

**Commission on Student Affairs**  
**Thursday, October 17, 2013**  
**3:30-5:00 p.m.**  
**Squires Student Center – Brush Mountain Room**

**Present:**

Brent Ashley, Cathye Betzel, Matthew Chan, Claire Childress, Noha ElSherbiny, De'Ashley Spain- designee for Morgan Esters, Jean-Luc Ford, Lauren Surface- designee for Monika Gibson, Kylie Gilbert, Mary Ann Lewis, Margaret McQuain, Peter Nettekoven, Patty Perillo, Greg Purdy, Katie White- designee for Caroline Sapyta, Robert Sebek, Lester Schonberger, Emma Smith, Colleen Thom- designee for Jay Tucker

**Absent:** Maria Andrade, Shaimaa Abdallah, Chris Atkins, Jacob Grohs, Andy Hsu, Nick Warrington, Erica Wood

**Guests:** Jaime Joslin (Leadership Education Collaborative)

**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Kylie Gilbert, chair, called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m. welcoming the group to today's meeting and reviewing the agenda items for discussion. She noted that the guest speaker/Extreme Makeover Campus Edition agenda item would be delayed until Mr. Blake Barnhill arrived, at which point it would be reviewed.

**II. Commissions/Committees Updates**

a. Non-Traditional Student Support Working Committee – Mr. Lester Schonberger

Mr. Lester Schonberger provided a quick recap that this working committee was focused on two specific topics: dietary and holidays. Related to non-traditional diets, there is a meeting schedule for next week to continue the committee's work. As well, he indicated that D2 is making significant improvements for gluten free offerings. The working committee will be visiting D2 as well to gain greater understanding and continue discussion about how to further partner.

Related to university-recognized religious and ethnic holidays, Mr. Schonberger indicated a meeting with Dean Brown scheduled for next week, as well as a presentation done last year to the CEOD that he hopes to secure. In short, the working committee desires more guidance on how students might approach/request religious and ethnic holidays with greater success, while also trying to gain understanding and clarification as to the logic behind why certain holidays are observed and not others.

b. Principles of Community Working Committee – Mr. Chris Atkins

Though Mr. Chris Atkins was absent, Ms. Caroline Sapyta asked Ms. Katie White to attend and represent her at the meeting, and to also provide a brief update on this working committee. Katie explained that Virginia Tech is the only school amongst SCHEV peer institutions without a trans-inclusive statement in their equity statements. Dr. Perillo began discussion about the need for CSA's specificity related to gender identity, gender expression, and/or transgender inclusivity as each means something different. As well, the need for clarity as to whether the goal is to make recommendations to change the university's nondiscrimination statement, the Principles of Community, both, and/or others. She went on to explain that there are university leaders/experts who might be a worthwhile guest speakers related to the different terms and their meanings. Ms. Gilbert indicated she would work to schedule these leaders for a future meeting.

Mr. Matt Chan inquired about partnership with the CEOD on the issue. Dr. Perillo explained that CSA really needs to partner with this valuable commission but that CSA needs clarity of definition and purpose before moving to another commission. Dr. Perillo also stated that CSA needs to understand the historical context of these conversations. It was noted that the working committee is to bring forth a recommendation which CSA, as a whole, may decide to broaden or narrow the scope and/or change the application.

c. Series 8000 Policies Working Committee

- i. This working committee's initial meeting is to occur on November 7; membership is currently reading and formulating questions related to series 8000 policies.
- ii. Mr. Lester Schonberger highlighted the types of items included in series 8000 policies and that they could be found online.

