

# MINUTES

## **Commission on Student Affairs Meeting**

February 25, 2016

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Squires Student Center – Brush Mountain Room

### **Attendees**

Susan Anderson, Margaret Appleby, Pat Finn, Zach Greenwald, Greg Purdy, Jimmy McClellan, Morgan Sykes, Tuna Shankar, Mohammed Seyam, Matt Chan, Bradi Rhodes, Dr. Perillo, Joycelynn Acheampong, Panisa Jiumdumneankij, Ben Rivera, Evan Robohm, Monika Gibson.

### **Guests**

Claire Kelling, Tom Brown, Joe Edens, Tricia Smith, Dean Brown, Angela Simmons

### **Call to Order**

At 3:35pm, Vice Chair Chan called the meeting to order.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Morgan Sykes made a motion to approve the agenda; Susan Anderson seconded, the agenda was approved.

### **Take Back the Night Presentation**

Claire Kelling, president Womanspace+, presented information on an annual, international event speaking out against gender based violence called Take Back the Night in order to encourage further participation from additional groups on campus. The first Take Back the Night at Virginia Tech happened in 1990. The event begins at Henderson Lawn at 7pm with a Rally Program that invites groups and individuals to discuss gender based violence, followed by attendants marching down an accessible path down though campus and downtown, ending with promoting action based options. Margaret Appleby, on behalf of the Council of International Student Organization, asked how Take Back the Night will accommodate intercultural groups. Ms. Kelling shared that they do intend to have speakers that address racial and sexual based violence as well. Zach Greenwald asked if any religious organizations are participating and she said they do reach out to religious groups but not specify any religious presentations. If any organizations would like more information about Take Back the Night or want to join, please contact Claire at [ckelling@vt.edu](mailto:ckelling@vt.edu).

## **Bias Response Protocol**

Tom Brown, Dean of Students, presented in order to educate the group on Bias Response Protocol. Dean Brown shared that the protocol is used by the DSA in order to provide protection to the students, but is adaptable on a case-by-case basis due to the fact that no two incidents are the same. This protocol is best used in order to address community wide incidents, similarly to the issue in 2015 concerning the graffiti incident threatening Muslim students. Dean Brown shared a handout of a campus wide note through GobblerConnect explaining "How to Report Bias Incidents," and asked the group where and how else to distribute this type of information.

Margaret Appleby suggested putting this notice on organization webpages.

Susan Anderson suggested adding this notice on the large bulletin boards in McBryde.

Panisa Jiumdumneankij suggested putting this notice in the table cards in dining halls.

Morgan Sykes suggested adding the notice to the slides on digital corkboards (TVs) in highly trafficked areas.

Reid Thomas shared using Facebook and Twitter as social media platforms.

Tuna Shankar suggested placing this as a notice on the homepage of scholar and canvas to grab student attention.

Lauren Surface asked if this notice could be handed out at graduate orientation because she was concerned about ways to reach out to graduate students.

Greg Purdy asked if students collectively know what a bias related incident is, and what kind of education is done at freshman orientation about this topic.

Dr. Perillo responded by expressing that many people want to be added to the orientation schedule and although there are many facts thrown at students during this time, these types of topics can be covered in skits, etc. In addition to orientation, RAs are thoroughly educated about the topic and it is the intention that their knowledge can be shared with their residents. However, Jimmy McClellan shared that these types of conversations are not mandated, and instead are discussed when an issue arises.

Ben Rivera suggested that including this information in welcome brunches for cultural groups could be beneficial.

Mohammed Seyam mentioned that this educational component must be clearly accessible to international students as well due to communication barriers that can cause international students to respond differently to messages that have been lost in translation.

Greg Purdy expressed his concern about getting this information out to graduate students because many things are targeted to first year graduate students, but including this information in a graduate honors group could help spread the word to a different group of students.

Ms. Kelling shared that the time in which students hear this information is important, as hearing the information in the middle of the year may create a greater impact than if the information is heard at the beginning of the year, as the student has experienced more as the year progresses.

Dean Brown shared that there is a committee working on ways to better label this feature on the DSA website because the current wording is not as inclusive as it could be. His plan is to return to this group sharing the drafts from his committee and get CSA's feedback of this revised language on March 24th. Student voices and opinions are included on this committee.

Mohammed Seyam suggested including confidentiality information into this educational component.

Greg Purdy shared creating the option of allowing students type in their incident and it can direct the student to which type of and who the best administrators would be to help their specific situation.

Dean Brown shared that currently it is not easily navigable but that issue is currently being addressed in the committee mentioned above. Share any additional thoughts with him at [dbrown@vt.edu](mailto:dbrown@vt.edu).

