

To: Participants at Recruitment Meeting with Jerry Rawls 2/18/2006
From: Brian D. Carr, Ph.D., Chair, Advisor's Circle
Subject: Unofficial Meeting Minutes

On Saturday, February 18, 2006 a meeting was held at the request of Jerry Rawls. Included in the meeting were fraternity advisors and members of the university administration (names were included in the meeting announcement which is unfortunately at my office and not available at this time).

Mr. Rawls introduced himself and provided his sense of the issues challenging the university in terms of recognizing the value of fraternities and the need to get more involvement of the school in the recruitment effort for these groups.

A general discussion ensued that brought out such points as:

- *need to get greater mention of fraternities in the general recruitment for the university
- *a targeted effort might include contacting the high school counselors and other "gate keepers" who could offer an introduction to what fraternities offer.
- *the message needed to address concerns that the parents had recognize them as having different questions and concerns about fraternities.
- *while the student may tend toward electronic media channels for finding out about colleges and fraternities their parents might need to have the message delivered in more traditional print media formats.

There was consensus that a major challenge was noted in how we reach out to the prospective fraternity man and his parents so as to overcome the stereotypic negative images of Greek life. It was noted that a critical point in this effort involved reaching out to the young man while still in high school.

Ethan Logan presented written materials that are used by the university in publicizing the Greek community. Materials included booklets and postcards which were received positively by the group in discussion. He provided comment as to the inclusion of similar information in the Freshman Orientations that are held in the Summer. He distributed a handout containing demographic information about both national and Texas Tech University trends in student and Greek trends. It was noted that Texas Tech has followed the national trends but our Greek system has not had as sharp a decline as other campuses. It was, however, a noted concern of everyone present that the current situation bodes poorly for the future and action is needed.

A general discussion about the current rush week brought out such points as:

- *Questions were raised as to the impact of removing the deferred rush requirement that was in place through the early 1980s.

*Diminishing numbers of rushees in the Spring raised the issue of whether there was a need to assess continuing to hold a formal rush during that time.

*As there were a sizable number of men who joined in “open” rush the Issue was raised as to what factors might be different for this group.

*There were noted to be problems during the week with scheduling and poor planning in the assignment of only a few men to each event during the latter part of the week instead of increasing the numbers and reducing the number of events. Ethan related that the ICS software used could do this but that it had not be utilized to its full potential.

It was noted that the IFC could benefit from more support from the chapters and advisors by improving the emphasis of the importance of that organization and the representatives sent to participate in it. Suggestions for improvement included:

*advisor’s ensuring that the representatives sent to the IFC meetings appreciate their responsibility and need to participate.

*that the IFC establish more formal meeting practices including following an agenda and requiring written committee reports and meeting minutes.

*that the IFC make available their financial records for the purpose of better understanding how funds raised are spent.

Dr. Carr detailed the work of IFC to examine the issues surrounding recruitment. He has been attending the rush committee recently formed and shared some of their initial planning. Dan Burns mentioned that the incoming rush chair is a member of his chapter and he will start a dialogue with him.

A need for having a better understanding of what is happening in our chapters was noted as well as capturing information that would be useful in recruitment. Dr. Shonrock spoke to the issue of how we might be able to get greater cooperation from the Development Department of the university as well as other resources. There were also a number of ideas discussed about what information might be useful to have and how to obtain it via exploratory work conducted by the advisors as well as by the university.

In forming an action plan for the group Dan Burns suggested that there were three components and a discussion was held identifying what might take place with each.

Component 1: Research: To collect information about what is happening in our fraternities with a sub-sampling of our newest members and combine it with information derived by the university. George Nelson suggested that he and Dr. Carr head this up. Two ideas are to be investigated initially. The first is to contact the chapters and advisors and ask them to identify prominent alumni from their group that will then be contacted and asked to complete a short profile sheet that

could be used in recruitment. A second idea is to investigate the question of differences in member's attitudes for those men who went through formal versus open rush. A questionnaire will be developed and distributed to the chapters that will collect information regarding this question.

Ethan Logan will also work with Micheal Gunn in the Campus Life Office to see what information might be available for data-mining in our efforts. Dr. Carr will follow up with him.

Component 2: University "Buy-In". Mr. Rawls will draft a letter to his contacts in the university leadership seeking to obtain their interest in our efforts to increase the school's participation in marketing the fraternity community. Jim Gilbreath will assist in the drafting and distribution of the letter. Dr. Shonrock will identify contacts in the Admissions office and others involved in recruitment and work to get them more involved.

Component 3: Internal Activities: All attending the meeting were encouraged to go back to their chapters and seek to raise the level of commitment to the efforts to improve the internal organization of each group as well as the IFC. Advisors were encouraged to be more actively involved with the IFC by attending their meetings and joining in on committee work.

No future meeting time was set. Dr. Carr will provide further feedback and information via a distributed email list to all participants. The meeting concluded at 12:30 p.m.

Submitted by

Brian D. Carr, Ph.D.