

MINUTES

Commission on Student Affairs

February 20, 2020

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Brush Mountain - All, Squires Student Center

Present: Collin Shelton, Victoria Dashevsky, Terri Pecora, Ginai Seabron, Kabyl Oxikbayev, Susan Anderson, Hani Awni, Maruf Hoque, Phoebe Gregg, Tara Frank, Adil Sageer, Blake Barnhill, Zilmara Montecinos, Lauren Surface, Heather Wagoner, Frank Shushok, Kimberly Smith, Ali Cross,

Absent: Lily Xie, Kayla Winbush, Madelynn Todd, Grant Bommer, Gregory Klatt, Ryan Foley, Alexis Hrubby, Colie Touzel, Spencer Hamilton, Irene Baron, Abdul-Rahman Sanuri, Rhoda Azeze, Sammy Bales, Jonathon Poff, Chapman Pendery

Guest: Emma Stump

Collin Shelton called the meeting to order at 3:32pm. A quorum was present.

1. Introductions (Commissioners)

2. Approval of Agenda (Collin Shelton)

Victoria announces an addition to the original agenda: that in regards to “New Business”, there will be a “Take Back the Night” presentation. A motion was made, and seconded, to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

Discussion was had regarding the prior meeting minutes, which were never sent out. Victoria pushed out the minutes electronically during the meeting and asked that they be voted on electronically. If you have issues with them, email Collin and Victoria, if you don't have any concerns/issues, don't email.

In the future, minutes will be adopted into the meeting. At the next meeting, we will be voting on the adoption of two sets of minutes.

3. University Council and Commission Updates

a. University Council (Victoria Dashevsky & Blake Barnhill)

- A bill to give AP Faculty/Staff 16 hours of Community Service leave per year was not approved at a vote of 21/25.
- AP Faculty Senate Resolution was heard and approved. Therefore, an AP Faculty Senate will be formed.
- New CS majors; the Data Centric Computing and Secure Computing degrees were approved.
- There was a presentation on open education by Anita Walz.

b. Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Commissioner)

- The next meeting is Tuesday, Feb 25th from 1:30 to 3pm. Collin announced Victoria will be representing CSA at the next CEOD meeting.

- c. Academic Support Committee (Commissioner)
 - Nothing new to report.

4. Old Business

- a. IFC Constitution (Spencer Hamilton & Commissioners)
 - A motion was made to approve the IFC Constitution, and seconded. The motion carried.
- b. Panhellenic Council Bylaws (Sammy Bales & Commissioners)
 - A motion was made to table discussion until someone from PHC comes to CSA to discuss the bylaws, and seconded. The motion carried.
- c. Hokie Pride Constitution (Phoebe Gregg & Commissioners)
 - Motion was made to approve the revised HokiePride Constitution, and seconded. The motion carried.

5. New Business

- a. Take Back the Night (Emma Stump, Susan Anderson)
 - Emma Stump gave a presentation regarding the TBTN Rally and March. The presentation encapsulated the purpose, the history, and important details of the program.
 - TBTN will take place at 7pm on the Henderson Lawn on Thursday, March 26, 2020, with pre-rally music set to begin at 6:30pm.
 - In case of rain, TBTN will be held in the GLC Auditorium.
 - Susan Anderson shared her insight regarding the importance of TBTN. This included, but not limited to: the impact of little steps over time; helping to spread the word about the rally; giveaways; the need for sponsors.
 - Motion was made for CSA to be a sponsor for TBTN, and seconded. Motion carried.

6. Announcements & Updates

- a. Student Affairs (Dr. Heather Wagoner)
 - Welcome week leader applications are due March 6th. They are currently looking for 100 to 120 leaders to facilitate Welcome Week. Only 6 applications have been received thus far, so encourage others to apply! This is a great way to celebrate UT Prosim, to give back, to serve our new students coming in and help them transition. You will start to see this being pushed out through Social Media beginning Monday, February 24th.
 - Frank shared that experiential learning is currently a big initiative, as we know hands on learning, is what matters the most for a lot of students. VT is actively thinking about how to increase the percentage of students who have a meaningful experiential learning opportunity. Frank has a colleague who is leading this effort, and would love to talk with students regarding their ideas of how best to implement experiential learning.

