

Commission on Student Affairs
October 1, 2009
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Brush Mountain Room
Squires Student Center

Present: Sandy Bass, Sara Brickman, Brandon Carroll, Kimberly Carlson, Phillip Fenstermacher for Kristin Carr, Ashley Davis, Rick Ferraro, Laura Freeman, Rebecca French, Kristina Hartman, Frank Hernandez, Lydia Michailow for Monique Johnson, Nathan Lavinka, Britta Long for Mary Ann Lewis, Kathy Lokale for Anna LoMascolo, Shane McCarty, Michelle McLeese, Charis Ghattas, Robert Sebak, Sharmin Shamsalsadati, Frank Shushok, Guy Sims, Cynthia Bonner for Edward Spencer, Ben Wade, Camille Waldron

Absent: Tom Brown, Monika Gibson, Brian Golden, Shivana Handa, Eric Hodges, Monica Hunter, Brad Klein, Matthew Penny, Donna Ratcliffe, Karen Eley Sanders, John Steger, Daryl Whitehurst, Nigel Wray

Guests: Carl Kreiger, Dale Robinson, Eric Schwartz, Maggie Sloane

I. Call to Order

Ms. McLeese, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

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

III. Guest Speakers

A. Maggie Sloane, Director of Compliance and Conflict Resolution, Office of Equity and Inclusion. Ms. Sloane spoke to the group regarding Revisions to Policy 1025, which, if adopted, would include gender identity or expression as a basis for protection against discrimination and harassment. Currently Policy 1025 prohibits harassment or discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, political affiliation, race religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. The changes to Policy 1025 are being finalized by the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity. When the revisions are complete, a copy will be sent to Ms. McLeese to share with the Commission for review and potential endorsement. Ms. Sloane also reviewed the procedures that are followed if someone reports that they have been harassed and the three basic elements of behavior that indicate harassment: the behavior is unwelcome, it is severe and persistent, and it interferes with a person's education or work. She noted that intent is not a factor;

therefore, there can be violations that are not intentional. It is the impact of the conduct on the other person that is the determining factor.

- B. Dale Robinson, Manager, Conflict Resolution Program: Mr. Robinson gave a history of the development of the Conflict Resolution Program which serves as a focal point to offer mediation and conflict resolution services to faculty and staff. It also offers workshops and individual skill building opportunities. Initially it did not offer these services to students. He has presented to classes and student groups; some workshops include an assessment tool to determine how one prefers to handle conflict.

There has been no university-wide process for mediation for students, but his office has formed a group of students and student affairs representatives to look at what the various conflict resolution processes for students are on campus (i.e., residence life, fraternity and sorority life, etc.) and consider whether we should offer a university-wide set of mediation services for students and graduate students. He noted that one area of need is for off-campus students who have roommate problems or problems with students in other apartment complexes. There are issues that currently are handled by the Office of Student Conduct that could be referred to mediation as another option. Mr. Robinson noted that his office is interested in hearing from students about their perspectives on the informal conflict resolution processes that currently exist, how little or how much conflict there is, and how students can be incorporated into the program.

Ms. McLeese stated that it is imperative that the Commission on Student Affairs go to our constituents and then get back to Mr. Robinson with feedback and input. You can find more information on the Mediation and Conflict Resolution program at the following website: <http://www.oei.vt.edu>.

IV. Old Business

Ms. McLeese polled the group for feedback on their stance in regard to the *USA Today* Reading program. Concerns were voiced regarding the fact that this program would add an additional student fee, that the newspaper can be accessed on line at no cost, that this program was decidedly voted down by CSA in 2005, and that excess newspapers would end up lying around in the buildings. Ms. McLeese asked that Commission members go back to their constituents and get feedback so that we can be ready for discussion at the next meeting. Kristina Hartman will be drafting a statement that will go out through the listserv, which will be voted on at the next meeting.

V. New Business

A. CSA Membership Committee

Ms. McLeese asked that a Membership Committee be formed to review the protocol for CSA membership. The following individuals were nominated: Shane McCarty, Kristina Hartman, Sandy Bass, Nathan Lavinka, Brandon Carroll, Camille

Waldron, Ed Spencer, Guy Sims, Frank Shushok, Laura Freeman, and Rebecca French. All nominees accepted. Three individuals were nominated to serve as Co-Chairs: Shane McCarty, Kristina Hartman and Laura Freeman and each gave a speech in support of his/her nomination as co-chair (the desire is to have as co-chairs a graduate and undergraduate student). Following their speeches, with Laura as only graduate nominee, a motion was made and seconded that Ms. Freeman be the graduate representative co-chair. The motion carried. A second motion was made to vote for the undergraduate co-chair, the motion was seconded, and Kristina Hartman was selected to serve and the undergraduate co-chair. Therefore the Membership Committee will be:

Committee Co-Chairs: Laura Freeman and Kristina Hartman
Committee Members: Shane McCarty, Edward Spencer, Sandy Bass,
Nathan Lavinka, Brandon Carroll, Guy Sims, Frank Shushok.
Camille Waldron, Rebecca French

VI. Announcements

1. Reminder that Homecoming starts next week and a schedule of events was distributed to the members, with a reminder that parade applications are due on Friday, October 2.
2. October 12 – SGA is teaming up with the President's Office to provide an opportunity for students to meet with Dr. Steger at the Lyric Theatre
3. October 13, 7:00 p.m., Burruss Hall – Ring Premier
4. October 15, AASU is sponsoring Danny Cho, Comedian at the GLC
5. The Filipino Student Union is accepting donations to send over to the Red Cross beginning Wednesday, October 7, for those affected by the recent Tsunami
6. Oct. 6 – LASO is sponsoring a movie at 7:00 p.m., in the Colonial Room
7. Oct. 18 – Latino Festival, 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
8. October 4 – VTU presents B. B. King; October 6 - Laugh Right On, and November 10 - Maroon 5 (tickets are on sale now)
9. GLC will be opening their plaza on October 9, 2:30 p.m.
10. October 11 – Daniel Goleman, author of Ecological Intelligence will speak on campus

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda M. Rogers
Recording Secretary