

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AFFAIRS

March 16, 2023 @ 3:30 PM

CID, Multipurpose Library (Room 104)

Present: Shahed Sanuri (presiding), Ally Jett, April Myers (for Kim O'Rourke), Avery Lee, Crasha Townsend, Daniel Pena-Salazar, Emaan Rahman, James Bridgeforth (for Frances Keene), Kat Nelson (for James Bridgeforth), Katie Minutillo, Kiera Schneiderman, Lauren Surface, Monica Nguyen, Nick Whitesell, Susanna Rinehart, Tamara Cherry-Clarke, Terri Pecora, Yohan Sequeira (for Ben Beiter)

Absent: Chloe Robertson, Jalen Neal, Jennifer Pike, Kimberly Smith, Shirin Mohammadian

Absent with Notice: N/A

Guests: Monica Hunter

Shahed Sanuri called the meeting to order at 3:30pm. A quorum was present.

1) Attendance

2) Team Builder

3) Adoption of Agenda

- A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

4) Approval of Previous Minutes

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes from the February 16, 2023 CUSA meeting. 14 voted in favor, zero voted in opposition, and zero abstained. The motion carried.

5) Unfinished Business

- a. Nick Whitesell shared an update regarding the Resolution for the Student Code of Conduct following its first reading during the last CUSA meeting. See attached.
 - The only change that has been made to the document since the last meeting is the correction of two misspelled words in the second bullet point under the "Now, therefore, let it be resolved" section. "Repel" and "repelling" were corrected to "rappel" and "rappelling," respectively.
 - Kiera Schneiderman noted that there had been much feedback from the Undergraduate Student Senate during their review of the resolution. Kiera questioned if there were any changes made in response to the feedback given during that conversation. Nick responded that the only change made from that conversation was the spelling correction noted above. All other feedback (e.g.

points made about gender-based violence, Title IX procedures, etc.) was noted and will be taken into consideration during the next set of revisions this summer.

- With no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded to enter the voting period to approve the Resolution for the Student Code of Conduct. 13 voted in favor, zero voted in opposition, and one abstained. The motion carried.
- b. Shahed re-opened the floor to continue the discussion from the last meeting and hear any more feedback there might be concerning the 2022-2023 CUSA Work Plan. See attached.
- A few CUSA members shared their thoughts on improving the experiences of prospective and incoming transfer students.
 - Daniel Pena-Salazar shared that several prospective transfer students have shared feedback with him about the transfer application process. Their main issue with the application is it only asks for activities and accomplishments from their time in college. These prospective transfer students, especially those applying during their freshman year of college, feel like they are not able to fully showcase themselves as an applicant with only their college experiences. They believe being able to include activities from outside of their college career would be an improvement.
 - Crasha Townsend added to these thoughts that, for context, the transfer applicant pool is competitive for Virginia Tech with an average GPA of 3.875, which may be why students are looking for ways to better their application.
 - Monica Nguyen brought up that it may be interesting to compare the application process of transfer students and high school seniors.
 - Monica also shared that she has heard feedback from students that have already transferred to Virginia Tech. They have noted that there are some difficulties in transferring with feelings of isolation and lack of guidance in welcoming them to the school. Virginia Tech could improve its processes in helping transfer students be brought into the school and acclimated to its culture.
 - Tamara Cherry-Clarke shared that Nasim Schwab, the Associate Director for Academic Advising Initiatives, is a good resource to connect with about programming and support for current transfer students. An idea would be to have Nasim's contact information shared as a resource in a welcome email sent to transfer students when they arrive on campus. Nasim could also potentially help answer questions from prospective transfer students.
 - Crasha Townsend additionally noted that transfer students also seem to have difficulty transferring credits.
 - Tamara added that having difficulty transferring credits is an issue widely experienced by incoming non-transfer students also.
 - Teri Pecora shared that the Office of the University Registrar does easily get behind with transferring students' credits, but there is something in the works to help smooth out this process.

