Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Baldwin, Jenn; Catalano, Alexandra; Chan, Teresa; Cray, Fiona; D’Allaird, Courtney; Dosono, Bryan; Ertl, Melissa; Golby, Leah; Griffin, Robert; Hawley, Brian; Khatib, Sari; Miller, Paul; Minor, Tamra; Miranda, Monica; Nuñez, Ariel; Stevens, Sheri; Urena, Moises

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

The meeting convened at 7:02pm.

I. Welcome - Dr. Robert Griffin

Dean Griffin welcomed members and explained that the meeting would primarily consist of a continuation of the discussion on the list of potential recommendations.

II. Approval of Minutes of November 20, 2019 - Dr. Robert Griffin

The minutes were approved with no members in opposition.

III. Developing Recommendations - Dr. Robert Griffin

The discussion about recommendations started with the category of support. The first section within this category is advising models and roles, but since Ms. Alvarez-Peña was not able to make the meeting due to attendance at a conference, it was suggested by a Commission member that we discuss this item at a later meeting. The next item discussed was the University off-campus events model:
• **Event planning form** – Commission members discussed reshaping the current Party Smart Form to include all student organizations and necessary changes that would need to happen to the budget process for Student Association funded student organizations to make this work.

• **Registered off-campus housing** – The benefits of having all off-campus residential addresses for students registered with the University were discussed to help with unrecognized fraternity/sorority activity, accountability, and partnering with the Albany Police Department.

• **Pine Hills neighborhood** – The idea that trying to solve problems in the Pine Hills neighborhood would be beneficial to fraternities and sororities, but is also much larger than fraternities and sororities was brought up. Potential areas of focus could include standards of living, getting other organizations involved, partnering with International Education, creating partnerships between landlords and fraternities/sororities, and continuing to teach students about tenant rights. Further discussions would need to include the City of Albany. Commission members also discussed the equity issue that may arise if there is only a focus on the Pine Hills neighborhood. The necessary, but hard balance of supporting students but also holding students accountable for neighborhood behaviors was mentioned, along with campuses (including Georgetown and The Ohio State) with dedicated and large off-campus staffing models.

Another area that was discussed is the integration of fraternities and sororities on campus. Ideas mentioned include building fraternity/sorority topics into curriculum, business priorities of the University, and different recognition models (including fraternities and sororities being recognized by individual departments rather than a central office). The benefits of disaggregated and aggregated models were discussed. Within this discussion, the costs of fraternity/sorority membership and required conference attendance for students, and the socioeconomic issues related to this, were mentioned.

Funding for fraternities and sororities was also discussed:

• **Student Association funding** – Ex-officio members explained that fraternities and sororities cannot receive standard Student Association funding because of the exclusive nature of the organizations, but that there is currently a $6,000 budget line fraternities and sororities can have access to for events. The idea of using a “Friends of” model for funding from the Student Association was mentioned.

• **Funding from inter/national organizations** – Commission members discussed the idea that UAlbany fraternity/sorority chapters have to pay dues to their respective inter/national organizations, but not to the University and a potential idea of charging inter/national organizations to be recognized on campus.
• **Funding for non-alcohol events** – Ideas for supporting fraternity/sorority sponsored events without alcohol on and off campus on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights were discussed. Ideas include a late-night “Meet the Greeks” type event at the beginning of each semester, a service day led by fraternity/sorority students (potentially in partnership with L-LLCs and/or international students), midnight basketball type events, and re-utilization of residence halls. The potential issues of this type of incentive creating related after-party type events involving alcohol, related staff needs/costs, the expense related to entertainment that will attract and keep students and these events were mentioned.

Further, Commission members began a discussion on high-risk areas:

• **Hazing** – The need for a variety of interventions including re-incorporating the hazing prevention coordinator, hazing prevention education, accountability, and increased interactions with new members and faculty/staff were discussed. Different types of hazing prevention led by some, but not all, inter/national organizations and opportunities to involve these organizations in holding chapters accountable were mentioned. Commission members highlighted the importance of involving many stakeholders including faculty/staff, parents, non-affiliated students, Athletics, and the Student Association. Some Commission members also discussed the ineffective nature of the current online hazing prevention course. The hazing investigation model, particularly concerns related to the severity of reports and heavy staffing needs were also discussed. Further, the need to focus on a harm reduction model, targeted approaches for different groups, and addressing underlying gender, power, race, elitism, and location (specific focus on downtown) issues were mentioned. Finally, gaps in hazing definitions between the Albany Police Department and the University were brought up.

Another item discussed was incorporating discussions from the NIC external review that took place a few years ago. Because of time constraints, all recommendations were not discussed. The conversation will continue at subsequent Commission meetings.

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

Dean Griffin thanked members for their work this semester and let the group know Dr. Feuer will be in touch with next steps, including dates for meetings in January or February.

The meeting adjourned at 9:13pm.

*There was not a chance for these meeting minutes to be formally approved by the Commission.*