Commission on Student Affairs
February 15, 2007
3:30-5:30 p.m.
Brush Mt. B
Squires Student Center

Minutes

Present: Ashley Anderson, Sumeet Bagai, Scott Cheatham, Kristin Clarke, Ron Daniel, Michael Dunleavy, Tim Filbert, Monika Gibson, Zenobia Hikes, Monica Hunter, Frances Keene, Adeel Khan, Tanya LeRoith, Justin Reyes for Pris Martinez, Ennis McCrery, Margaret McQuain, Amanda Olejarski, Ann O’Neal, Manisha Patel, Marshaun Glover for Jory Ruscio, Greg Sagstetter, Karen Sanders, Sarah Saxton, Robert Sebek, Guy Sims, Ryan Smith, Ed Spencer, Mike Stoupa, James Tyger, LaChelle Waller, Brian Whitaker

Absent: Saurabh Attarde, Virgilio Centeno, Rob Dalton, Rick Ferraro, Gary Kinder, Shane Moore, Jacqueline Nicholson, Aaren Salido, John Gray Williams

Guest Speakers: Amanda Beringer, Neal Kegley

I. Call to Order

Mr. Sumeet Bagai, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Bagai pointed out that item a) under Old Business, Undergraduate Honor System Legislation Report, should have been listed under the Chair Report. He then called for adoption of the agenda. There was a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded and passed.

III. Chair Report

Mr. Bagai discussed legislation concerning the Undergraduate Honor System that CSA passed at the February 1 meeting. The legislation was forwarded to Dr. Mark McNamee and Ms. Kay Heidbreder. Dr. McNamee responded via letter on February 5, and his letter was forwarded to CSA on the listserv. Dr. McNamee’s letter indicated that they already had plans to review the Undergraduate Honor System, and he will meet with Mr. Bagai and the current members of the Honor Court and Review Board to discuss the remaining issues. Mr. Bagai and Mr. Cheatham will remain in contact with the Provost Office to ensure that representatives from CSA will be involved in the review committee process and that the review will be conducted by an independent review committee.
Mr. Bagai pointed out that under the constitution and bylaws of University Council, the Honor System Review Board reports to the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies (CUSP), and the CUSP charge states that policies and procedures related to the Undergraduate Honor System must be decided by that commission. CSA had a lengthy discussion on this topic at the February 1 meeting, but since the Undergraduate Honor System falls under a different commission it would not be CSA’s role to make decisions in this matter nor to provide conflict resolution between the disputing parties. However, since the presentation on Undergraduate Honor System by Ms. Amanda Beringer and Mr. Neal Kegley was requested by the commission at the February 1 meeting, the agenda item was included as an informational piece. Once the question and answer period for this agenda item has been completed, the discussion on the topic of Undergraduate Honor System will be closed and future discussion referred to CUSP. Ms. Ennis McCrery, Dr. Karen Sanders, and Mr. Greg Sagstetter asked that their objections to closing this discussion be recorded.

IV. Old Business

a. Informational Presentation on Undergraduate Honor System—Ms. Amanda Beringer, Chief Justice of the Undergraduate Honor System, discussed how the system is doing in response to recent questions and concerns. Ms. Beringer indicated that they are still processing cases and students’ cases are not being held up. She asked Mr. Neal Kegley, Operations Manager of the Undergraduate Honor System, to speak about the number of degrees that were held up. Mr. Kegley reported that at the beginning of fall semester there were 71 cases outstanding. Of those 71 cases, there were was one case from 2005 and 26 cases from 2006 that were still unsolved. Sixteen of these 27 cases were assigned to associate justices who resigned. These cases are being reallocated and are in the top tier of cases to be processed and completed. Out of the 3,560 graduation applications for spring 2006, there were nine holds based on Honor System requests for retention of degree—all nine were based on the incompletion of service hours. They currently have 164 cases, which includes 132 cases in process from fall semester (70 new cases for fall and 62 cases that were unassigned from the previous semester). The 62 cases have now been assigned and allocated. They have five new cases for spring 2007. Mr. Kegley feels the backlog of cases for fall and spring falls within the normative standard of cases they have. They expect a total of 250-300 cases this year. Mr. Kegley turned the floor back over to Ms. Beringer, who discussed why their cases take longer to process than those in the Judicial System. In the Honor System, the associate justices are in charge of gathering as much evidence as possible so the accused can have a fair hearing. Often there are delays because the accused don’t understand the process and delay in contacting the Honor System. These delays lead to a backlog in the caseload, but they are working hard to
process as many cases as possible this spring. Cases for seniors are receiving priority so they can graduate on time.