Frank is going to host a dinner, (likely at his house), for students to come together and discuss the bridge between co-curricular life, the curriculum, and different disciplines. If this sounds like something that interests you, and you want to participate in, please email Frank (fshushok@vt.edu).

b. Student Government Association (Adil Sageer)

- Adil shared that four finalists have been chosen to come to campus for the Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA) position. Official info, candidate schedules, presentations, and ways for you to get involved will be made public soon. Please participate, get involved, and provide feedback.

Both Adil and Hani are on the VPSA selection committee, so feel free to share any feedback with either of them. A Qualtrics survey will be sent out to the campus community for each of the candidates. Lastly, if you'd like to talk more about what values you want to see in a VPSA please email Adil to schedule a meeting.

- Blake shared that elections for undergraduates start next week. If you want to help advertise it, please feel free.
- Blake also shared that he went to the Town Gown meeting last Thursday where one of the main things discussed was mental health on campuses. He will be meeting with Registrar soon regarding the possibility of a longer fall break (i.e.: 4 to 5-day weekend).

Blake talked in depth regarding the recommendation and need for a longer fall break for the well-being and improvement of health for our student body. This included history from Cook Counseling; the many student benefits; justification for; comparison of current fall/spring semesters and time off; and lastly the implications and logistics to make this happen.

Byron Hughes is going to facilitate the requested meeting with the Registrar. Being the 2021/2022 and the 2022/2023 Academic Calendars are already posted on line, it is unknown how flexible, or permanent set they are. Therefore, this may not be a possibility until the 2023/2024 Academic Year.

Heather shared her full support in this endeavor, but asked that we be kept up to date, as decisions are made to move forward.

- Adil shared that next Tuesday/Wednesday himself, and about 20 other SGA/GSA, and non-SGA students travel to Richmond for HokieDay. If interested for next year be sure to look into this great opportunity to network and advocate.

c. Graduate Student Assembly (Hani Awani)

- Started process for their own elections. They are doing an internal redesign that entails looking at what areas GSA is currently active in, and particularly what areas the GSA structure makes us very ill-suited to actually do.

Such as, how can we collaborate with different student faces offices, in order to help them see the needs for graduate students and potentially create programs that are more tailored to graduate student needs. Rather than exclusively working at the shared governance resolution level of the discussion. This is a big endeavor we currently have going on inside our movement. Likely there will be new chaired positions within GSA oriented toward expanding that out.

- Something forthcoming at a future CSA meeting is possibly GSA Constitution Amendment/Bylaws Amendment.

d. Board of Visitors Representatives (Madelynn Todd & Ginai Seabron)

- Ginai shared that applications just closed last Friday, so that process is just starting.

e. Other, etc. (Commissioners)

Susan Anderson shared a concern regarding the unnecessary time spent trying to find out the name of who made a deposit for the United Feminist Movement that showed up on their bank statement. As she wishes to reach out to the donor to thank them. Heather shared the first thing she thought of was a gift made through Advancement, and agreed with Susan, that it shouldn't be that hard to find out. She agreed it is a conversation worth having and offered to bring up the topic in her own circles.

Blake made an announcement that next Wednesday the 26th is the Maroon Out game against UVA. SGA will be tabling Monday through Wednesday of next week from 10am to 4pm so be sure to come by their booth with your receipt to be entered into a raffle for a signed basketball from last years' team.

Jassi Chahal shared a concern that has been going on or two semesters now. UCFS is having a lot of trouble accessing their money and the FSL office has been unable to help. This has prevented them to collect dues, as they have received conflicting information regarding who checks should be made payable to, and they don't know who they send checks to, etc. Both Frank and Heather offered to help in clearing up all the confusion.

