

MINUTES

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
March 23rd, 2026
3:00 PM
Via Zoom

Present – J. Tokuhisa (presiding), S. Armstrong (representing J. Sible), A. Ball, J. Bedore, M. Caddick, K. Goyne, M. Kimbrell, H. Lexer, M. Eick, M. Pleimling, L. Ricci, S. Rinehart, M. Seref, R. Sparks, S. Sumner, D. Thorp

Absent with Notice: N. Akers, S. Clements, S. Over, R. Poff, J. Russell

Absent: M. Acosta, E. Austin, S. Dip, K. Edgar, C. Middleton, C. Ruktanonchai, K. Thompson

Guests: J. Gallagher, J. Leech, E. Moon, R. Lucas, V. Nguyen, R. Pitcher, L. Rose, K. Wells, Z. Tucker

J. Tokuhisa called the meeting to order at 3:08. A quorum was present.

1. Adoption of Agenda

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

2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of February 23rd, 2026.

J. Tokuhisa noted that the February 23rd, 2026 minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Office of the University Registrar's [website](#).

3. Unfinished Business

CUSP 2025-26A – Resolution for Review Process for Pathways Concept 7 (2nd Reading)

J. Tokuhisa shared that after discussion with Faculty Senate President, J. Lemkul, it was brought to his attention that the University Council Cabinet was consulted during the creation of the resolution and, as a result, some faculty members were involved in the process. With the cabinet having faculty members, some faculty were consulted for this resolution. D. Thorp noted that consultation with a limited number of faculty through the University Council Cabinet does not constitute consultation with the faculty as a whole. He questioned whether language such as “the majority of faculty” or “the vast majority of faculty” would be more accurate in the resolution.

K. Tran clarified that when the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee on General Education revised this resolution, they were specifically referencing their committee in this faculty section because this is where faculty governance is formally exercised. He explained that including the committee here may more accurately reflect the nature of the revised resolution.

M. Pleimling suggested revising the language to explicitly state that UCCGE was not consulted, noting that this would be a more precise and truthful characterization of the process. The group agreed that identifying the specific committee rather than making a broad claim about faculty consultation would improve the clarity and accuracy of the resolution. As revised, the statement in the sixth Whereas statement will read, “Regrettably, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee on General Education, the appropriate faculty committee, was not consulted.”

The motion to revise the language in the sixth Whereas statement in CUSP 2025-2026A and approved the resolution for its second reading passed unanimously. The resolution will move to Faculty Senate for second reading.

CUSP 2025-26H – Updating the Foreign Language Requirement (2nd Reading)

R. Sparks shared updated information related to previously reviewed data on foreign language (FL) requirements. The data under discussion came from more recent student cohorts who had not yet completed or reported their foreign language requirements. As a result, he explained that data needed to rely on older cohorts, at least six years out, to accurately identify which students ultimately completed the foreign language requirement at Virginia Tech. This is because many students do not report their foreign language courses until they are close to graduation.

R. Sparks continued and clarified that during the initial data provided to CUSP, 1% of students over 3 cohorts were identified as taking Foreign Language courses towards graduation at Virginia Tech. 98% of students had already met the requirement. The remaining one percent consisted of students who transferred foreign language courses into the university. Taken together, this clarified that there was no unexplained or “missing” percentage within the 98 percent of students who met the requirement.

Concerns from the AP Faculty Senate were raised regarding the perceived burden placed on advisors to locate students and solicit documentation of previously completed foreign language coursework. This pressure was viewed as a significant advising challenge.

H. Lexer asked about potential barriers students might face when applying to Virginia Tech under the new policy and how those cases would be assessed. In response, R. Sparks explained that students with documented accommodations exempting them from foreign language requirements in high school would not be denied admission on the basis of foreign language requirements. Additionally, students denied admission solely due to foreign language requirements will be monitored to ensure that this group does not exceed one percent of applicants.

M. Kimbrell said there is still some concern from the department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures. It was clarified that all the students who took classes from the 232 were not enrolled in MCLL minors. There is a concern about loss of student credit hours. However, if these students are taking the course to satisfy the university Foreign Language requirement, these credit hours do not count towards graduation.

