What is the Open Forum?

Creating a line of open communication between faculty, staff, and student. We will have senators following up on concerns.

It is about how we can maximize our experience as a Mary Baldwin Community

Guidelines:

* No offensive, defensive language
* Can express concerns, but don’t complain
* Address one concern at a time
* Be concise - everyone has a two minute limit
* Faculty and staff should use senators to communicate with students after the forum
* Be open and honest

Bookstore:

* Qadira Mohammed - experience with the online bookstore was not too bad, except for a couple of hiccups. Still believe that it is something that we need to try, particularly if the glitches are being worked on.
* Brent Douglass - not directly in charge of the new merchandising store, but have been involved in creating the space. Not sure of the exact date, but the new bookstore in Hunt will be merchandise (not books).
* Dean O’Connell - people were already buying books online extensively. The physical bookstore was becoming a little obsolete. Online vendor also lets us buy books from different vendors and different prices. Costs to the student will be significantly lower than buying new books from a physical bookstore.
* Spencer - if you ordered books from the online bookstore in September, the books took too long to get to campus. Expedited shipping was not available for every order.
  + Dean O’Connell - something that we will need to work on for the future is to have the books for each class posted over the summer.
* Jazmine Brooks - what about students who are provided a book stipend/voucher?
  + Dean O’Connell - probably cannot use the book voucher ahead of time. Have to follow up with Financial Aid.
  + Layla Williams - I did get in touch with Financial Aid and they gave me my voucher
  + Tralen Neal - students cannot buy access codes with book vouchers.
* What about books that the school publishes?
  + Is possible to do through the online bookstore.
* Dylan Hitchcock - book lists were not updated on time
* Rev. Scott - students have told her that her mail has not arrived - confusion with the changing mailbox numbers
  + Mike Shoaf - any questions regarding mailbox numbers must be directed to Kim Robinson

Greek Life on Campus

* Kelsey Jones - I feel like we should have Greek Life because it gives me a sense of unity.
* Rev. Scott - have been a part of a sorority for many years, have worked with students for many years. Mary Baldwin itself considers itself a sisterhood, and breaking this apart further might create fractures, not bonds. There is also a crunch for housing, land, and have to deal with the Congress and Councils, etc.
* Qadira Mohammed - I don’t feel like Greek Life should be a part of Mary Baldwin. Knows of another small college with prominent Greek Life, and she felt this made people feel excluded more than anything.
* Noni Stevens - I definitely feel like we should have Greek Life on campus. I think that Greek Life teaches you sisterhood. It also involves a community service aspect.
* Kelsey Jones - Have had experience with Greek Life, and it did not foster any rivalry.
* Jazmine Brooks - strong arguments on both sides. But who would we talk to to carry forth this conversation?
  + Dean O’Connell - did not realize how much energy was around this idea. Lisa Wells would be someone to talk to, and would like to be a part of this conversation as well. Will get back to Jazmine on this.
  + Rev. Scott - was told that there is a policy about Greek Life on campus. Benefits of Greek Life is that there is a big network to tap, and as for Black Greek Life, there is a large community that welcomes you. We also need to understand the difference between Congress and Council - some are more focused on social life and some on service.
  + Ciara Dacosta Reyes - ICC Handbook says that national organizations are allowed on campus as long as they adhere to Mary Baldwin rules
  + Erin Paschal - That particular article of the ICC Handbook was written from the aspect of clubs like Circle K, etc.
    - Noni Stevens - Would Greek organizations fall under this article of the ICC Handbook?
    - Erin Paschal - feel fairly confident that this was never written in conjunction with any faculty and staff, and don’t think it was written with the objective of Greek Life