## **New Business**

### **A. BOV Representative Presentation**

Morgan Sykes, Undergraduate Representative to the Board of Visitors, and Mohammed Seyam, Graduate Representative to the Board of Visitors, presented to CSA about the Board of Visitors and the role of being a student representative. Morgan Sykes shared some background information about the Board of Visitors' roles and responsibilities. She then showed how the student representatives fit into that structure. On March 17<sup>th</sup> the final three undergraduate and final three graduate candidates will come and present to the commission. This will give the commission an opportunity to hear what initiatives these candidates hope to work on as well as allowing the candidates to practice their proposals and be asked questions. CSA will be able to provide feedback to the current representatives that they can share with the BOV during final interviews on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **Commission, Committee, and Sub-Committee Updates**

- Matt Chan updated the Commission on the Operation Manual for CSA. Matt shared that hopefully they will soon have a document to aid the difficulty of transition of members from year to year and help speed up the learning curve of serving on this commission.

- Mohammed Seyam updated the Commission on the Committee on Religious Holidays. Mohammed explained again that this committee has reached out to groups trying to better understand the importance of certain religious holidays to groups. Replies have been limited so we want to partner with COED to strengthen this initiative.

### **Announcements**

- Dr. Simmons from DSA shared updates about the Keystone Fellows application. Applications are due on March 18<sup>th</sup>. They are looking for students who are highly engaged and involved in aspects of the community that live out the aspirations for student learning. On April 19<sup>th</sup>, there will be a ceremony for students with attendance by Dr. Perillo, President Sands, and Provost Rikakis. The application is available on GobblerConnect. The application does require a faculty or staff nomination and an interview is required. Dr. Simmons encouraged this group to go to the application, learn more, and apply! Keystone Fellows will be celebrated at Graduation with a stole/cords and are expected to become peer mentors to the second phase of Keystone Experience (practice).
  - Dr. Perillo's hope for this group is that fellows will continue to journey with us in the upcoming years to help us better understand what the future of Keystone will look like.
  - Being a fellow is a celebration of what you have done and you also serve as a mentor and retain this connection with this program and the aspirations. Dr. Simmons mentioned the possibility of hosting future Keystone Fellows reunion.
  - Jimmy McClellan asked if graduate students are able to apply and Dr. Simmons responded that, yes, all graduating students are encouraged to apply.
- Matt Chan shared that CSA will meet again March 17<sup>th</sup>. After March 17<sup>th</sup>, we will meet weekly. The semester schedules were sent to the Commission early this semester and if you did not receive this schedule please contact Matt.
  - We will be working on Hokie Handbook Revisions, University Master Plan, and hopefully Destination Areas. If you have agenda items you would like to address, please contact Jackie Fisher or Matt Chan.
- Zach Greenwald brought up Jewish cultural events that will be coming up in the next month. Former ambassador Dennis Ross will be talking about Peace in the Middle East on March 28<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup>.

- Dr. Perillo shared that Nicki Giavonni is hosting the administrator from NASA tomorrow on 10am-12pm in 380 Shanks.
- Susan Anderson shared March is women's month.
- SGA elections start the week after spring break and on March 17<sup>th</sup> 6-7pm SGA will be hosting a "meet the candidates event" in place of the usual debate.
- GLC is hosting many events but the GSA will host its research symposium with workshops, posters, and talks from graduate and undergraduate students. This conference has had 150+ abstracts submitted. There will be an external speaker who is involved in efforts related to Hurricane Katrina and he will talk about how arts, technology and local government can work together to aid rescue efforts.
- Tricia Smith shared the availability of a safe space to discuss Trump coming to speak at Radford and Shapiro speaking on campus. She wanted to provide the space to discuss any possible groups or efforts in reaction/response to these visits. There will be a meeting tomorrow, **Friday Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> at 3pm** for the Trump meeting. There will be a meeting **Monday Feb. 29<sup>th</sup> at 7pm** to discuss Shapiro's visit. These will both be held in the multi-cultural center (MCC). IEC is behind students and she wants to be a facilitator with you and for you so we can be in community and have these discussions and share our ideas.
  - Ben Rivera shared that Budget Board was not aware who the speaker was when they allocated YAF the money for Shapiro's event.
    - Dr. Simmons shared that Budget Board does not make decisions based on content, but instead on policy.
- Tricia Smith mentioned the application for the next InterCOM training that will take place at the end of the semester (April)

### Adjournment

Morgan Sykes made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Susan Anderson, and passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM.