Commission on Student Affairs

November 6, 2003
2:00-3:30 p.m.

Brush Mt. B
Squires Student Center

Minutes

Present: Tom Brown, Myrna Callison, Trey Church, Cristin Coles, Lanny Cross, Ginny Fowler, Monika Gibson, Erin Hawkinson, Ben Kearney, Ellen Krupar, Elaine Kwan, Matthew Lieber, Kasey Martin, Vivek Mehta, Kim Mitchell, Clarresa Morton, Jerry Niles, Anand Patel, Brooke Randa, Nicole Reynolds, Rachel Rizk, Roberta Snelling, Brant Snyder, Chris Wise, Will Wright

Absent: Allan Bradley, Caryl Gray, Pankaj Gupta, Vishal Nakra, Keniah Robinson, Jane Warner

Guests: Greg Beecher, Heather Black, Erik Kneubuehl, Rakesh Kapania, Richard McCoy, Puraj Patel

I. Call to Order

Mr. Vivek Mehta, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

There was a motion to move Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate Students, item A under New Business, to a Special Report before Old Business. The motion passed. The agenda was adopted as amended.

III. Minutes from October 16 Meeting

Mr. Mehta announced that the minutes of the October 16 CSA meeting have been electronically approved by the commission and forwarded to University Council.

IV. Special Report - Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate Students

Dr. Rakesh Kapania, Chair of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies (CGS&P), discussed the “Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate Students at Virginia Tech.” Dr. Karen DePauw, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School, set up a committee to develop this document as a guide for graduate students regarding their rights and responsibilities in terms of their conduct and academic pursuits at Virginia Tech. The committee reviewed similar documents at our peer institutions and sought feedback from other universities. The committee wrote several drafts of the document before it was presented to CGS&P. CGS&P is seeking comments from other commissions before they finalize the document and send it to University Council. Comments should be sent to Dr. Kapania at rkapania@vt.edu and Mr. Panjak Gupta, President of GSA, at pgupta@vt.edu. The document will be
discussed again at the November 20 CSA meeting as old business.

V. Old Business

A. Parking Issues
Mr. Richard McCoy, Parking Manager, updated the commission on changes that are taking place in Parking Services. He briefly discussed the Transportation and Parking Master Plan, which was designed to improve parking, traffic, and alternative transportation on campus. Implementation of the plan recommendations are expected to begin in June 2004. They have already made changes to campus roadways that will make the campus more bike and pedestrian friendly. Parking Services continues to work with Ms. Suzanne Ducker, Alternative Transportation Manager, in promoting alternative transportation on campus. Questions related to carpooling, CAP permits, and bicycles may be answered by Ms. Ducker at sducker@vt.edu.

Mr. McCoy addressed a list of questions the commission forwarded to him following a discussion of parking issues at the October 16 meeting. The questions were related to: vehicles driving on sidewalks; parking tickets; parking for residents and commuters; a parking garage; Blacksburg Transit routes; Parking Services revenue, why must tickets be paid before they are appealed; can parking times for graduate students be extended; why are faculty and staff allowed to park in student lots without being ticketed; are there lots on campus where more tickets are written; are other groups on campus ticketed as quickly as students. Mr. McCoy indicated his willingness to speak to other student groups for further clarification on any of the issues. Additional questions may be sent to him at rimccoy@vt.edu.

B. Major Entertainment Sponsorship

Mr. Erik Kneubuehl, Associate Director of Campus Programs, and Mr. Greg Beecher, Associate Director of Event Services, attended on behalf of UUSA to discuss proposed changes to the Major Entertainment Policy. Copies of the current and proposed policies were distributed to the commission for first reading at the October 16 meeting. There was a motion to waive full reading of the policies. The motion was seconded and passed. Mr. Kneubuehl and Mr. Beecher explained that the changes are being made because the current policy hasn’t been reviewed since 1977. In addition, Event Services has seen an increase in the number of student organizations asking to host major entertainment events on campus. The current policy doesn’t include enough structure to support the organizations in relation to advisement, resources, and consultation as they are planning their events. The proposed changes set up a consultation system between Event Services and the Student Activities Office that will help the student organizations understand legal issues, cost, budgeting, marketing plan, etc. This will help the organizations decide if they can go forward with the event as planned. Following a question and answer period, there was a motion to approve the changes to the policy. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

C. Board of Visitors Information Session on Race-Conscious Programs
Ms. Myrna Callison, Graduate Representative to the Board of Visitors, reminded the group of the BOV Session on Race-Conscious Programs being held on November 10 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Owens Banquet Room.

Ms. Rachel Rizk from RHF commented that the November 3 breakfast meeting with the BOV Student Affairs Committee and student members of CSA was very informative and asked if future meetings can be planned to increase communication between the Board and students. Dr. Cross said he will speak with the Student Affairs Committee chair to see what can be worked out. He also suggested that Order of the Gavel invite a Board member to attend one of their meetings.

V. New Business

A. Virginia Tech Union Constitution Changes (First Reading)

Ms. Brooke Randa, President of VTU, discussed proposed changes to the VTU Constitution. They are proposing minor changes that show the new titles of UUSA employees acting as advisors for VTU. The new titles are a result of reorganization in UUSA this year. Mr. Mehta opened the floor for questions and discussion. There were none. Second reading will take place at the November 20 meeting.

B. University Updates

Mr. Vivek Mehta updated the commission on a few items that were brought up at the brainstorming session on September 18:

1. Fall Break

A Fall Break has been approved and the first will occur on a Friday in October of Fall Semester 2005-2006.

2. BOV Student Representatives

Mr. Mehta has discussed with the President’s office and the BOV student representatives the issue of whether the student representatives should be voting members in future years. It is felt the representatives are more effective as non-voting members who are voicing the student opinions to the Board.

3. Weekday Football Games

Mr. Mehta has discussed this topic with the administration as well. It is financially beneficial to the university to host weekday football games because of television coverage. The university has the opportunity to host two or three weekday games per year, but the goal is to host only one per year. The commission can discuss this further if there is enough interest.

VI. Announcements
Ms. Kim Mitchell announced that mandatory workshops on annual funding will begin on Monday, November 10. There will be two workshops in November, one in December, and one in January. Sign-up for the workshops takes place in 319 Squires.

Ms. Brooke Randa announced that VTU is bringing Lonestar, a country group, to Burruss Auditorium on December 5 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are $12 for students, $18 for non-students.

Ms. Rachel Rizk announced that RHF is forming an ad hoc committee to address upper quad parking and will bring a resolution to CSA later in the year.

Ms. Rizk also announced plans to invite speakers from the Office of Risk Management and Event Services to discuss student organization insurance. She plans to develop a list of questions on this topic at the November 20 meeting.

Mr. Anand Patel announced that CISO is hosting the Dance of Nations in Squires Commonwealth Ballroom on November 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Vivek Mehta announced that the AASU Annual Cultural Show is being held in the Donaldson Brown Auditorium on November 8 at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Kasey Martin announced that the Voluntary Action Center is holding their annual fundraiser at Donaldson Brown on November 15 at 5:00 p.m.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.