Commission on Student Affairs
October 5, 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, Elizabeth Ford, Monika Gibson, Megan Horan, Frances Keene, Adeel Khan, Tanya LeRoith, Ennis McCrery, Margaret McQuain, Shane Moore, Manisha Patel, Jory Ruscio, Greg Sagstetter, Marc Saint Raymond, Aaren Salido, Karen Sanders, Robert Sebek, Guy Sims, Ed Spencer, Devin Stone, James Tyger, LaChelle Waller, Brian Whitaker

Absent with Notice: Ron Daniel, Zenobia Hikes, Navin Manjooran

Absent without Notice: Jack Atkins, Michael Dunleavy, Gary Kinder, Pris Martinez, Jerrine Morris, Ken Stanton, Purnima Sudeswaran

Special Note: At 3:30 p.m. on September 21, the commission held an orientation meeting. Members introduced themselves, notebooks were distributed, and topics of interest for this year were discussed. No minutes were generated for this meeting because no formal business was conducted.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Sumeet Bagai, chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32 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

a. Brainstorming Session Results – Mr. Scott Cheatham distributed a copy of the brainstorming results from the discussion at the orientation meeting on September 21. The list of topics to be covered this year are as follows: 1) Sports & Recreation; 2) Campus Climate; 3) Policies/Procedures; 4) Campus Safety.

b. Committee Structure – Mr. Bagai discussed the committee structure for this year. There will be four committees to cover the four main issues shown above. Committees will meet at the end of each commission meeting this year. He asked all commission members to write down their top two choices
for committee assignment, and he and Mr. Cheatham will make committee assignments based on preferences. The committee list will be distributed at the next meeting and chairs will be identified at that meeting.

IV. Old Business

V. New Business

a. Student Organization Office Space Update – Dr. Ed Spencer discussed the UUSA policies and procedures for allocating office space to student organizations. There is a great need for more office space for student organizations. The university is in the early stages of planning for one or more new student centers, which will increase the available space for student organizations. Under the current procedures, agreements for offices are signed for a two year period. At the end of this agreement, applications are sent to those currently having offices and they are asked to rejustify their need for the space. A review committee then looks at the applications, meets with the groups, and makes recommendations to UUSA management as to how space should be allocated. Last year at the end of this process, there was a meeting with representatives from all the organizations to hear the report, and he then asked for input from these organizations. Dr. Spencer received a substantial amount of input and concerns from the organizations. As a result of these concerns, he and Dr. Hikes decided to renew the current agreements for another year (2006-2007) and restudy the issues and applications this fall, when they will make space allocation decisions for 2007-2009. The one change they did make this year was to add office space in Squires for LASO. LASO is currently sharing space with CISO. Applications are out now for the next allocation process.

Dr. Spencer asked Dr. Guy Sims to discuss this year’s application process. Dr. Sims said they have developed a new application that will streamline the process. They want to ensure the office space is being used sufficiently due to the high demand for the space. They will research and benchmark our peer institutions and study how they handle space issues and get input on how their allocations are working. They will have an office space assessment plan, as well as a new timeline. Application materials are due on October 10, and the report to Dr. Hikes, Dr. Spencer, and Dr. Sims is due on October 17. Contracts for 2007-2009 will be mailed out in December and January. If there are groups not using their office space very often, the review committee may reallocate this space to other groups. A brief question and answer period followed.

b. Undergraduate Representative to the BOV Selection Process – Mr. Bagai gave a brief history of the selection process. The first student representative was selected in 1984, with only one student, and the selection process was handled by CSA. This process was used for 21 years for the undergraduate representative; the graduate representative process was taken over by the
Graduate Student Assembly. In the spring of 2005, CSA voted to change the process for undergraduate representative and a new nominating committee was developed. The new nominating committee was comprised of: the Director of Student Activities; the Undergraduate Representative to the BOV; President of SGA; undergraduate members of CSA; one student senator representing each college. This process was presented to the Board of Visitors, and they agreed to the new process, but asked to review it after one year to make sure it went smoothly.

The floor was opened for a discussion of how to proceed with this year’s selection process, and the following suggestions were made: 1) the selection committee would be comprised of all undergraduate members of CSA because they represent a diverse group of students; 2) the college senators would serve as the selection committee; 3) the committee would be comprised of one undergraduate student representative from each college, two SGA representatives, one UUSA staff representative, and the current undergraduate representative would serve as chair; 4) the committee would be comprised of undergraduate members of CSA who volunteer to serve, and the commission could choose to add additional undergraduates if the number of committee members was too small.

Mr. Bagai indicated that this discussion needs to be completed and a vote taken at the October 19 meeting because the selection process will be presented to the Board of Visitors at their November 6 meeting. He requested that any additional suggestions be sent to himself (sbagai@vt.edu) and Mr. Scott Cheatham (scottche@vt.edu) by Thursday, October 12. They will forward all suggestions to the commission prior to the meeting on October 19 so the commission will have time to consider the options before voting.

VI. Open Forum

Mr. Bagai announced a new agenda topic for this year. There will be an open forum at future meetings, where commission members will be able to bring up current topics that are on-going at the university. He will allow three topics and the time limit for each will be 3-5 minutes.

VII. Announcements

Mr. James Tyger announced that Maroon Effect will be held during the Clemson football game on October 26. He also announced that he is looking into problems with Event Planning, and those who have experienced problems should e-mail him with their concerns.

Mr. Aaren Salido asked the commission to let him know if there are issues related to his organization, AASU, that he should elaborate on during upcoming meetings.
Ms. Margaret McQuain asked anyone having complaints or comments regarding campus classrooms to please let her know.

Ms. Elizabeth Ford announced that Anthony Rapp, known for his role in Rent, would be speaking for National Coming Out Day on October 10, 7:00 p.m., Colonial Hall, Squires.

Dr. Guy Sims said the open forum sponsored by the Task Force on Race & the Institution was an excellent source of information from the students and he encouraged the Campus Climate Committee to consider the comments by the students at this forum.

Dr. Ed Spencer congratulated Mr. Marc Saint Raymond for being one of two nominees from Virginia Tech for a Rhodes Scholarship.

Ms. LaChelle Waller announced that GSA would hold Game Night on October 13, 6:00-9:00 p.m., GLC Multipurpose Room.

Mr. Tim Filbert announced the National Issues Forum on the topic of immigration, to be held on October 12, 4:30 p.m., Commonwealth Ballroom, Squires. He also announced that Maria Hinojosa would be the keynote speaker for Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month and the speech would take place that evening, October 5, 7:00 pm, GLC Auditorium.

Mr. Bagai stressed the importance of attendance at each meeting so the groups can keep up-to-date on issues. He asked members to send substitutes when they are unavailable to attend meetings.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sanzenbach
Recording Secretary