The motion to approve CUSP 2025-2026A for its second reading passed unanimously. The resolution will move to Faculty Senate for second reading.

CUSP 2025-26G – Resolution for Policy on Use of Text Messaging (2nd Reading)

Concerns were raised that individuals using text messaging for university purposes may not be fully aware of other related institutional policies. It was noted that the graduate school needs greater consideration and that a representative from Legal may need to provide input. Members discussed that various stakeholders have explored aspects of a texting policy for several years, without moving forward because of the numerous complexities surrounding text messaging.

Discussion clarified that the intention of this resolution was to focus on mass text messaging, but several participants emphasized the need to also address one-on-one or limited-use texting, which is already widely used. M. Caddick shared that text messaging is essential for communicating with Study Abroad students, where timely and direct communication is critical.

D. Thorp asked whether an existing policy governs phone calls. R. Sparks responded that he is not aware of an existing policy related to phone calls. The resolution seeks to provide guidance in an area that has lacked formal policy, noting that email and phone communication developed without centralized oversight.

J. Tokuhisa motioned to withdraw the resolution for further development. The motion to withdraw CUSP 2025-2026G passed unanimously.

Following the vote, J. Tokuhisa asked about appropriate representation for a future committee. According to the input of Commission Members all groups that should be as part of this committee include undergraduate and graduate students; research and teaching faculty; IT governance; legal affairs; academic advising; university communications; the global education office; representatives connected to scorecard metrics; student affairs; student organizations; and enrollment management.

4. Reports

- Academic Support Committee – Sherwood Clements: The next meeting will be April 26th and a draft resolution will likely be provided after that meeting.
- Academic Policies Committee – Michel Pleimling: No report
- Athletics Committee – Dan Thorp: No report.
- Commencement Committee – Monica Kimbrell: No report.
- Honor Council – Hannah Lexer: H. Lexer shared that they are currently looking for engaged students to serve as panel members for next year. Also, recently, the director presented the new AI policy to Undergraduate and Graduate Councils.
- Library Committee – Sarah Over: No report.
- University Curriculum Committee for General Education – Khanh Ngoc Tran: No report.

5. Constituent Reports

- Constituent Reports – Administrative & Professional Faculty Senate – N. Akers: No report.
- Constituent Reports – Staff Senate – M. Acosta: No report.
- Constituent Reports – Faculty Senate – S. Clements: Sanctions were discussed.
- Constituent Reports – Undergraduate Student Senate – L. Ricci; C. Middleton: At the upcoming BOV meetings, a new budget for meal plans is being considered that will offer more swipes for students. This will address food insecurity for both undergraduate and graduate students.
- Constituent Reports: Graduate and Professional Student Senate – S. Dip: No report.

6. Other Business – Nominations for 2026-2027 Academic Year Appointment Vacancies

J. Tokuhisa notified the commission that the following appointments will be opening for the 2026-2027 academic year. Votes for these positions will take place over the next two meetings.

- Chair of Academic Support Committee – (1 Year Appointment – Appointee should be selected from College Faculty Representatives) Current Chair: Sherwood Clements
- Chair of Academic Policies Committee (Ad-Hoc) – (1 Year Appointment)
Current Chair: Michel Pleimling
- Representative for Library Committee – (3 Year Appointment)
Current Representative: Sara Over
- Representative for University Athletics Committee – (1 Year Appointment)
Current Representative: Dan Thorp

- Representative for University Commencement Committee – (1 Year Appointment) Current Representative: Monica Kimbrell
- Representative for University Curriculum Committee for General Education – (1 Year Appointment – Appointee should be selected from College Faculty Representatives) Current Representative: Khanh Ngoc Tran (If not selected from Faculty Representatives, ineligible to vote.)

J. Tokuhisa presented the idea of holding one of the next two CUSP meetings in person. Several commission members expressed support for this. J. Tokuhisa proposed the April 13th meeting be held in a hybrid, in person format and based on reception, the 27th session may also be held in a hybrid, in person format.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:01.