- CUSA members also had feedback concerning orientation and how it could be improved.
 - Kiera Schneiderman feels like the current format of orientation with all of its icebreakers and the Hokies on Track script is lacking. Kiera feels as though previous in-person orientation experiences were more valuable, especially with being able to bring in representatives from different offices across campus to share resources and information.
 - Ally Jett added to Kiera's sentiments and mentioned that Chief Babbs from VTPD recently came to USS and mentioned that they no longer speak with students in person at orientation. Ally expressed that having an officer speak with students in person as opposed to doing the current online modules would be much more effective in communicating safety information.
 - Kiera also mentioned how members from the Title IX office were looking to talk at the information sessions hosted by Residential Well-Being but were not allowed since they already had their own online orientation to share that information.
 - Monica Hunter shared some context concerning the reasoning behind the changes in Virginia Tech's orientation approach over the years. The main reason for the shift is to focus more on getting students in, registered, etc. As opposed to programmatic initiatives. Monica does agree with the CUSA members though that she did like the old approach more.
- James Bridgeforth helped list the following options as ways to act moving forward from this discussion:
 - CUSA could invite the people who oversee admissions, the transfer process, and/or orientation to a meeting to hear everyone's feedback and share information about why things are set up how they are now.
 - Dr. Bridgeforth is in the same suite as some of the people who oversee orientation, so he could connect CUSA with them.
 - Shahed works at the admissions office, so she can be a contact between CUSA and that area.
 - Terri can also help connect with the admissions and registrar's areas.
 - Tamara will also be emailing Nasim about the transfer process and will share that information with Shahed.
 - Susanna Rinehart also added that certain questions members had asking for information about these areas could probably be addressed more quickly over email to help save time during meetings if CUSA were to delve deeper into these issues.
 - CUSA members could write letters to these individuals to share their feedback.
 - CUSA members could also take no action.

6) New Business

- a. There was no new business for this meeting.

7) CUSA Announcements

- a. The USS president, Caroline Lohr, made her Statement to Affirm Principles of Community during the last USS meeting. It was voted on and approved.

8) University Council and Commission Updates

- a. There are two working groups each looking for two students to sit on and help with these working groups. One is focused on the student experience and the other is focused on financial feasibility. Students interested in helping should email Caroline.
- b. Minutes from the March 13 meeting can be found here: <https://governance.vt.edu/BodyDetails/UC>

9) USS VP for Finance

- a. Sam Yuzbashev was not present to share the Appropriations Committee update. See attached.

10) Adjournment

- There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:30pm.

****Next Meeting: Thursday, April 20, 2023 @ 3:30 to 5:00pm****

Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE REVISIONS AND UPDATES TO THE VIRGINIA TECH
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

CUSA 22-23 (get number from CUSA chair/April)

Draft Notice Sent to University Council Cabinet	February 10, 2023
First Reading by Commission	February 16, 2023
Approval by Commission	February 16, 2023
First Reading by Senate	February 28, 2023
Approval by Senate	February 28, 2023
Faculty Senate Comment	Date
Staff Senate Comment	Date
Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Comment	Date
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Comment	Date
Undergraduate Student Senate Comment	Date
First Reading, University Council	Date
Approved, University Council	Date
Approved, President	Date
Approved, Board of Visitors	Date
Effective Date	Upon Approval or Date

WHEREAS, the *Code of Virginia* §23.1-412 requires each public institution of higher education to adopt non-academic student codes of conduct; and

WHEREAS, in addition to university policies, the *Student Code of Conduct* includes regulations applicable to all students as promulgated in the *Code of Virginia*; and

WHEREAS, by state statute, the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors is charged with regulating the discipline of all students; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors carries out that responsibility through the university's student conduct system inclusive of the *Student Code of Conduct*, which applies to all enrolled undergraduate, graduate, professional students, and student organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors annually reviews and approves the *Student Code of Conduct*; and

WHEREAS, the university student conduct system reflects best practices for the education of students about appropriate behavior and responsibility to self, others, and the community; and

WHEREAS, proposed revisions incorporated in the *Student Code of Conduct* bring clarity to prohibited conduct; and

WHEREAS, proposed policy language for the *Student Code of Conduct* includes revisions that incorporate new regulations in the *Code of Virginia* pertaining to tobacco products, and university policies associated with unauthorized climbing on buildings, impersonation, theft, and incapacitation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the *Student Code of Conduct*, applicable to undergraduate, graduate, professional students and student organizations, be approved by the Board of Visitors, to include new language as outlined below (in red) and in the attached and take effect upon approval of the board:

- pursuant to *Code of Virginia* §18.2-371, the *Student Code of Conduct* “prohibit the purchase or possession of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, alternative nicotine products, and hemp products intended for smoking by a person under 21 years of age” (*Student Code of Conduct*, Section V, Alcohol and Other Drug Offenses, Tobacco); and
- the *Student Code of Conduct* prohibit the “unauthorized climbing, scaling, repelling, or attempting to climb, scale, or repel, inside or outside campus building or structures” (*Student Code of Conduct*, Section V, Offenses Against the University, Climbing); and
- the *Student Code of Conduct* prohibit “impersonating any person, group, or office, with the intent to deceive another” (*Student Code of Conduct*, Section V, Offenses Against the Community, Impersonation); and
- the *Student Code of Conduct* clarify the existing policy prohibiting theft, attempted theft, or possession of stolen property to state, “theft is the unauthorized taking, appropriation, use, or possession of property belonging to another person or entity. Failing to tender payment for services rendered may also constitute theft. Found property should be presumed lost and delivered to an appropriate University authority immediately. Failure to return found property to an appropriate authority may constitute theft” (*Student Code of Conduct*, Section V, Offenses Against Property, Theft); and
- the *Student Code of Conduct* update the existing definition of incapacitation to state “physical or mental inability to make informed, rational judgements. Incapacitation includes but is not limited to being asleep, being unconscious, and the inability to make decisions due to the voluntary or involuntary use of alcohol or drugs.” (*Student Code of Conduct*, Section IV, Definitions, Incapacitation).



Faculty Senate
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
<https://www.facultysenate.vt.edu/>

March 1, 2023

Resolution CUSA 2022-2023A

The Faculty Senate will waive our right to comment on CUSA 2022-23A: Resolution to Approve Revisions and Updates to the Virginia Tech Student Code of Conduct.

Respectfully,

Dr. Robert Weiss
Faculty Senate President

Professor of Natural Hazards
Center for Coastal Studies (Coastal@VT), Director
DRRMVT, Director
Department of Geosciences



**Graduate and Professional Student Senate
(GPSS)**

25 Graduate Life Center (0186)
Blacksburg, VA 24061
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GPSS read CUSA Resolution 2022-23A on February 16th, 2022 and offers the following comment:

There were discrepancies between the changed text in the resolution's 'Therefore, Be it Resolved' clause, and the attached new version of the document. These should be resolved. Specifically the discrepancy noticed is in the line regarding impersonation (Student Code of Conduct, Section V, Offenses Against the Community, Impersonation).

Secondly, the GPSS had a robust discussion on how law enforcement interacts with Student Code of Conduct violations and that this should be taken into consideration whenever changing the Student Code of Conduct.

2022-23 Proposed Goals	Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs
Goal 1	Begin orienting the new chair for CUSA
Goal 2	Create inclusive culture of dialog
Goal 3	Review first generation student performance compared to other universities
Goal 4	Focus on international student experience
Goal 5	Improving the excessive work and treatment of members of the executive board (president, vice presidents, & directors) of the Undergraduate Student Senate
Goal 6	Advocate for the rights and safety of religious minorities on campus Improve residential well being leaders' working environment and treatment as well as strengthen quiet hours
Goal 7	Promote stable growth of Lavender House, a new LLP, an expand diversity and inclusion within Lavender House

Goal 8

Reinforcement of punishment for perpetrators of sexual violence within the campus

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*Appropriations Presentation -
3/16/23*