Victoria shared that everyone in the room should have received an email regarding specifics of the four upcoming VPSA candidate interviews/receptions to be held on Monday, February 24th, Thursday, February 27th, Monday, March 2nd and Thursday, March 5th. Since the one on Thursday the 5th conflicts with the next scheduled CSA meeting, she wanted to feel the room to see how everyone felt about not having the CSA meeting so that everyone could attend the candidate presentation.

Discussion was had regarding moving the meeting, as well as canceling the meeting. Since the following week is Spring Break, a motion was made, and seconded, to cancel the CSA meeting for Thursday, March 5th. The motion carried. In place of the CSA meeting, Heather highly encouraged everyone to use this time to attend the VPSA presentation.

Victoria referenced the section of the email toward the end where it states that an interview group leader be chosen that will help ask questions. Victoria and Maruf would like to represent CSA/GSA as your two group leaders. In addition, Victoria offered to compile all of the questions everyone has into a google doc to be shared with everyone. She also offered to meet with people to discuss these questions more in depth, prior to actually asking them. Victoria also stated the email asks that the number of questions be narrowed down to between four and six.

It was shared that if you can't make it to see all of the candidate presentations, that each one will be recorded, and will be made available by Zoom after the fact. Watch the presentations so that you can accurately share feedback. Be sure to check the Provost website for updates. <https://faculty.vt.edu/leadership-development/senior-search-information.html>

Kabyl with CISO shared that last semester and this semester they have been working with multiple University Chartered Student Organizations (USCO's) and with the Cultural and Community Centers (CCC's). The hope is to recreate a large, multi UCSO collaboration for the weeks of April 13th and April 20th leading up to the International Street Fair which is scheduled for April 26th. This collaboration is with 5 UCSO's (AASU, BOC,

GSA, HokiePride, LASO), and 1 RSO (Native at VT). This is still in the planning stages, and they have six different events in mind. If you have something you want to bring into the collaborations (i.e.: you want to help in some way; or you'd like to have a table) please let Kabyl know after the meeting or email him. Once everything is set, marketing materials are made, please help in sharing it.

Victoria shared with the committee, that during the CSA off weeks that she, Collin, and Heather meet to talk about what is going on. They feel it is a good idea for this year (and to set presidents for the coming years) to have a schedule for the entire semester set at the beginning of the semester. During the retreat there were a lot of issues raised, as well as, a lot of core groups that these issues relate to.

- SSD
- University Planning
- Parking at VT
- Shared Governance
- Admissions
- Technology

The thought is to plan every meeting from this point forward, for the rest of the semester to have a short 20-minute presentation, followed by a 20-min Q&A at the beginning. This would take place Old Business, and then we would move onto CSA Business, which would include constitutions, Hokie Handbook, etc. They will begin reaching out individuals and will push out a calendar of presentations once they are set.

In addition, a few other things coming to CSA for future meetings include: Student Budget Board policy changes, Hokie Handbook, and the Tobacco Free Policy. Heather shared that colleagues in HokieWellness and Student Contact have been contacted to see if they want to present in the future as well.

Collin shared a few updates regarding RHF and Residential Life. RHF is hosting their annual Executive Board elections. The election period forms close on February 27th. Open to anyone who lives in a residence hall owned and operated by Housing and Residence Life until a constitutional update is made.

Last general assembly meeting, voted to approve and instate two new committees to evaluate Dining Services and Waste Management, as well as, Infrastructure and General Well-Being. If interested in learning more, please email Collin.

Collin shared that he recently had a meeting with Sean Grube, the new Director of Housing and Residence Life. Both Collin and Frank shared future projections regarding the new housing building, as well as, Slusher coming down. Frank reiterated the benefit and need, of getting something onto the agenda related to all of the ongoing capital projects throughout campus.

UPS will soon not be able to support delivery of packages to student rooms. During the first eight days of the spring semester alone, a total of 52,000 packages delivered to resident halls alone. Over the summer we will have three new package pick-up locations, which includes 1300 package lockers, in three different regions on campus.

New Residence Hall, CID is currently on schedule, projected to open Fall of 2021 with 600 beds.

