

COMMISSION ON STUDENT AFFAIRS
September 30, 2010

Present: Sandy Bass, Sara Brickman, Tom Brown, Shyrah Thomas for Karl Brunner, Michael Cardman, Parisa Ahmadi for Lubna Chowdhury, Rick Ferraro, Deepu George, Caroline Gimenez, Meg Gough, Bo Hart, Lauren Heming-designee for Stacey Pannell, Frank Hernandez, Eric Hodges, Monica Hunter, Rawlin Jefferson-designee for Pamella Palmer, Kim Carlson for Jessi Kane, Brad Klein, Nathan Lavinka, Karen Strickler for Mary Ann Lewis, Sharbari Dgy for Anna LoMascolo, Shane McCarty, Michelle McLeese, Johnathan Moore, Nate Navasca-designee for Richmond Hwang, Charles Petty, David Ramras, Joseph Seaton, Robert Sebek, Frank Shushok, Guy Sims, Ed Spencer, Joe Tran-designee for Dani Bernabe, and Leighton Vila

Absent: Dustin Dorph-designee for Tyler Campbell, Monika Gibson, Greer Kelly, Matt Parker

Guests: Jamie Biggs, Steve Burrell, Amy Greenhouse, Frances Keene, Erica Swanson, Emily Wilkinson, Peter Velz

I. Call to Order

Mr. Nathan Lavinka, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Motion was made to adopt agenda. The motion was seconded and the agenda was approved.

III. Welcome and Chair Updates

Mr. Lavinka welcomed the group to the meeting and gave the following updates:

- He has set up a CSA Blog and will be sending out a survey to Commission members for feedback on the blog over the weekend. The blog will be used as a way to disseminate information to the student body.
- He has reviewed the topic survey and will be sending out the list of topics that were suggested. There were many suggestions and some, but not all, of these topics will be covered during the course of the year.

IV. Guest Speakers/Presenters

- A. Ms. Erica Swanson, Chi Delta Alpha, RSO Funding for Service Organizations
Community Service Sorority

Ms. Swanson, introduced Emily Wilkinson, Amy Greenhouse, and Jamie Biggs, Chi Delta Alpha members, who presented their thoughts and argument in regards to community service projects not funded by Student Budget Board. They stated that we are here to encourage students to embrace “Ut Prosim” and that community projects affect students and faculty directly and indirectly. They were not asking for money now and they are not only representing their organization, but the community as a whole. They gave examples of some costs that are incurred such as gas to out-of-town sites and purchase of board games for children. Mr. Steve Burrell, Assistant Director of Student Activities, stated that traditionally, some of the reasons community service projects are not funded is that the primary audience is non-students and the service is going off-campus. Ms. Monica Hunter, Interim Director of Student Activities, noted that the Big Event and Relay for Life would be the two projects that would be looked at and only programmable items were funded. Dr. Spencer asked that the group keep in mind that funding additional items would result in less funding for other programs which are currently funded. Ms. Swanson stated that they are not asking for complete funding for community service, but say travel to community service projects, etc., to make it reasonable. The desire is to change the historical policy. Following discussion, it was noted that if the culture is changing and heading in the direction of funding community service projects, maybe this is not such a bad idea and should be looked at. Mr. Lavinka noted that at the last meeting a subcommittee was formed to look at the funding policies to see how they might be revamped and this is something that particular committee will want to review.

B. Ms. Frances Keene, Director of Student Conduct, Student Conduct Policies
Ms. Keene talked about the Student Conduct Office and that they are doing some shifting in the language and the way they talk about student conduct. She opened with asking the question “what is student conduct about.?” The responses were:

- Community commitment
- Without certain restrictions and/or framework for which we are held accountable, we all might be in jeopardy not to succeed.
- Student Conduct is in charge of “busting people” in the gray area that honor court does not have clear jurisdiction
- To hold everyone to a similar standard
- There to help people, help them grow, and take a mistake that they have made to make them a better person.
- Opportunity for people to learn
- Provide structure and framework of consequences.

