plan spring semester events before the end of the fall semester.

V. Role of the House Cabinet

The House Cabinet is elected before the end of the spring semester. The election will take place the day of the room draw meeting in the spring. All House members are eligible to be a member of the House Cabinet. A House member may run to be President after living in Drew for one (1) semester. If a new House member would like to run for President, they may be allowed to if they have held a leadership position at Amherst College beforehand. All House Cabinet candidates should send out personal statements before the election, and any changes in their platform should be indicated in the House meeting minutes. The vote is taken by secret ballot and should take place the day of candidate speeches. A majority of the votes is not necessary to win the election; the nominee with the most votes out of all those running for the position wins. Results of the election should be announced at the end of the meeting; the current Executive Board should be responsible for tallying the votes. Lastly, the House Cabinet should be re-elected every year. The current positions are President, Director of Correspondence, and Treasurer. The President is in charge of room draw, admitting new students to the house, running house meetings, handling infractions between house members, and enforcing house responsibilities. The President is also responsible for parent's weekend breakfast, is the contact for faculty advisor, and keeps a record of House projects. The Director of Correspondence keeps the calendar, schedules Drew House discussions, and takes attendance at House discussions. The Treasurer secures funds for House projects and events.

a. Responsibilities

The House Cabinet is responsible for monitoring House members' contributions to the mission of the House in accordance with the review and expulsion process discussed in Section VIII. It is the role of the House Cabinet to communicate with the Faculty Advisor. Additionally, the House Cabinet is responsible for conducting a minimum of two House meetings a month (House residents may also hold House meetings), taking attendance at all House events (meetings, discussions, and projects), and at least one member of the House Cabinet must attend each House discussion.

It is the responsibility of the House Cabinet to record minutes of all House meetings, communicating with dorm and community-at-large about Drew House events and maintaining the House budget. The House Cabinet must make House finance information available to all residents and file all meeting notes, House project and discussion information in hard copy. With regards to finance information, the House

Cabinet should consult with the Director of Student Activities or the Community Development Coordinator if the complete financial records are required.

The House Cabinet also serves as the executive board for Drew House. All pressing matters may be brought before the House Cabinet for deliberation. All concerns brought before the House Cabinet will be addressed and resolved internally. The House Cabinet's decision should have the support of the majority of the board. In the event that a consensus cannot be reached, the House Cabinet may present the matter in question to the House members and use their opinions to better reach a conclusion. All constitutional decisions made by the House Cabinet are final.

b. The Review and Expulsion Process

In an attempt to make the review process a fair one, it will be handled by the House Cabinet and the Foreman(s), aka the Evaluation Board.

In the middle of October (for the first semester) and the week before Spring Break (for second semester) the House Cabinet issues written evaluations to all residents. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide the residents feedback of their general performance in the House. Those missing events will be so notified in their evaluation, and have seven days upon the receipt of their evaluation to submit a program proposal for the missing event and discuss ways of improving performance with the House Cabinet. A failure to comply with the residential responsibilities i.e. attending House meetings, failure to attend fellow residents' events and failure to execute their event will be followed by a letter that explains the expulsion process that takes place in November (for first semester) or April (for second semester) if there is no change in their involvement in the House. At this time, the Office of Residential Life contacts those students who remain inactive for a formal hearing in the end of November/April. At this hearing, the student has an opportunity to explain their actions or remind the House Cabinet and the Residential Life Community Development Coordinator of any contributions that may have overlooked. If the student cannot justify their residence in the House, the student is placed on the room change list and applications are accepted for the vacant room. Please note that despite the fact that late November/April have been designated as the time of formal review process, students may be expelled at any time throughout the year for failure to carry out their duties as members of the House. Residents can also be removed from the House for disciplinary reasons.

VI. Role of the Evaluation Board

This Board will consist of at least one House resident selected by the House to serve as the Foreman(s), (an) unbiased member(s) of the Evaluation Board.

The House Cabinet becomes the Evaluation Board once the Cabinet is joined by the Foreman(s). The Evaluation Board will be responsible for holding House member evaluations in both the fall and spring semesters (See Section 5b). The Foreman(s) will be selected every year by the House.

VII. Role of the Resident Counselor (RC)

It is important to note that the Resident Counselor (RC) is hired and placed by the Dean of Students Office. The RC is free from the requirements of a normal House member, although must attend at least one House meeting a month. The events initiated in the House by the RC are in partial fulfillment of their responsibilities as an employee of the college. All residential conflicts should be directed towards the RC, not the House Cabinet.

Furthermore, the RC has a budget designated for their Residential Life programming requirements. The RC is responsible for two to three House-bonding events a semester and two or three study breaks a semester. This budget is not be confused with the Theme House budget, which is allocated for cultural events. The RC must also provide the House with kitchen sanitation supplies.

The RC is responsible for authorizing the use of the House for all events and overseeing common space maintenance. Requests from non-Residents to use the kitchen and common room must go through the RC and the House president. House residents get priority when it comes to common room reservations. The RC should ensure that the kitchen and common room is clean, if not they must take the necessary immediate steps to resolve any common space untidiness.

VIII. The Role of the Faculty Advisor

The Faculty Advisor is available for students in order to give advice and assistance with the events which they are planning. They are expected to come to a minimum of one House meeting per semester in order to ensure familiarity with residents and House

activities. The Advisor is also expected to attend and participate in House activities regularly.

IX. House Party Policy

Non-Drew House affiliated groups and House residents that would like to have parties in Drew must submit a request to House members for approval, and sign a party contract, through the Office of Student Activities, agreeing to abide by the rules of the college. (See Section VII for more on common space reservation).

X. Amendment Procedure

House residents can raise amendments to the Constitution. If a House resident raises an amendment, it must be brought to the House Cabinet. The House Cabinet will then call a House meeting and the amendment(s) will be discussed and vote held. The Charles Drew House Memorial Cultural House Constitution can be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of all the House members.