Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Alvarez-Peña, Arleny; Baldwin, Jenn; Catalano, Alexandra; D’Allaird, Courtney; Dosono, Bryan; Ertl, Melissa; Golby, Leah; Griffin, Robert; Hawley, Brian; Martin, Kyle; Mendez, Cameron; Miller, Paul; Miranda, Monica; Stevens, Sheri

Guests of the Chair Present: Collins, Jonathan; Collins, Justin; Feuer, Emily; Jaromin, Michael; Lauricella, Nancy

The meeting convened at 7:06pm.

I. Welcome - Dr. Robert Griffin

Dean Griffin opened the meeting by asking Commission members how they would like to proceed given the low attendance and absence of a quorum requirement from the Commission charge and Briefing Book. The Commission decided to proceed with the meeting as usual. Dean Griffin announced to the group that Commission member Kaweeda Adams has resigned from the Commission due to personal matters.

II. Approval of Minutes of October 2, 2019 - Dr. Robert Griffin

The minutes were approved with no members in opposition.

III. Overview of the Open Forum and Written Statement Period - Dr. Emily Feuer

Dr. Feuer let the group know there were 20 speakers at the Open Forum on October 16 and 59 written submissions. The focus of the majority of speakers and written submissions were on the positive contributions of fraternities/sororities. Dr. Feuer reminded members that all
written submissions and a recording of the Open Forum are available in the Commission shared folder.

IV. **A Timeline of Past Interventions** - Arleny Alvarez-Peña

Ms. Alvarez-Peña spoke about past interventions, priorities, and initiatives related to the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life within the past seven years. Topic areas included scholarship, leadership, programming, service/philanthropy, community, accountability, and marketing. Questions from Commission members were asked about evidence of positive change, minimum membership number requirements, the Blue Ribbon Committee, the role of sub-governing councils, what an ideal number of students in the fraternity/sorority community would be, the role of alumni involvement, and difficulties with unrecognized organizations.

V. **Review of Positive Contributions of the Fraternity/Sorority Community at UAlbany**

Dr. Feuer reviewed the positive contributions of the fraternity/sorority community based on data and presentations thus far in the process and asked for Commission feedback on a graphic (available in the shared folder) depicting the positive contributions. Recommendations were made to include a section for recruitment/marketing/enrollment, leadership, academic excellence (combining GPA and retention), and to highlight cultural inclusion more specifically. Keeping the proposed changes in mind, all Commission members present agreed on the list of positive contributions.

VI. **Review of Destructive Behaviors of the Fraternity/Sorority Community at UAlbany**

Dr. Feuer also reviewed the destructive behaviors of the fraternity/sorority community based on data and presentations thus far in the process and asked for Commission feedback on a graphic (available in the shared folder) depicting this information. Feedback from Commission members included the need for adding the exclusionary nature, inherent power, gender-specific focus of fraternities/sororities, and specific outcomes of the behaviors. Comments were also made about considering if fraternities/sororities increase or decrease the risk associated with these behaviors, the importance of relationships with fraternities/sororities and the University in making changes to behaviors, and how changing technology impacts incident knowledge and reporting. Questions were also asked about race/ethnicity and council breakdowns in terms of destructive behaviors and if the risk of destructive behaviors are caused by something that develops within fraternities/sororities or by a specific type of individual who is drawn to membership in a fraternity/sorority.

VII. **Moving Forward** - Dr. Robert Griffin

Commission members were invited to share their thoughts on the following two questions:
• Do we believe the University at Albany should continue to recognize fraternities and sororities?
• If yes, do we believe that changes need to be made to the current system?

It was discussed that the questions posed are not the original question the Commission was charged with because of evolved thinking about the best ways to move forward. All but one Commission member (who was undecided), stated they believed the University at Albany should continue to recognized fraternities and sororities. Not all Commission members spoke about the second question, but all that did stated they believe changes need to be made to the current system. Ex-officio members were also asked for their thoughts.

VIII. **Wrap Up and Next Steps** - Dr. Robert Griffin

Dean Griffin reminded attendees that because of Thanksgiving, the next two meetings will be back-to-back on November 13 and November 20. Dean Griffin also let attendees know that at the next meeting, the focus of the first part of the meeting will be on aspirations for the fraternity/sorority community. Members should share their aspirations and potential strategies through a shared document that Dr. Feuer will distribute.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11pm.