Ms. Keene shared the Student Conduct mission and vision statements, stating that the intent of Student Conduct is to promote learning. She noted that the vast majority are due to alcohol violations.

Talked about the “three strikes and you’re out” concept

- Three strikes do not always means you are out
- A student does not have to have three strikes to be suspended
- Strikes are not a policy, but a progressive way to set a sanction
- Strikes are not tracked
- What is a strike: it is more like this – Orange Obligation and Maroon Mindset. Want students to commit to excellence , integrity, and to embody Hokies Respect, Principles of Community, and Ut Prosim. Ultimately we are trying to promote a civil and healthy community.
- Focus on accountability and behavior

The Student Conduct Office wants to hear what the students think from their perspective. They want to focus on success instead of telling students what they can and cannot do.

What is the Student Conduct Office doing to prevent a student from ever entering the judicial system?

- Starts at orientation
- Trainings/Programs
- Marketing campaigns
- Partner w/Alcohol Prevention Center, Women’s Center
- All new students take an on-line course

Ms. Keene reiterated that they are not out here to “get you,” they are here to help students learn from their mistakes. They hope to take a student and make their experience into something positive.

Ms. Keene is working with Tyler Campbell to do some focus groups with students to hear what students have to say and they are also working on figuring out whether or not we need to have a “Good Samaritan” statement. Any other ideas are welcome. Ms. Keene stated that she would be happy to come to any organization meeting to talk about student conduct if they are interested.

V. Old Business

A. Danielle Bernabe, United Council of Fraternities and Sororities, Resolution for Constitution Revisions/Updates, 2nd Reading

In Ms. Bernabe’s absence, Mr. Jo Tran gave the second reading for constitution revisions and updates. Following a brief discussion a motion was made to approve the resolution and was seconded. The motion was carried and the resolution approved. The organization will now be known as the Multicultural Greek Council.

VI. New Business

A. Collegiate Times Readership Survey

Mr. Lavinka introduced Mr. Peter Velz, Editor of the Collegiate Times, stating that Mr. Velz had met with Mr. Lavinka, Dr. Spencer, Michelle McLeese, and Bo Hart and developed an idea for a Collegiate Times Readership Survey. They want to get a pulse on ways the CT can be improved, things that are going well, etc. It was suggested that the best way to go about this might be to have a subcommittee formed that would work along side of the CT so that this survey would be a benefit to both groups.

In response to some issues between CSA and the CT from last year regarding the on-line commenting system, it was noted that for all intents and purposes, the CT is an important resource and it is important that we work together to make the CT a better paper so as not to run the risk of the paper dying out or some other entity coming along and starting another paper. Dr. Spencer commented that because there is much speculation, unknowns, accusations, etc., it is a much broader issue than focusing on the on-line comments—it is the newspaper serving the campus and how we can make it serve the campus better.

Mr. Lavinka asked for a poll to see whether or not the commission should formulate a subcommittee to do a survey. Following a vote, it was decided that a subcommittee will be formed. A motion was made that Ms. Michelle McLeese serve as chair of the subcommittee and the motion carried. Ms. Michelle will send out an e-mail to garner committee members (about six people).

VII. Announcements

- GSA Fees forum tonight, September 30, in the GLC.
- Homecoming 2010, October 8 - 17 – The theme is Hokie Spirit- Learn it, Love it, Live it. Ms. Hunter handed out a flier with all of the events for that week listed.
- Panhellenic Council is sponsoring an event on October 19, 7pm in the GLC. The speakers will be two women who were involved in a personal experience with sexual assault. This event is open to the community.
- Class of 2012 Ring Premiere will be held on Tuesday, October 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the Burruss Hall Auditorium
- An IFC group will be hosting an event on Oct. 17, at 2pm, to break the world record for largest pillow fight on the Drillfield to raise money for a 10-month old baby in Blacksburg who has cancer.
- The Latino Festival will be held on October 17, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Delta Sigma Phi will be hosting a Blood Drive, October 5-6 on the Drillfield
- The Zenobia Lawrence Hikes Step Show will be held on October 15, 7:00 p.m., in the Squires Commonwealth Ballroom

VIII. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.