**Presented on Behalf of the Appropriations
Committee**



Recent Updates

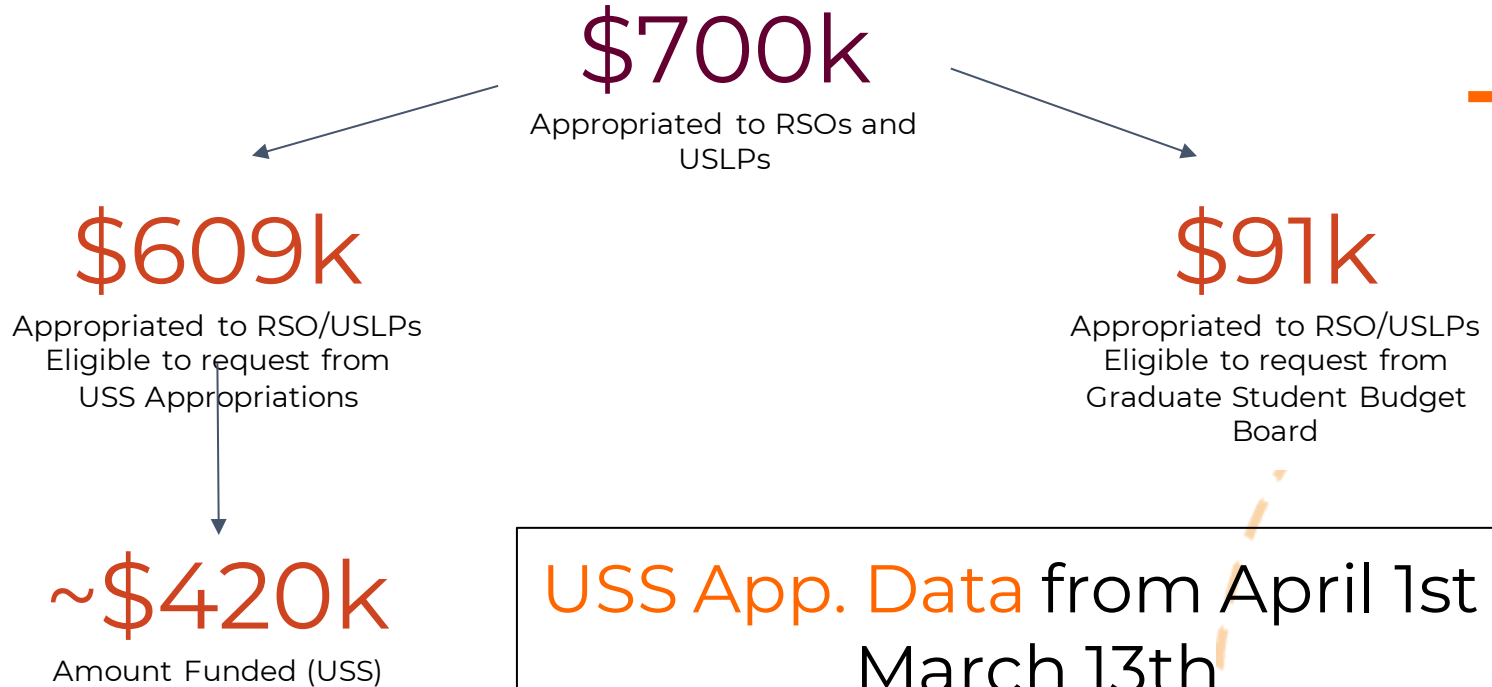


- None

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*State of
Committee*

State of Committee



Requests Heard by Committee: 2/20-3/13

62

Requests Heard

40

Approved Requests

49

Unique Organizations

~\$83.5K

Amount Funded

Competition	5 requests	\$6,100
Conference	3 requests	\$3,200
Major Event	2 requests	\$13,200
Small Grant	9 requests	\$11,000
Operational	7 requests	\$5,000
General Program	14 requests	\$45,000

Total 2022-2023 USS Appropriations Year to Date (August 1st-March 13th)

399

Requests Received

254

Approved Requests

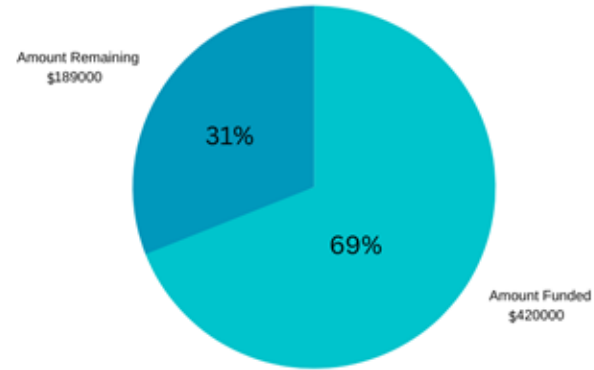
163

Unique Organizations

~\$420K

Amount Funded

Appropriations 2022-2023 Budget



Total Approved for
2022-2023 Events