

**Commission on Student Affairs  
September 17, 2009  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Brush Mountain Room  
Squires Student Center**

**Present:** Sandy Bass, Tom Brown, Brandon Carroll, Kimberly Carlson, Kristin Carr, Ashley Davis, Rick Ferraro, Laura Freeman, Rebecca French, Lauren Keister for Monika Gibson, Eric Hodges, Edwin Yusman for Shivana Handa, Kristina Hartman, Monica Hunter, Lydia Michailow for Monique Johnson, Brad Klein, Nathan Lavinka, Mary Ann Lewis, Sara Brickman, Shane McCarty, Michelle McLeese, Charisse Ghattas for Tom Medina, Matthew Penny, Donna Ratcliffe, Rhonda Rogers, Karen Sanders, Sharmin Shamsalsadati, Frank Shushok, Guy Sims, Ed Spencer, Camille Waldron, Daryl Whitehurst, Nigel Wray

**Absent:** Brian Golden, Frank Hernandez, Anna LoMascolo, John Steger, Ben Wade

**Guests:** Michael O'Brien, John Kayrouz, Erica Swanson, Kim Timpany, Ana Barrenechea, Kristen Houston, Stephanie Feinberg, Samantha Kidd, Asa Miner, Ellen Plummer, Adam Rubin

**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Michelle McLeese, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

**II. Adoption of Agenda**

There was a motion to adopt the agenda as written, The motion was seconded and approved.

**III. Welcome**

Ms. McLeese welcomed all to the first meeting of the Commission. She emphasized that members must be certain to appoint a proxy to attend meetings when they are unable to do so in order for organizations to be represented fairly. Introductions were made.

**IV. Guest Speakers**

A. Ellen Plummer, Assistant Provost

Dr. Plummer reviewed the governance structure of the University and its purpose indicating that a high value is place on shared governance, which plays a crucial role in mitigating the various voices that present themselves within the University

community. She stated that the Commission on Student Affairs is an important part of the University governance structure and expressed her thanks to the Commission members on behalf of the Office of the Provost.

B. Dr. Edward Spencer, Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Spencer gave a history of CSA noting that the Commission on Student Affairs has existed for a long time, pre-dates the current governance system, and used to be chaired by a faculty or staff member, It is now the only Commission that can be chaired by a student. It is also the largest Commission in the governance system, has expanded over the years, and every few years the structure is reviewed.

In terms of procedures, the agenda is prepared ahead of time and the deadlines for submission of agenda items are in the CSA notebook. There are sometimes formal resolutions that go on to University Council (opinions of the Commission do not have to go through University Council). Dr. Spencer reiterated that attendance at Commission meetings is very important and if you are unable to attend, a substitute should be sent (preferably the same person each time a sub is needed to ensure continuity).

Ms. McLeese will be sending to the listserv a summary of Roberts Rules of Order, which should be kept in the CSA notebook.

C. Michael O'Brien, Coordinator, USA Today Readership Program at Virginia Tech

Mr. Obrien reported on the possibility of bringing the USA Readership Program to Virginia Tech. The program has been in existence for about 10 years and would provide USA Today, The Roanoke Times, and the New York Times at an affordable cost to students (about \$2.50/\$3.00 per student per semester). Distribution would be in residence halls and around the campus with card reader displays. The goal is to conduct a four-week pilot program, free of cost, which will gauge student feedback on how well the program is accepted by students. In response to questions, there are two funding options: 1) through a University fee or 2) through student organizations and offices coming together to pool funding. Most successful programs are funded by student fees. USA Today would provide recycling receptacles, but we would have to address any waste that would result. There could be consideration for faculty and staff also participating in the program.

Members of the Commission were asked to get feedback from their constituents and pass that information on to Mr. O'Brien or on to the CSA listserv.

**V. New Business**

A. Erica Swanson, Undergraduate Chief Justice

Ms. McLeese noted that the Student Government Association is the largest organization on campus and that they need approval for the new SGA Constitution

and would like to get it passed following this first reading. Ms. Swanson reported that the main goal in revising the constitution was to create a document that would be adaptable in the future. Ms. Swanson reviewed the changes and revisions.

A motion was made to suspend the rules to waive a second reading of the constitution, the motion was seconded, and the motion carried.

A motion was made to pass the SGA Constitution after the first reading, seconded, and motion was carried.

#### B. Stephanie Feinberg, Jewish Student Union

All organizations on CSA have to be University Chartered Student Organizations and the Jewish Student Union is interested in the protocol and policies for a USCO to gain membership on CSA. Dr. Spencer noted that there is nothing in CSA's procedures that assures a chartered organization a seat on CSA, nor to provide office space in Squires for an organization. The decision needs to be made as to whether or not CSA will allow the Commission to become larger or take time to study this before making a decision to bring another organization onto the Commission. In fairness to the Jewish Student Union, they need to know what direction CSA is going to take. Following further discussion, a motion was made and seconded that a subcommittee be created to study CSA Membership and the motion was carried. This does not preclude the Jewish Student Union from applying for membership in the interim.

### VI. **Announcements**

1. Agenda items are due 10 days prior to the meeting and approval of minutes is due within seven days after the minutes are distributed.
2. Dr. Spencer will be having monthly open office hours in the SGA Office. Those dates will be advertised in the coming weeks, but the first one is on Wednesday, September 23, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
3. The Student Government Association is handing out coupons for the dining facilities where you get 10% off your meal if you dine between 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. the week of September 21 – 25.
4. Be cautious that a negative ad regarding denial of the Holocaust is sneaking into newspapers.
5. Ms. McLeese will be posting the survey results from the survey that she had members take, on the listserv. In regards to an item from that survey where someone asked about residency requirements for graduate students, she noted that this needs to be taken to the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies.
6. Ms. McLeese reminded the group that in the future, any materials provided prior to the meeting and sent out to the listserv should be reviewed ahead of times; copies of materials will not be available at the meeting.

**VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda M. Rogers  
Recording Secretary