Other Concerns

* Deandra Wells - Mailroom concerns. The hours are very inconvenient for many students.
* Tralen Neal - do any students have anything to say about the new work study policy?
  + Ciara McLaren, HC Chair:
    - have heard many concerns from many students. Certain parts of the new code seemed less thought out than desired. Found the specific code about not wearing a bra shocking because of the larger conversation around dress policing. Particularly at a women’s college.
    - People see this as an internship, but as a students see work study as something to help pay expenses. The idea that I have to constantly prove myself feels like a misunderstanding to me.
    - There seems to be a disconnect between students who do this for money and how we’re doing this. Students have been cut back to minimum wage, and now there’s more work for less money.
  + Rolanda Williams - main concern with the introductory sessions held.
    - No one was allowed to tell us how to fill the tax forms correctly
    - Concern about freshmen/people who are working for the first time ever, they’re having to fill out federal forms without their guardians, without someone to walk them through it
    - We need to have an understanding of exactly what we’re doing
  + Tralen Neal - concerns about the app
    - People with two jobs have to clock in for only one job and keep the other one manually
    - Miscommunications
    - Awkward deadlines because the system is not working properly
  + Dean O’Connell:
    - Understanding is that the bra provision has been taken out. Had heard that it would be taken out.
    - College does see work study as a professional opportunity. College is paying a lot of students’ salary, so college is invested in students learning certain skills and appear successful. Bar for professional conduct is moved up.
    - Also a desire to allow students to regulate their income over the course of the entire year.

Club Constitution: Random Acts of Kindness

Officers:

* + Assyra Cunningham - President
  + Eliza Hong - Vice President
  + Emily Hurst - Secretray

Aim of the club: to bring joy to the campus. Students on campus all have their bad days - these are just small things that hopefully have a big impact.

Will also do a lot of community service - team up with other clubs as well as fundraise

From Club Rush, they have over 30 people are interested

Starting first meeting at 8 pm on Thursday.

Faculty Adviser - Lisa Brown

* Kaybria Johnson: What is the difference between this club and the social work club?
  + Assyra: SOWK club has its focus on organizations outside the campus, while RAOK will focus on the MBC community
* Aaleyah Jones: Will this be more of a way to increase community ties on campus?
  + Eliza: More of an individual focus
* Tevanah Charlemagne: How do you plan on giving to soldiers?
  + Assyra: That is an overall goal that we still need to discuss. We don’t have all the resources right now, so we’re thinking of giving to larger organizations.
* Lilly Parker: Your goals sound very similar to those of the Spencer Center
  + Eliza: Will do one or two community outreach events a semester, and but will be focusing on the students of the campus
* Rev. Scott - Definitely think that it is a good idea and should happen through many avenues. Think that this is something that should be done through Student Life or Residence Life, maybe not the SAF.
* Jaysn Chase - are you willing to have cohosted events?
  + Assyra - yes, definitely want to partner with other clubs for bigger events.

Vote:

In Favour: 7

Not in Favour: 3

Constitution approved.

Announcements:

* Virginia Banda - Another open forum at 7 pm on Tuesday 22nd September. Latinas Unidas is hosting a speaker
* Qadira - Doing a service project where we’re helping enhance the trolley service for students. Please look out for a survey.
* Lilly Parker - Cohosted event (BPB, LU, SA) on Page Terrace for Hispanic Heritage Month. 7 pm on 23rd September. Salsa group and arts&crafts event.
* Tralen Neal - next week is Spirit Week! Please look out for an email about it.
* Aji Gaye - Had some conversations about racial issues on campus. Had a conversation with Rev about it. An idea is to have a guest speaker come and talk about it. Another project is to create a community quilt where different people create quilt squares with their halls. Make it a big event and connect as many students as possible. Please email your class senator/Aji with any ideas.
* Rev. Scott - on Apple Day, the Ida B. Wells society will be hosting Remix the Hymn. Please come out and support! October 26th, Pamela Maloney will be speaking about creating a moment into a movement.
* Jazmine Brooks - Ignite retreat during Fall Break. Talk to Dr. Dorries for more details about this retreat. You learn about social entrepreneurship and social change.

Senator Liaisons:

Financial Aid - Khabirah Matthews, Layla Williams

Mail Room Hours - Deandra Wells, Laura Harmon (make sure to talk to Registrar and Mail Room employees)

Greek Life - Jazmine Brooks, Aaleyah Jones, Sharanya Rao

Online Bookstore - Theresa Jones, Juanaysa Singletary

Shari Moody - coordinate with everyone bringing the shoeboxes and have them up in the dorms by Friday.