
Absent with Notice: Karen Sanders, Brian Warren

Absent without Notice: Michelle Dillon, Ron Forbes, Caryl Gray, David Jones, Gary Kinder, Devin Weller

Guests: Chris Laffoon, Kate Payne, Kristina Perry, Steve Schneiter

I. Call to Order

Ms. Jory Zmuda Ruscio, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Ruscio called for adoption of the agenda. She announced that Mr. Tapasvi Bhargava, president of Council of International Student Organizations, had informed her that the CISO constitution changes were not ready, and that agenda item will be tabled until the next meeting. There was a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded and approved.

III. Chair Report

Ms. Ruscio announced that she still needed two volunteers to switch from the Campus Climate Committee to another committee. She will randomly select two people to switch if no one volunteers. She asked that anyone who hasn’t signed up for a committee to please contact her via e-mail to volunteer. Committees will be given the opportunity to meet as groups at future commission meetings. She asked that committees plan to give reports at the following CSA meetings: Campus Climate and Alcohol Related Issues--February 2; Faculty Advisors, Recreation, and Parking & Traffic--February 16.
IV. New Business

• Evaluation of SGA Election Procedures—Steve Schneiter and Kristina Perry

Mr. Steve Schneiter said he and Ms. Kristina Perry were attending at the commission’s request because CSA received a complaint last year of alleged unfairness in the SGA election process. CSA asked the SGA Judicial Branch to review its election rules and report back during fall semester. The complaint last year cited problems with: 1) the hearing process, specifically the training for people involved in that process; 2) the election procedures appearing to favor SGA insiders; 3) the use of Virginia Tech images for campaign materials; and 4) advertising the debate and other events. Mr. Schneiter distributed a copy of the SGA Judicial Branch 2006-2007 Elections Rules and asked Ms. Perry, Chief Justice of the Judicial Branch, to discuss how the rules have been updated to address these complaints and to ensure the election system is fair. Mr. Schneiter indicated they were attending only to make a report, and no vote on the rules was to be taken. They addressed the commission’s questions and concerns during the question and answer period. Mr. Schneiter indicated they are still open to suggestions, and invited the commission to contact them with any suggestions.

• BranchOut - Erik Kneubuehl, Kate Payne, Chris Laffoon

Ms. Kate Payne gave a presentation on the BranchOut program. The program is a computer based survey tool that matches students and organizations based on student interests. They are hoping to present this information at Orientation so freshmen can be thinking about joining organizations before they even arrive on campus. The program is free to student organizations and students. Mr. Chris Laffoon gave a computer demonstration of the process for creating a student organization’s entry into the BranchOut website. He also demonstrated the student survey that will help determine what organizations students would be interested in. They currently have around 150 student organizations registered. The BranchOut website is: www.branchoutvt.com. This program has been designed by students and they are hoping it might be marketed to other schools in the future. The presentation concluded with a question and answer period.

• CISO Constitution Change - 1st Reading - Tapasvi Bhargava

Tabled until December 1 meeting.

V. Old Business

• Undergraduate Representative to the BOV Selection Committee Procedure

As a follow-up to the November 3 meeting, Ms. Ruscio opened the floor for a discussion of the process for choosing the nominating committee for the BOV undergraduate representative. Mr. Scott Cheatham and Mr. James Tyger presented “Resolution Clarifying the Undergraduate Representative to the Board of Visitors Nominating Committee Selection Process” for first reading. The floor
was then opened for a question and answer period. During the discussion period, Ms. Jessie brought up a possible discrepancy in last year’s resolution about the nominating committee. She noted that a friendly amendment made during the second reading was not incorporated into the final resolution. The recording secretary was asked to check on this. At the conclusion of the discussion period, it was pointed out that the BOV approved the nominating committee for this year only, and plan to review the selection process in June. Therefore, passing the resolution would be premature until we know the nominating committee will continue in future years. There was a motion to table the resolution until the end of the semester. The motion was seconded and approved.

VI. Announcements

Ms. Ruscio announced that the next CSA meeting will be held on December 1. Agenda items are due by Monday, November 28.

Mr. Erik Kneubuehl thanked everyone for spreading the word about the Homecoming Board. They had the most diverse applicant pool they’ve ever had. Interviews will be held on Sunday, November 27, and the Board members will be announced the following week.

Dr. Zenobia Hikes asked that we not lose sight of two things that have happened in the last two weeks: 1) The apparent murder of a student. She asked that anyone with information for the investigation to please contact the police. 2) We have had a number of race motivated incidents on campus. This is unacceptable and as a campus community we should do all we can to discourage people from being intolerant of others.

Mr. Sumeet Bagai followed up Dr. Hikes’ comments by announcing a “Not at Virginia Tech Campaign” that will focus on these types of problems. The group will meet at noon on November 18 on the 3rd floor of Squires, and he encouraged everyone to attend. He also announced that administrators have challenged them to develop an effective manner of getting information to all students on campus. They are working on an electronic portal that all students will be able to access. They will have a general planning meeting on November 17 at 5:30 in 341/345 Squires. Mr. Bagai also thanked everyone for their support of Hokies United this fall. They have nearly crossed the $100,000 mark in their fundraising efforts.

Mr. Matt Streeter announced that LGBT A is having a bracelet campaign to promote tolerance and a safer environment for LGBT A students on campus. Bracelets may be purchased for $2.00 at the LGBT A office. Any group interested in selling the bracelets to their organization should e-mail him for more information.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.