The floor was opened for questions and a lengthy discussion followed. Topics of discussion included how long it takes to review cases; the number of associate justices, how many cases they typically handle, and the length of time they serve; training for faculty about the Honor System; education programs about the Honor System for international students; and questions about the Honor System constitution in regard to the election of the new chief justice and associate justices. There is still much concern about resolving this issue, and Mr. Bagai was asked how this topic can be added to the agenda for the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies so that body can begin their discussion of the issue. Mr. Bagai responded that the CUSP chair is Dr. Tom Walker, and agenda requests may be sent to him via e-mail at twalker@vt.edu. Dr. Daniel indicated that CUSP has this topic on their agenda for the February 26 meeting. CUSP meets from 3:00-5:00 p.m. on alternating Mondays from University Council in 230 Student Services Building. Mr. Bagai will attend the February 26 meeting to represent CSA in the Honor System discussion. He stressed that the meeting is open for anyone who wants to attend.

b. **Student Legal Services Funding Approval** — The budget for Student Legal Services was presented for second reading. The total budget for 2007-08 is $71,758. There was a motion to approve the budget. The motion was seconded and passed.

V. **New Business**

a. **CSA Operating Procedures Committee** — Mr. Bagai indicated that he and Mr. Cheatham met with Drs. Hikes and Spencer about the need for operating procedures for the commission so that new members could be prepared to address the set responsibilities CSA needs to cover each year. These set responsibilities include approval of the Student Budget Board funding allocations, selection of the finalists for Undergraduate Representative to the BOV, and appointing representatives to other university commissions and committees. They would like to form a committee to write an operating manual for CSA. Mr. Adeel Khan and Ms. Ashley Anderson volunteered to serve on the committee with Mr. Bagai and Mr. Cheatham.

VI. **Committee Meetings**

a. **Progress Document** — Mr. Cheatham distributed copies of a committee update sheet and asked each committee to write down their ideas, goals, and plans of action for this semester. The completed forms should be returned to Mr. Cheatham, who will compile the results and send them
out to the CSA listserv. The committees met for 10 minutes then the full commission meeting resumed.

VII. Open Forum

VIII. Announcements

Mr. Mike Stoupa made the following announcements for VTU: Mike Henry, writer, producer, and voice of five characters for the “The Family Guy” will speak at 7:30 p.m., February 16, Graduate Life Center Auditorium. The movie “Casino Royale” will show at 8:00 p.m., February 16, Colonial Hall, Squires. Winterfest, an indoor carnival, will be held from 12:00-5:00 p.m., February 24, Squires Student Center.

Ms. Monica Hunter announced that applications for the Homecoming Board are due on February 16. Information sessions for Homecoming Court are continuing through February 19. The Homecoming Court application deadline is March 2.

Ms. Ashley Anderson announced that BSA is sponsoring the movie “Catch a Fire” at 7:00 p.m., February 20, Colonial Hall, Squires.

Ms. Margaret McQuain announced that Campus Scouts has Girl Scout cookies for sale in the lobby of Squires.

Ms. LaChelle Waller announced that BSGA is holding the Ebony Affair Gala at 7:00 p.m., February 16, in Graduate Life Center Multipurpose Room.

Mr. Bagai announced that he is selling raffle tickets to raise money for Service for Sight. He also announced that Delta Gamma’s Anchor Splash will be held at 6:00 p.m., February 16, Burruss Auditorium.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sanzenbach
Recording Secretary