Commission on Student Affairs  
October 19, 2006  
3:30-5:30 p.m.  
Brush Mt. B  
Squires Student Center  

Minutes  

Present: Sumeet Bagai, Steve Burrell, Virgilio Centeno, Scott Cheatham, Kevin Denny, Tim Filbert, Monika Gibson, Zenobia Hikes, Megan Horan, Frances Keene, Manisha Patel, Jory Ruscio, Greg Sagstetter, Marc Saint Raymond, Aaren Salido, Robert Sebek, Guy Sims, Ed Spencer, Ken Stanton, Devin Stone, Nicole Dade for Purnima Sudeswaran, James Tyger, LaChelle Waller, Brian Whitaker  

Absent with Notice: Rob Dalton, Ron Daniel, Tanya LeRoith, Ennis McCrery, Karen Sanders  

Absent without Notice: Jack Atkins, Michael Dunleavy, Elizabeth Ford, Adeel Khan, Gary Kinder, Navin Manjooran, Pris Martinez, Margaret McQuain, Shane Moore, Jerrine Morris  

I. Call to Order  

Mr. Sumeet Bagai, chair, called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.  

II. Adoption of Agenda  

Mr. Bagai called for adoption of the agenda. There was a motion to adopt the agenda as written. The motion was seconded and passed.  

III. Chair Report  

Mr. Bagai apologized that the agenda went out late due to technical problems.  

IV. Old Business  

a. Task Force Report—Race and the Institution—Dr. Zenobia Hikes reported that she serves as a member of the Task Force on Race and the Institution. The Provost appointed this task force in response to a protest that took place in the spring. The protest occurred because of a couple of diversity issues on campus: 1) an African American faculty member was not going to receive tenure and 2) there is not enough diversity in our faculty rank at the university. There was a conversation forum the same day as the protest and the Provost decided to appoint this task force. The task force was charged with developing initiatives and plans to address the issue of race and the institution. The task force was appointed in
July and the meetings and activities started in the fall when everyone returned to campus. The task force is charged with looking at where we are at Virginia Tech in regards to race and making recommendations in the area of faculty/staff affairs as well as student relations. They will be inviting speakers, gathering information from documents that have been produced in the past, and deciding how to move forward in a more effective way. As part of this process, there will be many conversations with the university community. The first was the Community Conversation with Students on September 28 in Haymarket Theatre. The purpose of the meeting was to get issues from the students. There will likely be a conversation on faculty affairs at some point this year. The group is divided into six subcommittees: 1) faculty and staff; 2) undergraduate students; 3) graduate students; 4) administrative infrastructure; 5) academic programs; 6) community/alumni engagement. Dr. Hikes sits on the undergraduate student subcommittee and they will look into how race issues impact undergraduate students. Dr. Hikes was asked if the task force meetings will be open, and she responded that they will be closed for now. Additional information about the task force is available on the Provost’s website at: 

b. BOV Committee Selection Process -- Mr. Sumeet Bagai shared the list of Selection Process Proposals that were submitted by commission members either at the October 5 meeting or via e-mail since that date. The proposals were discussed and specific questions about the proposals were answered. Following a lengthy discussion of the merits of each proposal, the committee decided to vote on the following three proposals, and the one receiving the most votes would be adopted as the new selection process: 1) all undergraduates on CSA will serve as the selection committee; 2) 12 undergraduates from CSA will serve as the selection committee; 3) 12 undergraduates from CSA will review applications, and all undergraduates will interview the top six applicants. Proposal #1 passed, therefore, all undergraduates on the commission will serve on the selection committee.

There was a motion that the undergraduate representative will serve as the non-voting chair of the committee, except in case of a tie; if someone on the CSA spring roster can’t attend or chooses not to participate, they may defer the committee membership back to the person who served during fall semester. The motion was seconded and passed.

There was a motion that the Vice President for Student Affairs will appoint a non-voting non-student member to serve as advisor to the committee. The motion was seconded and passed.

There was a motion that meetings will be held on alternating Thursdays from CSA meetings at 3:30 p.m. with the committee chair choosing the
dates; members will be allowed no more than one absence. The motion was seconded and passed.

There was a motion that the committee chair and the advisor will review the application and timeline each year, bring any recommended changes to the commission at the first meeting in October, and the commission will vote on any recommended changes by the end of October. The motion was seconded and passed. This application and timeline review will take place at the November 2 meeting this year. If feasible, the first reading will be waived and a final vote taken at that time to allow earlier distribution of applications this year.

c. **BOV Position Awareness/Publicity** -- Mr. Bagai asked that any suggestions for publicity for the BOV position be e-mailed to Mr. Greg Sagstetter at gjs618@vt.edu prior to the November 2 meeting. It was also requested that the current application be e-mailed to the commission for review before the November 2 meeting.

V. **New Business**

VI. **Committee Meetings** -- Mr. Bagai asked Mr. Cheatham to read the list of people assigned to each of the four committees. Mr. Bagai then asked all committees to meet briefly after the commission meeting adjourned and to appoint their chair at that meeting.

VII. **Open Forum**

VIII. **Announcements**

Mr. James Tyger announced that absentee ballots for the November 7 election are due on October 20 in 321 Squires.

Ms. Megan Horan invited everyone to the Panhellenic Council’s Block Party at 7:00 p.m., October 20, on the Drillfield. The NPHC Step Show will follow at 9:00 in Burruss Auditorium. Both events are part of homecoming week.

Mr. Steve Burrell announced other homecoming events: Jason Mraz concert at 7:30 p.m. on October 19 in Burruss Auditorium; the online homecoming voting would be open until 8:00 p.m. on October 19; the Corps of Cadets Pass and Review at 4:00 p.m. on October 20 on the Drillfield; the pep rally at 6:00 p.m. on October 20 on Dietrick Lawn; homecoming parade at 11:00 a.m. on Main Street on October 21. Applications for parade floats will be accepted through October 19 at noon in Squires. The Homecoming King and Queen will be announced at half-time of the football game on October 21.

Ms. Nicki Cantrell announced that student leaders will be inducted into the Order of the Gavel at their Induction Ceremony at 5:00 p.m. on October 20 in
War Memorial Chapel. Student leaders will be inducted. A reception will follow. She invited members of the commission who aren’t being inducted to attend as well.

Dr. Ed Spencer encouraged the commission to stay focused on the mission and charge of the commission as we proceed into the semester and try to accomplish more business in the coming months.

There were a couple of questions about scheduling speakers for commission meetings. Mr. Bagai indicated that anyone wanting to invite speakers should contact him and Mr. Cheatham, and they will make sure it’s on the agenda. Committees who wish to have their topics on the agenda should also contact the chair and vice chair. Mr. Tim Filbert asked how the committees should decide which issues on their list are the most important. Mr. Bagai indicated that a survey could be sent to the commission to determine the highest priorities for the year.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Bagai adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m. and asked the committees to stay for brief committee meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sanzenbach
Recording Secretary