

COMMISSION ON STUDENT AFFAIRS

March 3, 2011

Present: Sandy Bass, Sara Brickman, Sue Buyrn, Tyler Campbell, Michael Cardman, Rick Ferraro, Monika Gibson, Caroline Gimenez, Tom Wittenberg for Bo Hart, Lauren Heming, Designee For Stacey Pannell, Shree Narayanan for Eric Hodges, Monica Hunter, Rawlin Jefferson, Designee for Pamella Palmer, Emily Wilkinson, Designee for Greer Kelly, Frances Kwong, Designee for Richmond Hwang, Nathan Lavinka, Mary Ann Lewis, Jen Underwood for Anna LoMascolo, Michelle McLeese, Jonathan Moore, Matt Parker, David Ramras, Bryan West for Joseph Seaton, Robert Sebak, Tara Frank for Katelin Shugart-Schmidt, Frank Shushok, Edward Spencer, Leighton Vila, Alex Walker

Absent: Parisa Ahmadi, Tom Brown, Deepu George, Frank Hernandez, Brad Klein, Shane McCarty, Guy Sims, Shyrah Thomas, Joe Tran

Guests: Steve Burrell, Heather Evans, William Lewis, LeeAnn Reich, Megan Weyrens Kuhn

I. Call to Order

Nathan Lavinka, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Motion was made to adopt agenda. The motion was seconded and the agenda was approved.

III. Welcome and Chair Update (s)

- At University Council it was passed that the Pamplin College of Business is doing a joint venture with the Navy which will be a dual degree program. We will watch for the outcome of this as it goes before the Board of Visitors.
- Nathan reported that the e-vote that he sent out for support from CSA to the Undergraduate Honor system constitutional changes passed and he has prepared a letter of support to send on.

IV. Guest Speakers/Presenters

- A. Dr. William Lewis, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, *An Introduction and overview of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion*

Dr. Lewis explained that here at Virginia Tech we have adopted a framework that helps us implement our Diversity Strategic Plan and it is called Inclusive Excellence. There are four domains: Access & Success, Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations, Education and Scholarship, and Institutional Infrastructure. When all four work together,

we see the organization transform. The goal here is for us to achieve inclusion. He focused on Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations because this is where he feels that CSA can find itself and realize how the members can help achieve Virginia Tech's inclusive framework. Dr. Lewis is interested in sitting down with members of CSA or of other student organizations to begin to talk about how student groups can engage and achieve this campus climate in regards to inclusiveness. The idea is to have our students leave Virginia Tech knowing that they can engage in a global environment.

In response to a question on highly marginalized students and how to expect that small population to fit into the environment, Dr. Lewis explained that Virginia Tech needs to get better in terms of recruitment. As it relates to campus climate and intergroup relations, those individuals who are from a minority or marginalized must engage in their education here at CSA or in other student organizations. Dr. Lewis noted that it is not about the engagement of the groups as much as it is an engagement of all of us and how we understand issues around diversity.

Ms. McLeese expressed a concern that over time we seem to have a large number of student organizations who come together at CSA or collaborate in other ways and that we are good at coming together to share information, but we each represent organizations that have different missions and we are responsible for carrying out those missions whether they effect another group or not. So how do we move beyond where we are? Dr. Lewis noted this is a great question for CSA to begin to think about and the for the student organizations around the table to begin to think about. We need not be so decentralized that it becomes difficult to have coordination and collaboration.

In response to another question raised by Ms. McLeese regarding what to do when conflicts arise between groups and/or organizations (e.g., CT v. CSA), Dr. Lewis acknowledged that he has only been in his position a short time and does not know all the details of this (or other) particular cases; however, he suggested that the Commission continue to investigate avenues or pathways to inclusion and keeping all voices at the table. Dr. Lewis indicated that although this may not be "the" answer, or a direct answer to the question, it is important to continue to find opportunities to include those groups so that some resolution(s) can hopefully be made.

B. Sheel Patel and LeeAnn Reich, *YMCA YToss*?

Mr. Patel reviewed the goals of Ytoss, some awards and recognitions the program has received, and the make-up of the team, which includes University administrators, community involvement, and students. This year's collection will be May 7-12 and they will have collection PODS at five collection points on campus. The sale will be held on August 19 and 20 in Cassell Coliseum. The items are sold inexpensively and this is a way to give back to the community. This assists, particularly with international students who are not able to bring a lot of things with them. The goal for this year is to get more tonnage.

Some additions to the program for this year is that they will have paper recycling at the collection points, they will be marketing at Summer Orientation to make parents aware of this opportunity, and they will be having a Pizza/Chipolte Night to market and entice students to recycle their belongings). Last year they sold about 85% of what they collected.

Mr. Patel asked that CSA members share this information and if they have any questions or suggestions he can be e-mailed at sheelhpatel@gmail.com. Any help to collaborate and help achieve their goals will be appreciated.

