

Navigating Chapter Operations Remotely- Webinar

TITLE SLIDE-

[Sam] So we're gonna get started in two minutes. I just want to give a couple more people the opportunity to log in... so just a couple more minutes.

[Sam] Alright so we are going to get started, thank you, everyone, for logging in. That being said, this is my first time doing a webinar so I hope there are no technical difficulties, but it's bound to happen so bear with me and we will do the best that we can as we navigate through this. So, hi I hope you're all doing okay after your extended spring break. Here's a picture of Kevin and I in the event that you forgot what we looked like, we are still here. Gillian is also on the line I just didn't have a picture of her, but we're going to be talking through some things to try and help prepare you for our new normal. So, Kevin can you hear me okay? *[Kevin]* Yes, hello everyone. I hope everyone's doing well and staying safe. Awesome.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] Today we're going to be talking- I'm imagining for around half an hour, maybe shorter, but just check-in, go through what our new reality looks like, help connect you to tools and resources that we think would be helpful for you all during these times, thinking about adjusting our priorities and what that means for each of your chapters, and how that may look differently depending on your organization, then go through some of the things that we've been getting a lot of questions about. Some of the fraternity and sorority life things that may be causing some anxiety, so we really want to go through and just provide you with as many updates as possible and provide some pretty clear communication. You all are currently muted, there is a chat function if you have a question you can drop it in the chat. Gillian's going to be monitoring the chat so she can just give me a heads up that there is a question I need to answer. If you have very chapter-specific questions, what Kevin and I are going to do is hop into a different Zoom meeting after this that we'll drop in the chat. You guys can log in and then video chat with Kevin and I, one-on-one, so we can go into any specific questions that you might have. I don't want you to feel like you can't ask your question, but in the chat if you have a clarifying question, drop it in the chat. Otherwise if you have a very specific question you can chat with Kevin and I after we end the webinar.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] To start, this is not meant to add stress to your life in any way, shape, or form. The purpose of this webinar is to let you know that we still exist and we're here to help you. I know people are used to popping into our offices and checking in and that's no longer a part of our reality. Our whole staff is working remotely, as well as I know many of you went home and that can mean different things. People could be in different time zones, in different states, but the reality is that we are here for you and we want you to know that if we are the only administrator that you're comfortable talking to that we want you to reach out to us. We're all working our full workload. I'm working 40 hours a week, so is Kevin. I don't want you to feel like just because you can't pop into the office that you can't talk to us, we will schedule a meeting with you at any time. So I just wanted to make sure that was clear. Secondly, your health and safety and the health and safety of your family is paramount. We are in a new world and we are constantly changing rapidly by evolving circumstances so health and safety really are paramount. As

Leaders of your organization's knowing that your members will be dealing with a variety of situations and there may be loved ones that are getting sick and knowing that will affect the operations of your organization, we're here to help provide resources in that regard, the university is here to provide resources, even if you are no longer on campus those are definitely resources that we can assist you with. Thirdly, it's okay to be upset. This is a period of upheaval, no one saw this coming or understood how quickly and rapidly this could change the lives of our students, the lives of our faculty and staff, the lives of your members, and the lives of your family. So it's okay to not be okay, and it's okay to not know what to do. Particularly, those of you that are graduating seniors, I completely understand that feeling. You may be grieving, and there may be a feeling of loss and now more than ever fraternity and sorority life is so important because the connections that we have during our organizations really provide that sense of community that people are seeking right now, and the changes that you all are going to have to make and we as a department and University are going to have to make are going to be difficult. No one is going to know exactly what to do right away and that's okay. To go back to our first point, we're here to work through this with you, so that we can help you figure out what's best for your organization, so you can have the desired outcome that you're looking for and we absolutely believe that you can do this. You absolutely can navigate being a fraternity or sorority leader in an ever-changing virtual world. I know all of you, and I am confident that we have the right leaders in place, that your organization's put you into positions for very specific reasons and you are more than capable of navigating that and navigating all the other changes that you are currently experiencing.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] So when we're talking about our new reality, given the rapidly changing environment, we really need to start thinking and taking time as Leaders to reshape our priority. There may have been things that we were working on, or there may have been organizational goals that are no longer a priority, or are no longer relevant. We're going to need to pivot and we're going to need to start thinking about you, a campus leader, as a student. You're a student first, you're going to be going through transitions yourself into your remote learning environments. People have different things that have happened to them. In terms of financial losses, people no longer have a job, and we're all functioning in a new reality, we're going to have to change our priorities to make sure that we are focusing on the most pertinent things. If you individually have things that you are working through there are University resources that are still here to you. So, outside of your organization, if you are struggling with things the student support team is here for you. Kevin, I, or Gillian can help connect you with those resources, but we're going to have to pivot and we're going to have to start thinking about what is our new reality, and within that new reality what are our priorities.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] When thinking about you as a leader these are some things that I think you should be doing, or I think would be beneficial for you, so in the immediate, in the short term give yourself a break you do not need to have every single thing planned right away, you do not need to have a laundry list of things that you're going to accomplish. We need to give ourselves a break, we are all human and we're going to figure it out together. Secondly, we need to be flexible. I know a lot of you as leaders are really strong and have really ambitious goals, and a lot of those

