Commission on Student Affairs
March 2, 2006
3:30-5:30 p.m.
Brush Mt. B
Squires Student Center

Minutes


Absent with Notice: Linsey Barker, Ron Daniel, Ginney Fowler, Monika Gibson, Brian Warren

Absent without Notice: Michael Dunleavy, Brandon Eason, Ron Forbes, Michael Goode, Gary Kinder, Jerrine Morris, Devin Weller, Brian Whitaker

Guests: Chelsea Benincasa, Katelyn Keefe, Frances Keene

I. Call to Order

Ms. Jory Ruscio, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Ruscio called for adoption of the agenda. Ms. Jennifer Jessie made a motion to add “Take Back the Night” presentation after Chair Report. Motion was seconded and approved. There was a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded and approved.

III. Chair Report

Ms. Ruscio discussed the absentee rate at the CSA meetings. She asked that members attend and put the proper work into the subcommittees in order to be as effective as possible.

IV. Take Back the Night—Chelsea Benincasa

Ms. Chelsea Benincasa, from Womanspace, distributed information on Take Back the Night. The rally starts at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 30, in front of War Memorial Chapel. This is the 17th annual rally held at Virginia Tech. She discussed the program for the evening and asked all organizations to be a sponsor. Sponsorship requires no monetary commitment, just support for the program and willingness to be listed on the program. She distributed a sign-up sheet, and also encouraged groups to contact her by e-mail at cbeninca@vt.edu.
IV. Old Business

- **Course Withdrawal Survey** – Mr. Sumeet Bagai distributed copies of the Course Withdraw Survey, which he developed as a result of discussions about the policy at the February 2 CSA meeting. He outlined the survey and asked for feedback. The commission made comments and suggestions, which Mr. Bagai will incorporate into the survey. He will e-mail the updated survey to CSA following spring break, and ask that student representatives forward the survey to their organizations. Survey results will be presented to CSA at the March 23 meeting.

- **Faculty Advisors Subcommittee Report** – The subcommittee distributed and discussed a report on the topic of Faculty Advisors for Student Organizations. The subcommittee has found that there are 613 registered student organizations, of which 491 have advisors. They are looking into ways to develop an advisor pool. They would like to develop a program that would pair interested advisors with student organizations. Once the Branch Out website has been completed, they will consider expanding the website to include such a pairing. They are also looking into ways to provide more training for faculty who are willing to be advisors. The subcommittee plans to continue their work on these and other advisor related issues.

- **Recreation Subcommittee Update** – Mr. James Freeman presented the subcommittee’s report on behalf of Ms. Laura Morgan. He distributed a list of issues to bring up with the Athletic Ticketing office. The issues related to: improvements in the ticket lotteries for football and basketball games; the number of student tickets allotted for basketball games; the feasibility of having tickets scanned or student IDs swiped at the entrance gates; how to stop the resale of student tickets personally or though auction sites. Mr. Freeman asked the commission to review the list and give him feedback before the list is presented to the Athletic Ticket Office.

- Mr. Scott Cheatham made a motion that New Business be moved forward on the agenda so the invited speakers could give their presentations. The remaining subcommittee reports would be presented if time permitted; if not they would be tabled until a future meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

V. New Business

- **University Policies for Student Life, 1st Reading** – Ms. Frances Keene presented CSA Resolution 2005-2006A: Resolution for Changes to University Policies for Student Life for first reading and outlined the changes. Part I of the resolution pertains to Sharing Information with the Undergraduate and Graduate Honor Systems. Mr. Greg Sagstetter indicated that the Undergraduate Honor System is aware of this proposed change and is in full support of the change. Part II of the resolution pertains to Withholding Academic Degrees for Serious Misconduct. Ms. Keene pointed out that the majority of our peer institutions have the authority to withhold degrees for
serious disciplinary matters. Ms. Keene asked that comments and suggestions be sent to her at fbabb@vt.edu. Second reading will take place at the March 23 meeting.

- **Green Fee** – On behalf of the Advisory Council for Environmental Sustainability, Ms. Katelyn Keefe gave a presentation on the proposed Green Fee. The purpose of the Green Fee is environmental sustainability, and the increase in student fees would be approximately $6 per semester. It would cover energy efficiency and recycling projects on campus. The complete PowerPoint presentation is available at www.aces.org.vt.edu/green. Several of our peer institutions and other ACC schools have instituted a similar fee. Since fall 2005 around 4,000 Virginia Tech students have signed a petition of support for the fee. The SGA and GSA Houses have both passed resolutions in support of the fee. They are hoping CSA will also pass a resolution in support of the fee so it could be presented to the Board of Visitors for consideration. The floor was opened for discussion. Many commission members indicated they support energy efficiency and recycling projects on campus, but weren’t sure the cost of these projects should fall to the students. They felt projects of this nature should be covered by the university’s budget. There were also concerns about how the fee was set at $6, whether there would be a cap on the fee in future years, who would determine how the money would be spent, and who would take care of the projects if they are funded. In the interest of time, the commission decided to continue the discussion at a future meeting and would decide at that time whether to write a resolution of support. Ms. Keefe encouraged the commission to contact them with any questions at greenfee@vt.edu.

VI. Tabled

- Undergraduate Representative to the BOV Selection Committee Procedure
- CISO Constitution Changes - 1st Reading - Bhavik Shah
- Parking & Transportation Subcommittee Update
- Alcohol Awareness Subcommittee Update
- Campus Climate Subcommittee Update

VII. Announcements

Ms. Jennifer Jessie suggested that the Commission on Student Affairs be listed as a sponsor for Take Back the Night. Student organizations will discuss it with their groups and decide at the next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sanzenbach
Recording Secretary