Ms. Reich noted that the YMCA at Virginia Tech is located in Squires Student Center. They work to engage students to volunteer in the community in roughly 15 programs (after school programs, recycling efforts, classes, etc.) and students put in the time to make programs work. In running Ytoss, they hope to raise money and at the same time bring awareness of sustainability, recycling, etc.

V. Old Business

- A. Frank Shushok, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Heather Evans, Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Policy Memorandum Number 95

Dr. Spencer explained that since the last meeting he has had the chance to double check with University Legal Counsel and because this is a Presidential Memorandum instead of a policy that actually went all the way through the governance system, the President can change it or withdraw it. The second point is that when we reclassified organizations into the three tier structure, this occurred after this policy was put in place and the intent with registered student organizations is that the university is suppose to have very little control over those organizations in terms of stipulating regulations for them etc. And so the concept that we are requiring, as a University, a certain GPA to belong to a specific registered student organization is really contrary to what we have done liability wise. So, the suggestion is that the best thing to do is to ask the President to delete the policy and that it will also help these organizations to now be in accord with their national regulations and to get the University out of this dilemma. Mr. Lavinka noted that we as a commission can write a letter of support to be sent to Dr. Steger. Following discussion a motion was made to support the withdrawal of the Policy and seconded. The vote was called and the motion carried.

VI. New Business

- A. Jonathan Moore, Vice President of Membership for GSA, Resolution for Constitution revisions/amendments, 1st Reading

Mr. Moore noted that for the most part they are revising or updating titles, but pointed out there is an addition of an Events Chair position, an individual to oversee the planning and implementation of programs, and in Section V, they made the as advisor the VP and Dean of Graduate Education also known as the Graduate School Dean until the Graduate Student Assembly decides otherwise. Dr. Spencer suggested a slight change in the wording of this section.

B. Monica Hunter, Interim Director of Student Activities, Steve Burrell, Assistant Director of Student Organizations, 2011-2012 Funding Strategy

Ms. Hunter and Steve Burrell reviewed the Student Budget Board Annual Funding Strategy for the 2011-2012 year which included the funding available and the 2011-2012 appropriations schedule. The total 2011-2012 Appropriations comes to \$1,124,636. She reported that 92 student organizations have requested annual funding in the amount of \$1,400.375 (24 graduate organizations and 68 undergraduate organizations).

C. Dr. Edward Spencer, *Student Conduct*

Dr. Spencer noted that this is an informational item, as he provided background information regarding a situation that occurred at the University of Virginia last year, where one student was murdered by another student. In the investigating of this incident they discovered that the alleged assailant had been arrested for assault of a police officer previously and felt that if they had known this about this student, maybe the tragic incident could have been prevented. The President at UVA at the time, John Casteen, made a proposal to Gov. McDonnell that all police agencies in the Commonwealth be required to notify colleges and universities when a student was arrested. Realizing how unrealistic this probably was, the University of Virginia instead now requires that students notify the University of any arrest or conviction themselves. When UVA made their change, Virginia Tech's Safety and Security Policy Committee decided that we needed to do the same thing and, as a result, Virginia Tech students will be asked to self-report incidents that have occurred since admittance to the University. When you register for classes every semester, you will be reminded that you are required to do so. The policy states that you have 10 business days after an arrest to notify the Office of Student Conduct. Dr. Spencer then introduced Ms. Megan Weyrens Kuhn from the Office of Student Conduct, who distributed information regarding the self-disclosure process. She noted that Ms. Frances Keene, Director of Student Conduct, will review the disclosure and make a decision if the student needs to come in and have a conversation with her. There will also be a case manager for all of this information. This will tell us a lot about a person and whether or not there is a pattern or behavior or if an incident needs immediate attention.

In response to a concern that maybe someone who has more of a legal background be the one who reviews the disclosures, Dr. Spencer noted that the general rule is that if there is any question, it is reviewed by more than one person. Dr. Spencer

noted this process is basically a screening for people who might be a threat to the community. It was also noted that if a student does not disclose, they could be in jeopardy of a student conduct violation because of providing false information

VII. Announcements

- Ms. McLeese announced that they will have a GSA Delegate Meeting on March 17, that Shree Narayanan is the new GSA President-Elect, and that she appreciated Mr. Moore stepping in for her while she was away.
- Class of 2014 finished elections and Jay Tucker is the President
- Mr. Jefferson announced that the Black Student Alliance will be sponsoring Roxanne Jones, Founding Editor of ESPN the Magazine and Senior Vice President of ESPN, on March 15, 7:00 p.m., in the Old Dominion Ballroom.
- Ms. McLeese announced that the Graduate Student Assembly Research Symposium will be held on March 23.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion was made and seconded for adjournment and the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Rogers, Secretary