things are going to have to change. We have to deal with some of those things with a little bit of grace and a little bit of flexibility. It's okay to be disappointed that some of those things are no longer going to be your priorities, but it's really important that we have humility, particularly for our members and for our other leaders that we are giving the flexibility that's necessary in these times. Next, focusing on your team. I know we have a lot of chapter presidents on the call, but we also have some additional executive board members on the call, so really thinking about what are the priorities for all of your team members. Maybe, for your new member educators or Vice Presidents that oversee committees, what does that look like? How are you going to be focusing on those that you oversee, and helping them have prospective, helping them be successful in their roles? Also, it's important to stay positive, as the leaders of your organization's people will be looking to you for guidance and it is very easy to slip into negativity, but in a time of crisis people respond to positivity and clear information. So, the next point is communication. I think if I stress anything on this call today it's that communication is key. We are in a rapidly changing environment, and people just want information. For those of you that may have been in quarantine or in self-quarantine, I don't think I left my house since like two Fridays ago, it's very important that we are communicating with one another and providing connections. Lastly, in the short term, really making sure that you're aware of the variety of resources that are available to you, and that you're using those resources to make your life easier. You do not need to recreate the wheel, you do not need to create some sort of communication platform, the university has invested in a number of those tools for you. So, it's really a matter of getting yourself up to speed and feeling like you understand how to use those resources and then leveraging those resources to make sure that you are accomplishing your new priorities. Then, thinking in the long-term, focusing on the future of your organization. This will end, the pandemic will come to an end, there will be a return to normal eventually, so what does that look like and how does this change our organization? How does this shape who and what we want to be in the future? Thinking half of our organizations will be transitioning leadership, so what does that look like? And, how are we focusing on that?

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] This is a quote that somebody had said on a webinar I previously attended, "The pessimist complains about the wind. The Optimist expects it to change. The leader adjusts the sails." I think that this is really relevant in explaining your role for your organization during this crisis. The ability to adjust, the ability to be flexible, and the ability to pivot is really important in this moment to help your organization succeed and to be able to discuss with your membership and your leaders: What does that pivot look like for us? What do our new priorities look like for us?, is really important and I want you all to know that this absolutely is anxiety-inducing and this absolutely is stressful, but I am confident in all of your abilities to make this pivot and to really help lead your organizations in the direction that they need to go.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] In thinking about leading your team and leading your membership, no matter the size of your organization there are different people that you can be leaning on and communicating to. Even if you are a single member organization, there are potential interests, there are grad chapters, there are advisors, and different people that you're going to be needing to communicate with. So, how do you plan to maintain connections with your leaders? How are we

going to make sure that we're maintaining communication with our executive board, or my department, or other small populations of people that need to be involved in the decision-making? And, what does that look like for us? How are we going to be communicating with our members? That may be different from how we communicated in the past, but I know that you all have, in the past, focused on text messaging, or GroupMe and things of that nature. But, if the last two weeks have really shown us anything it's that people are craving human interaction and face-to-face, so are we providing ourselves the opportunities to utilize some of those resources that we're going to discuss in a little bit to make sure that people don't feel isolated and alone. How do you plan to maintain social interactions along with operational priorities? We are socially excellent organizations, as fraternities and sororities, but it's really important that we are maintaining social interactions and allowing our members to feel involved in the organization during this time, particularly during the remainder of the semester. How are we making them feel connected to the organization? Both from an organizational priorities perspective of "What are you trying to accomplish as an organization?", but also from a social interaction perspective. Are we providing social outlets for members so that they feel connected with the organization? Honestly, of our student groups I think that you are highly prepared to do that, but it may be just thinking about it a little bit differently. People are seeking community, more now than ever, so how can we leverage our organizations, as social organizations, to provide what people are looking for? We are going to have to think about things differently and we're going to have to interact differently, but I think that you all are in a position to be creative and figure out what your members are looking for, what they need out of their fraternity or sorority experience, and then provide those Outlets for our members. Then, on the organizational operation side, making sure that you're keeping track of your priorities, and that you're leveraging your leaders to be able to accomplish what you want to accomplish.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] Thinking about tools, I just want to say if you haven't yet, the Student Engagement & Activities website has gone completely virtual. There are a lot of resources at stonybrook.edu/studentengagement for our student organizations. All of this chart I pulled from that website, so these are different resources and different platforms that you can be utilizing. Since I don't want you to feel like you have to write any of this down, I will be sharing the slides as well as, potentially, a recording with all of you. Thinking about virtual meetings, and potentially the video conferencing that we're talking about, everyone that's a Stony Brook student, staff, or faculty now has a Zoom login. Those Zoom meetings allow for up to 100 members. I do not believe any of our organizations have more than 100 members, so this is absolutely a platform that you can be utilizing for chapter meetings or executive board meetings. If you wanted to host office hours or things of that nature you can absolutely be doing that through Zoom. Again, Google Hangouts is very similar and you can use as well. I've tended to use Google Hangouts for one-on-one quick calls with other people, and then there's Skype. You absolutely have access to Zoom and Google Hangouts, it's just a matter of preference. Messaging tools, I'm not really concerned about you all, I think that you're all pretty well-versed in messaging your members, but there are some other ones that we recently started to use. Slack, that you can have on your desktop. You all use GroupMe, I'm sure, and WhatsApp so I think you guys are pretty good there. Scheduling tools like Doodle and When2Meet, assist with

trying to find times for you all to be scheduling these meetings. My understanding is that everyone's class schedule should remain the same in terms of when people have classes, obviously, some professors would choose to do more on your own discussion board type classes, but my understanding is that the class schedules are not changing. So, if you had your chapter meeting on a Monday evening you can absolutely keep your chapter meeting on a Monday evening. Those are things that we can definitely help you navigate. Then, the one new thing that I think is important for you all as leaders are project management platforms. Those are really kind of task management, I've personally used Asana and Basecamp before but these platforms allow you to assign tasks and duties, and then follow up on some of those things so I would suggest checking them out and seeing if any of them feel relevant for what your organization needs in terms of kind of keeping on track and following up with assignments. Again, all of those resources are on our website so definitely take some time to check them out, as well as Kevin will talk about some other information on the website.

SLIDE CHANGE-

When we're thinking about moving forward and reprioritizing these are some things that I think you all should be focusing on. Re-evaluating your goals, some things that were goals for the semester are no longer possible and that's okay, so thinking about what is a priority right now and how do you want to discuss with your executive board or alum how you want to re-evaluate your goals and change those goals to be realistic for something you can accomplish in the next couple of weeks. Things that I think you should be focusing on are member engagement rates. How are we keeping our members invested in the organization? How are we providing them outlets? And, then are we accomplishing what we need to accomplish as an organization? You have the ability to post virtual events, so if there's an event that you are super passionate about that you are no longer able to host because of cancellations through the end of the semester, but you want to hold virtually we are happy to get up and running and figure out how you can do that. There's a new feature on SBEngaged, that you can post where your virtual event is with a URL. That's a pretty exciting new change to SBEngaged.

Elections and transitions are going to be really important, we do have the ability to do Anonymous elections through SBEngaged and the department will be doing some trainings on that in the coming weeks. Knowing that is something if you are in an election cycle that needs to be one of your number one priorities. How are we going to be moving that election process to a virtual process? Awards and recognition are still going to happen, you guys have done amazing work throughout the year and Kevin's going to go into a little bit of detail on that. Then, graduating seniors you know a lot of our organizations have done things to celebrate our seniors in the past and thinking about what does that look like in our new reality and how do we make sure that we are recognizing the accomplishment of those members and having some sort of celebration for them even if it's not in person and it's through some sort of virtual means. Lastly, dues this is more a conversation for those of us that are nationally affiliated, but you need to be connecting with your headquarters, if they haven't already reached out to you, about dues and what that looks like. I know that a number of our organizations are prorating dues or refunding dues. I really don't know and I can't speak to your personal organization, but it's important for you to make sure that you're following up with them on what that looks like for your organization. And then, long-term like planning for the fall obviously a lot of your e-boards are

not changing, and you will be officers in the Fall so really starting to get some momentum under that. Thinking about what reconnection looks like when we are all back together, there may be a long period of time where we're virtual but, do you need to have a retreat in the fall with all your members? What does that reconnection look like? Obviously, recruitment. How are we maintaining interest within our organization? How are we promoting the success of our organization and the resiliency of our organization during this process? Lastly, budgeting. If we are refunding dues, how does that look like in the fall, what are some of your financial priorities moving forward?

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Kevin] Now we are going to shift and we are going to talk a lot about the updates for all fraternity and sorority life just to make sure that we are on the same page as I know there are definitely a lot of concerns about Five Star, new member processes and what that all means given the circumstances. So, we want to alleviate any worries that may exist. To start off, let's just talk about the importance of communication as Sam emphasized earlier in the webinar. The department of Student Engagement and Activities is going to continue to offer services to you all. Yes, we're a virtual platform but we are still working regular 9 to 5 for you all. Knowing first and foremost in terms of communication, we are here for you as people and to support your chapters, so please do not hesitate to reach out with any areas that you are identifying as stressors, as worries, we're here to help you through that so please do not hesitate to reach out and connect with us. If you visit the Student Engagement department website we have overhauled all of our services to virtual resources. We are offering virtual drop-in hours daily, Monday through Friday, Sam and I will at least be going for an hour and Gillian for two. You can go on that link right there, I'll drop it into the chat so you all have it. You can see when we are offering those hours and connect with us on anything that you need, in terms of personal or in terms of your chapter, or maybe questions about what it means to go virtual or just overall support. We're here to provide. Also, know that we will still be offering appointments Monday through Friday as usual, just give us a call or shoot us an email and we'll schedule that with you. I think the big key takeaway in all of this is, let's continue to prioritize the importance of community and connection during these challenging times, we are here for you and together we're going to get through this and we are going to come out stronger when all of this is over. So please know that.

SLIDE CHANGE-

Let's talk about Five Star Accreditation and what that's going to look like. Given the circumstances, all organizations will receive at least a 3-star accreditation as long as they have completed all required administrative tasks. When we're thinking about roster collection and all the things that we're asking for administrative and regarding policy as long as we are complying with and adhering to those policies we're going to make sure that everyone receives that 3- star accreditation at minimum. Organizations who are seeking 4-star or 5-star accreditation will surely be able to do so if they choose. 4 and 5 star will be graded on a curve based upon what you have already achieved at this point, any 5-star verification forms that you know are outstanding or you know you haven't filled certain requirements, we're going to give you until Monday, April 13th at 11:59 p.m. to submit all those forms and then we'll grade them like we normally would and get back to you. If you are looking to shoot for 4-star or 5-star please do

fulfill those requirements and we will grade accordingly, based on the curve system. That is all relevant information for five star accreditation. Just for clarification purposes, we are not interested in adding more stress to your lives. We are going to get everybody a 3-star rating unless there's some sort of outstanding items that we need from your organization and if that is the case with your organization we will reach out to you saying these are the handful of things that we need from you to be in good standing. And, talking about 4-star or 5-star the reason that we're going to grade on a curve and the reason we're not kind of cutting it all together is that we do know that some of our organizations had worked really hard and really have accomplished a lot so we will be assessing where everybody lands. Then, from there, prorating what that looks like for each of our organizations and going from there. Again, this is not to add more stress, if you do not want to do it, do not do it. We wanted to provide our organizations that really were passionate about it the opportunity to potentially get that recognition if they wanted to. It's completely challenged by choice.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Kevin] Alright, let's give a few updates on fraternity and sorority life Awards. We will be continuing with fraternity and sorority life awards as planned, but in a virtual format we will share more of what that is going to look like in the coming days just be on the lookout. Individual awards will be mailed out to graduates and chapter rewards will be made available for pickup in the fall semester, at our office. Some notes on Fraternity and sorority award nominations, they will be shared out with all chapters on Monday, March 30th, this upcoming Monday, with instructions on how to access and complete awards. All individual and chapter award nominations must be submitted on SBEngaged by Monday, April 13th at 11:59 p.m. so just a big overarching deadline. Just keep in mind that the April 13th deadline on Monday at 11:59 p.m. Given the circumstances, we will be introducing some new innovative awards for all of our chapters focused on resiliency and how we're working through the situation, so be on the lookout for all those award updates. Within a week or so you will be hearing more about what that is going to look like.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Kevin] Given all changes, the spring 2020 new member process surely has changed for some organizations. At this point, looking at the new member process, all organizations have either chosen to immediately initiate, defer the process until the fall semester, or gone completely virtual to complete their new member processes. For those organizations who have opted to continue virtually, we will be receiving some communication from our team on Monday with what that means going forward and how we're going to plan and schedule that out. We're really looking to keep you on that same timeline that existed. If you have any specific questions, meet with Sam and I outside of this call and we would be happy to chat about what that looks like for you. Something that we do have is the set expectations that regardless of the new member program status that our new member policies are adhered to, these include all spring 2020 new members complete online Prevent Zone and Fraternity and Sorority Life 101 modules if they have not already done so we did already reach out to the new members about two weeks ago letting them know that they have not yet completed these requirements. We will be completing follow-ups this upcoming week, reminding those who have not already done so to complete it and set a deadline for it.

Something that we need from all the chapters is just encouraging and checking in, particularly chapter presidents and new member educators, with your new members to make sure that they're fulfilling those requirements, if they haven't done so. Another requirement is all spring 2020 new members are Red Watch Band trained. I'll go into, in a couple of moments, what Red Watch Band training is going to look like being that it has taken on virtual formatting. Finally, all spring 2020 new members must attend or virtually complete the new member education online module and quiz. If prior to spring break occurring your new members did attend a new member workshop, no worries we have that tracked and they are good to go. For those organizations whose new members did not fulfill that in-person requirement, we have been working very very hard, kudos to Gillian for turning that presentation into a 30-35 minute online virtual presentation with a quiz to document learning and big policies and takeaways from that workshop, to make sure that our members who did get that new member workshop in-person and virtually are getting that same important information regarding our fraternity and sorority life community and what it means to be a new member at Stony Brook. If you're currently unsure on your chapter's status of new member education please call or email me as soon as possible, we want to make sure that you're in the know and I want to make sure that we can support you where you're at in your planning and make sure that your new members get that important new member experience. So please connect with me via email or call, if not hang tight and join the Zoom after this webinar and we'll help you out.

SLIDE CHANGE-

Quick information on red watch band training, CPO will be offering virtual Red Watch Band training via Google Hangouts every Wednesday, starting April 1st from 8:30 pm to 10 pm. Students who choose to participate in this must pre-register via the link provided, we will send that out to you separately. The sessions will allow for 20 students, I'm definitely encouraging students to share that information with your members, and make sure that they're reserving for those sessions. If your chapter wants to offer virtual Red Watch Band Training during virtual chapter meetings, you can work with CPO to coordinate a virtual meeting for Red Watch Band training. Training would need, at minimum, 10 participants to occur. If you choose to do that, email Kerri Mahoney at the link provided to schedule.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Kevin] We want to hear from you. Currently, we are looking at how to create some virtual resources for you all, whether that be more virtual webinars, different virtual workshops, maybe some roundtable discussions to hear what you need and this can be anywhere from how do I do a virtual election process?, how do I revise constitution and bylaws?, how do I plan for recruitment in the fall semester? or what are some conversations that I think need to take place today or tomorrow for me to plan out my semester and persist through the spring? So, we want your ideas, please if you can complete the link that's provided on this PowerPoint slide take a few moments to share what you're thinking, what you think would be helpful for not only your chapter but for the community. Sam, Gillian, and I are going to be working very diligently to get some of these webinars and things scheduled throughout the semester and offer them, these will be optional but we definitely want to continue that education and resources to make sure that you all feel supported during this time but that you also feel ready to take on what the fall brings.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] As we come to a close, it's really important for us to have perspective and direction during this time. Really thinking about what is the purpose of your organization, why does your organization exist, and how can we be leaning on some of those values to help you all decide what your pivot looks like. Thinking about, in my opinion, one of our number one priorities is Brotherhood and Sisterhood. How are we maintaining that during this very stressful uncertain time because our members need it, more now than ever, people have uprooted their lives and really have a lot of uncertainty but one thing that should be certain is that this is a lifetime membership and that your organization will be with them and be there for them during the good times and during the hard times. I think that the fraternity and sorority experience is really important right now and we all have an opportunity to really think about those things and think about why our organizations exist and how they could be benefitting the lives of our members. Next, I want to talk about helping others. We didn't really touch on this in terms of the types of virtual programs that you can be doing but people are hurting now and there are a lot of different things happening. Thinking about helping others, what are things that you can be doing or your organization can be doing to accomplish that goal, calling members that are in assisted living facilities and having conversations with them because they're not allowed to have visitors, are we reaching out to healthcare workers and sending words of affirmation. What can we be doing as organizations to make sure that we are thinking about service and philanthropy as the cornerstone of our community, are we going to continue somethings? We are definitely going to continue fundraising for the Be Positive Foundation, families of cancer patients need it more now than ever, people are losing their jobs, those bills still exist and every dollar in is a dollar out to those families in need. Thinking about some of those things, what are your priorities and how are you using your values to help shape those things.

Lastly, and most important, is health and safety and making sure that we're taking care of each other and making sure that people are taking the directive seriously and that we're focusing on social distancing and we're really doing everything in our power to help keep our friends, family, and neighbors safe. Additionally, mental health and making sure that we are checking in on our members, this is a difficult time, this is a lot that you all are going to be dealing with changing to online classes, being in a different location and there will be strains on our mental health. Are we making sure that you as students have the resources that you need and that you're making sure that your members are checking in with those resources so that they're maintaining their health and safety. There's a lot of resources through the Center for Prevention Outreach as well as health services that can really be beneficial and a lot of those services have gone virtual so really making sure that we're continuing to focus on those things that we're leaning on our values to have a little bit of clarity in this uncertain time and focus on what we need to focus on.

SLIDE CHANGE-

[Sam] That's all that we have for you. Gillian, if you have not, can you post the Zoom link in the chat, I'm going to give you all a couple of minutes to copy that down before I end the meeting. I have to end the meeting before I can start the next one for Q&A. Again, we are here for you, you, the students are our number one priority so I want you to know that you can reach out to us. I will drop my cell phone number in the chat I'm not going to say it out loud because I'm currently recording this and will most likely pop it on the internet but you guys can text me, or

you can email me. I'm here for you whenever you need, that's really all we have for you today. Again, you can do this, we will get through this together. I'll see anybody that has follow up questions in the Zoom chat.

[Kevin] I'll also be dropping my personal cell phone number, feel free to connect with me as well. Thank you all for your attention I know we will get through this, sending a lot of happy thoughts to you during this time. Take care.