- d. Budget Board Working Committee
  - i. Mr. Matt Chan noted that no chairs were elected at the last meeting for this working committee; and, that all members of the Budget Board Working Committee also participate in the Series 8000 Policies Working Committee.
  - ii. Dr. Perillo clarified that a chair appointment wasn't necessary and that Ms. Monica Hunter, Associate Director of Student Centers and Activities, was previously asked to lead the working committee and call the meeting(s).
  - iii. Ms. Kylie Gilbert believed a meeting request may have gone out via email, but will work to rectify any existing confusion and to get a meeting scheduled.
  - iv. Mr. Brent Ashley asked to be added to the Series 8000 working committee.
- e. Connecting Cultural Groups Working Committee
  - i. Ms. Noha ElSherbiny met with Mr. Steve Burrell, Assistant Director of Student Organizations, to discuss what they are doing to connect cultural organizations. Mr. Burrell indicated there was no active work being conducted regarding connections other than the suggestion and encouragement to do so at the RSO workshop. Mr. Burrell identified similar problems and resonated with the concern that student organizations don't partner. A discussion pertaining to the use of GobblerConnect for connecting groups occurred; however, there are limitations from the service provider as to changes desired.
  - ii. The working committee also met with Dr. Sharrika Adams, Interim Director of Multicultural Programs and Services, who also indicated there was no cross-collaboration currently. Dr. Adams inquired if this is a broader issue (systemic rather than logistical/financial) and asked the group to consider/investigate such further.
  - iii. Dr. Perillo noted that a request has been made for Budget Board to share monetary request with MPS, which they have agreed to do. She also indicated that a request was made to Mr. Burrell to share programmatic information with MPS. It is hoped that more intentional sharing of information will facilitate collaborations more.

### **III. Old Business**

- a. Routed back to guest speaker topic

#### **Extreme Makeover Campus Edition – Mr. Blake Barnhill**

Mr. Blake Barnhill with SGA was unable to attend; however, Mr. Brent Ashley, SGA President, was in attendance and agreed to provide an update on behalf of Mr. Barnhill.

Mr. Ashley explained that the Extreme Makeover Campus Edition consisted of a two-part survey. The initial survey will be a personal solicitation and interaction for data collection at various campus locations. Data collection will occur via iPads on the following dates (all day) and various location:

- October 29- McBryde/Turner Place
- October 30- Owens/D2 Plaza
- October 31- Owens/Turner Place

Surveys will also be conducted randomly across campus. President Steger has committed to being visible and present at survey sites at various dates/times and there will be raffles for students who participate.

The second part of the survey process is an in-depth online survey that is intended as a follow-up to in-person survey, but is not limited to only those who completed to in-person, and is rather a call for any/all to participate.

Feedback was solicited, as well as ideas for survey questions to ask; both can be sent to either Mr. Ashley or Mr. Barnhill, but timing was imperative given the already established survey dates. Mr. Ashley continued by encouraging participation, stating a 30% response rate goal (last year's survey was only 10%).

### **IV. New Business**

- a. New/Listed Agenda Items for Next Meeting – Commission Members

Ms. Kylie Gilbert requested review and consideration of agenda items generated at the retreat; as well, members representing a constituency who would like to take on any item were encouraged to note such

for inclusion. The group discussed the following from the generated list of possible CSA agenda items from the retreat in September, 2013:

- i. Defending student status—the special status where in the first 15 days of the semester a student can register for zero credit and defend in that two-week window (no cost, no classes, etc.); however, if this 15 day window is missed, the student must enroll in a 3-credit course and pay associated tuition even though there is no class/coursework, etc. DSS allows you to register for 1 credit and gain all the benefits of student status. It was stated and agreed that this is primarily a graduate student concern, and will be considered by other committees/commissions, but that the topic should remain on CSA's list of agenda items for informational purposes.
- ii. Diversity programs agenda item— Dr. Sharrika Adams, Interim Director of Multicultural Programs and Services, has called presidents of cultural UCSOs to a meeting on October 30 to discuss diversity program topics at that time.
- iii. Co-op program and enrollment—internship credit doesn't count unless enrolled as a student which is an expensive endeavor. Ms. Colleen Thom spoke of her own experience and hopes CSA or a sub-committee can investigate further if it is across multiple colleges. Discussion continued with various members noting that academic credit comes with enrollment/fee responsibilities. The co-op intern program has a \$50 administrative fee but is a zero-credit academic program. Paid internships cannot grant academic credit; unpaid internships require you to pay for course credit if academic transcript credit is desired. Discussion concluded with the statement of an acknowledged need to investigate if it is possible for undergraduate students to get academic credit for unpaid internships (cannot happen for graduate students; separate issue).
- iv. Dismissing students for cumulative GPA lower than 2.0— Dr. Mary Ann Lewis indicated that this is part of a policy 91 issue, not free-standing issue. Many acknowledged the frustration related to students whose GPA leave them without an academic home, but who are permitted to be enrolled at the university. However, further discussion indicated that of the ~120 majors, less than half have restricted enrollment policies; academic homes are available but may not be home the student wants. The commission members present identified that what is missing is strong academic advising and support cross-major (advisor in major cannot speak to other majors; other majors won't talk to students not in that college). The discussion continued as to whether CSA was the right place for this discussion, or if CUSP would be the better entity. Dr. Lewis stated that an advisor exists in University Studies who can assist any student but there are restrictions on her time and there is little to no promotion or knowledge of this position's existence. Mr. Lester Schonberger motioned for the creation of a work group within CSA to further investigate. Ms. De'Ashley Spain seconded the motion. Ms. Colleen Thom, Ms. Emma Smith, and Ms. De'Ashley Spain all agreed to serve on this committee; Ms. Spain agreed to chair the working committee and indicated that would like to meet with Dr. Lewis and Ms. Claire Childress to better understand the issue. Ms. Spain further indicated they will work closely with SGA and will contact CUSP.
- v. Dr. Margaret McQuain added an issue for further consideration which deals with the capability of a student to withdraw from a class on the Friday before the final exam. Dr. McQuain offered consideration as to allowing students to determine whether or not they wish to withdraw after the final exam grade is posted. Dr. Mary Ann Lewis noted that CUSP might be considering this topic currently and she believes their recommendation is to delay the withdraw deadline. Ms. Gilbert indicated she would review minutes from recent CUSP meetings and report back to CSA. It was noted that SGA has a rep on CUSP and that Erica Wood serves as a representative for Academic Affairs. Mr. Greg Purdy indicated that VT's policy is lenient compared to other universities and suggested benchmarking with peer institutions as part of this review.
- vi. Mr. Matt Chan stated that the agenda items generated when the graduate CSA members met are being discussed by GSA and will route up as necessary and that he would gladly report out as to their status if of specific interest to CSA.
- vii. Discussion occurred regarding the required attendance policy by faculty and its impact on grades. As attendance taking and grade correlation is highly departmentalized and very faculty drive, it was determined by CSA members present that this was not an issue for further CSA discussion

and that it should be removed from the agenda list.

**V. Announcements**

- a. The Dining Hall receipts resolution from CSA was submitted to University Council for a first reading. However, Dr. Perillo received an email from the secretary of University Council. The email indicated that while there are no legal reasons requiring dining centers to print receipts (policy 5505 indicate the printing of receipts is a necessity), there are business practices to consider and procedural changes necessary to implement the resolution change as requested. In order to proceed with a first reading on Monday, the issue would have to be resolved within a 6-week window to pass, at which point it would cease and the process would have to start over. As such, the resolution will not move forward to first reading until some process issues are resolved. The President's Office will assist to resolve the process issues so that CSA's resolution can proceed to University Council in the near future.
- b. Mr. Jean-Luc Ford thanked everyone for attending ring premiere on October 8, noting it was the largest attended ring premiere in history.

**VI. Adjournment**

- a. With no further announcements or business, Ms. Kylie Gilbert, chair, entertained a motion to adjourn; Mr. Lester Schonberger motioned and Mr. Jean Luc Ford seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.