Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Alvarez-Peña, Arleny; Apgar, Travis; Baldwin, Jenn; Catalano, Alexandra; Golby, Leah; Griffin, Robert; Hawley, Brian; Jones, Lani; Khatib, Sari; Mendez, Cameron; Minor, Tamra; Nuñez, Ariel; Stevens, Sheri; Urena, Moises

Guests of the Chair Present: Alexander, Pamela; Feuer, Emily; Jaromin, Michael; Lauricella, Nancy

The meeting convened at 7:05pm.

I. Welcome - Dr. Robert Griffin

Dean Griffin informed members that because of technical difficulties, Zoom conferencing is not available for the session and microphones would not be available. Because of this, members Julie Bunson, Bryan Dosono, Kyle Martin, and Monica Miranda were not able to participate in the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes of November 13, 2019 - Dr. Robert Griffin

The minutes were approved with no members in opposition.

III. An Update on Fraternity/Sorority Related National Headlines – Dr. Emily Feuer

Dr. Feuer reviewed national headlines from the past month regarding fraternities including four student deaths and a racist/anti-Semitic incident. The Commission discussed the increased pressure and scrutiny of our work and the number and nature of incidents occurring within fraternities and sororities this semester at UAlbany were discussed.
IV. **Philosophy Statement** – Dr. Emily Feuer

Dr. Feuer presented the ideas generated through the shared document related to the Commission’s philosophy statement on the relationship between fraternities/sororities and the University. Minor adjustments were made by Commission members and a discussion was had about whether to include a statement on unrecognized fraternities/sororities in the document. It was decided to not include this type of statement. Dr. Feuer will draft a full philosophy statement to present to the group.

V. **Developing Recommendations** - Dr. Robert Griffin

Dr. Feuer discussed how the list of potential recommendations were developed using broad categories that were discussed in the philosophy statement followed by specific suggestions under the categories based on the list of ideas generated from Commission members. The broad categories include opportunities, support, and accountability. Dean Griffin discussed how specific suggestions will be discussed in order they appear on the list of potential recommendations, but that this list was not generated using any type of rank. A discussion was then started using the first category of opportunities:

- **Social programming** – Ideas related to increasing options for programming for student organizations, especially fraternities/sororities, were discussed including more on-campus spaces (Campus Center, residential life, new spaces, etc.), and fraternity/sorority-only locations for meetings and events. In addition, more opportunities for collaboration with Athletics, including half-time performances and designated seating for fraternities/sororities was discussed. Other ideas mentioned were designating off-campus registered events better and working with Student Association to increase funding opportunities for fraternities/sororities. Potential issues were also discussed including limited late night bussing options, limited venue options both on and off campus, the cost of off-campus events, and the cost of on-campus catering options.

- **Housing** – Ideas related to on-campus housing options for fraternity/sorority members were mentioned, including models with fraternity/sorority members occupying Greek-only space on Alumni and models more aligned with living-learning communities with a focus on leadership and a mix of both fraternity/sorority members and non-members and faculty representation. Multiple Commission members discussed the need for lower cost options for any on-campus model to work for fraternity/sorority members.

- **Partnerships** – Commission members discussed what to do with the list of identified offices/areas that could build stronger relationships with fraternities/sororities. It
was mentioned that for these partnerships to be effective, the partnerships would need to be “built into the fabric” of each office and the importance of the partnerships would need to be reiterated from upper-level administrators. Commission members also mentioned other offices that need to be added to the list including Campus Recreation and inter/national organizations.

In addition to items related to the opportunities category, the off-campus events model was mentioned including a need for consistency across all student organizations and an increase in the number of trash receptacles in certain areas in the Pine Hills neighborhood. In addition, a discussion about whether fraternities/sororities can/should be compared to athletic teams was had. Further, Commission members discussed hesitations about implementing a fraternity/sorority fee.

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

Dean Griffin reminded members of the next meeting on December 4 and let the group know the work of the Commission may be extended past December 4 given the number of potential recommendations that still need to be discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.