Commission on Student Affairs

September 15, 2005
3:30-5:30 p.m.
Brush Mt. B
Squires Student Center

Minutes

Present:  Sumeet Bagai, Lindsey Barker, Tapasvi Bhargava, Elizabeth Bieber, Tom Brown, Steve Burrell, Ana Maria Cherrez, Scott Cheatham, Russell Davis, Michelle Dillon, Michael Dunleavy, Ron Forbes, Ginny Fowler, Monika Gibson, Michael Goode, Caryl Gray, Zenobia Hikes, Jennifer Jessie, Jamie Kalista, Jaquisha Kearson, Susie Kim, Erik Kneubuehl, Margaret McQuain, Laura Morgan, Jory Zmuda Ruscio, Karen Eley Sanders, Ed Spencer, Paula Spruill, Devin Weller, Brian Whitaker

Absent with notice:  Brian Warren

Absent without notice:  Ron Daniel, David Jones, Gary Kinder, Navin Manjooran, Robert Sebek, Michael Sutphin, Nikeshia Womack

Visitors:  Brian Marroquin

I.  Call to Order

Ms. Jory Zmuda Ruscio, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

II.  Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Ruscio called for adoption of the agenda.  There was a motion to adopt the agenda as written.  The motion was seconded and approved.

III.  Welcome and Introductions - Jory Ruscio (Chair)

Ms. Ruscio welcomed the commission to the first meeting of the year.  She asked those present to introduce themselves.  She also asked that each person give a topic they would like the commission to address this year.  The list of topics will be compiled and distributed to the commission.

IV.  Orientation to CSA - Ed Spencer

Dr. Ed Spencer, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, gave a brief introduction to the commission.  CSA is the largest university commission, with 39 members, and the only commission that allows students to serve as chair.  He pointed out that business can be handled formally by sending legislation forward to University Council, or informally by
sending information to campus offices, giving the opinion of the commission and how we think things should be handled. Dr. Spencer also discussed the commission’s charge and how we can address some of the issues listed in the charge.

V. Expectations – Jory Ruscio & Scott Cheatham (Vice-Chair)

Ms. Ruscio and Mr. Cheatham discussed their expectations for the meetings. Ms. Ruscio encouraged everyone to attend all meetings or send a substitute. The commission meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at 3:30 p.m. Agenda items must be submitted by the Friday before each meeting. Discussion items may be introduced at the meeting during adoption of agenda, but no resolutions can be introduced at the meeting. Mr. Scott discussed parliamentary procedure and how meetings will be run.

Ms. Ruscio distributed and discussed a list of past CSA agenda items and accomplishments.

VI. Vice President for Student Affairs Introduction - Zenobia Hikes

Dr. Zenobia Hikes, Vice President for Student Affairs, briefly introduced herself. Her areas of expertise are enrollment management, with a special focus on attracting and retaining African American students at traditionally-white institutions. She also focuses on public relations and secondary education. Dr. Hikes likes to stay at the forefront of student issues and stay connected with the students. She has an open door policy and expects feedback from the students because communication is the key to bringing about change.

VII. Agenda Topics for 2005-2006 (Brainstorming)

As a follow-up to the earlier discussion of agenda topics for the year, Ms. Ruscio opened the floor for a brainstorming session to discuss which topics are the most important and how they can be addressed this year. The main topics were:
- Diversity on campus—how can we bring about change?
- “Principles of Community” – is it being widely distributed to student organizations and the campus at large?
- Do all student organizations need a faculty advisor?
- The need for more non-alcohol events on campus, and better advertising for those that already exist.

The commission will be forming subcommittees and inviting speakers to address these issues throughout the year.

VIII. Question and Answer Period

The chair opened the floor for a question and answer period. There was one question related to introducing parking issues. The chair replied that we could address parking issues if needed. It was suggested that any parking legislation be directed to Kurt Krause, who oversees the director for the Office of Transportation.
IX. Announcements

Ms. Ruscio announced that the next commission meeting is October 6. Please send any agenda items to Ms. Ruscio and Mr. Cheatham by September 30.

Mr. Erik Kneubuehl announced that Homecoming Week begins October 3. Homecoming events are available at the following homecoming website: http://www.vthomecoming.org.vt.edu/. When the committee starts planning for next year’s homecoming court, they plan to hold information sessions about the application process in order to increase diversity on the court.

Ms. Jennifer Jessie announced that she would be sending a survey link to commission members regarding the rising cost of textbooks. She asked that all student organizations forward the survey information to their groups.

Mr. Sumeet Bagai announced that SGA is selling t-shirts for Orange Effect Day at the September 24 football game against Georgia Tech. He also announced that the first Student Body Open Forum would be held on Wednesday, September 21, at 7:30 p.m. in Squires Colonial Hall. The opening topic is The Legal Process and Understanding It Better, followed by a more general open forum to discuss student concerns. Hokies United has reformed to raise money for Hurricane Katrina victims. Their goal is to raise $250,000 by December 1, and they have several events planned. The kickoff event is Kash for Katrina, a fundraiser at the September 17 football game. Other events are shown at: http://www.hokiesunited.org.vt.edu/

Mr. Steve Burrell followed up this announcement by asking for staff volunteers to help with Kash for Katrina at the September 17 football game.

Mr. Brian Marroquin announced that September 15 was the first day of Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month and many events are planned for the upcoming month. The full calendar of events is available in the Multicultural Center in Squires and he encouraged everyone to participate.

Ms. Monika Gibson announced that the Graduate Life Center’s open house would be held from 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on September 16.

Mr. Steve Burrell announced that September 16 was the last day for UCSO, USLP, and RSO student groups to register if they plan to request funding for next year.

Ms. Jory Ruscio announced a speaker series at the Graduate Life Center. Dr. James Whiteman, from the Chemistry Department, was the speaker on September 16 at 4:30 p.m., following the Graduate Life Center’s open house.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Sanzenbach, Recording Secretary