Hani asked how many members currently sit on Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies Committee. Blake shared that SGA has seats. Victoria will connect Hani with those individuals in SGA, should she find those seats are currently filled.

Collin shared there is a new committee being formed related to personal transportation – Committee for Personal Transportation. It looks at policies pertaining to electronic transportation (i.e.: not just scooters, but any form of transportation with wheels run by an electric motor). Phoebe asked if this included bikes that have been altered with the use of a conversion kit, by adding a gasoline powered motor.

Heather shared this could be related to Policy 5005 Bicycle and Personal Transportation Devices. This policy establishes responsibilities and procedures to ensure pedestrian safety, proper vehicular operation, and enforcement of bicycles, unicycles, skateboards, E-scooters, in-line skates, roller skates, mopeds, motor scooters and electronic personal assistance mobility devices (EPAMDs) on campus, as well as parking regulations. More information regarding this policy can be found here: <https://policies.vt.edu/assets/5005.pdf>

Blake brought up that last year CSA voted that to talk about governance structures moving forward and have not done so thus far. Victoria shared in a meeting between she, Collin, and Heather they discussed that since the university committee on governance is currently in discussion about making these changes it would not be extremely beneficial for CSA to talk about making changes – and the two, be completely separate conversations, that wouldn't mesh together. Having Adil and Hani come in here and talk about what is going on.

Blake said, that as a group, it was discussed we would talk about what we, as students, would like to see. Then send Adil and Hani forward with the information that this is what students currently want from this structure. We were told we should be proactive in telling what we want to see if the current structure doesn't work for us.

Blake shared the ideal goal, is at the end of the spring semester, the commission is going to put forth a recommendation to President Sands. Once the recommendation is made the implementation of that plan is going to take time to execute and change. Blake went onto say that the plans for hypothetical structure of what students want, should have taken place at the beginning of the semester, and therefore proposes this discussion take place now.

A long discussion ensued about what Student Governance restructuring should look like if building from scratch. Victoria compiled the list of recommendations entitled "Governance Restructuring" in a google doc that can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1L9DrwLxtmb_ToWTgGYijA74OBi3U7yG18v7Erye4gM/edit

Once the list was completed, Frank reiterated his take away of the governance restructuring priorities...a strong, influential student voice that is collected, collated, and coherent – thus being brought together in a really strong way. He then proposed an idea, to which he referenced, is not a simple solution, as this is a complex problem that is being discussed.

In his current role, he feels he can appoint a year-long commission study – a group of people who are really committed to study what that would look like. Benchmarking other institutions in which you would most want to be like. And work that problem so that you have a coherent proposal of what a student governance system would look like at Virginia Tech in the future. This would require involvement of a committed group of people, broad student participation, and also faculty/staff who understand governance. The end result being...if you could have the strongest student voice in 5 years – what would that look like.

Blake shared that he agreed with the formation of some commission/committee to look at this. But went onto say there are actually two sides. (1) Being the side that the institution sees students as, and (2) there is how we see our own governance looking. It is important in the short term, to create some sort of vision of what the university will see students united as. Be it an undergraduate/graduate senate or combined senate. Something in the short-term, so that it can be discussed and put into place appropriately at the university level. And there is the internal piece of how do we make that work, which is an even more important aspect of benchmarking and looking at other institutions as the actual implementation of that.

Blake stated it sounded as if everyone is on board with the idea of a large organization that tries to consolidate everything that students want under two umbrellas (grad/undergrad). And over the next year, we can look at how to structure everything that falls underneath, as well as the support systems. The committee agreed.

Blake asked that moving forward, Adil and Hani will take these ideas to the Commission on Governance meetings and advocate this is what students want; and then for the next year we will work amongst ourselves, and as a student governance commission, to figure out how it looks on our end.

Lastly Collin shared that as long as all UCSO's have a stake in this process, as that is not what it currently feels like now, then that would be great. The more student involvement, the more diverse opinions is key.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 5:05pm.

Important reminders:

- CSA meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 5 is canceled
- Next CSA meeting is Thursday, March 19th – 3:30pm to 5:00pm