

# MINUTES

## Virginia Tech University Council: Commission on Student Affairs (CSA) Minutes

October 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Commission chair Mr. Matt Chan at 3:33 p.m.

### In attendance

Benjamin Calvo-Rivera for Allison Aviles Garcia, Susan Anderson, Neel Arora for Travis Bauer, Matt Chan, Chelsea Corkins, Pat Fin, Aliana Harrison, Byron Hughes, Ron Mecham, Brett Netto, Meriam Nure, Andrew Peck, Patty Perillo, Nevetha Ramesh, Mikey Erb for Evan Robohm, Chris Saunders, Lauren Surface, Cameron Varano

### Absent with notification

Alicia Cohen, Gabe Cohen, Manjot Kaur, Maddie Mitcham, James Orr, Tara Reel, Liang Shi

### Attending guests

Ryan Beck, Tracey Newton, Menah Pratt-Clarke, Darren Small, Tricia Smith

### Absent

Ron Mecham, Alexa Parsley, Brett Speakman

### Approval of Agenda and Past Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried. A motion was also made to approved the minutes for the September 29, 2016 meeting of CSA. The motion was seconded and approved.

### Presentation

Dr. Menah Pratt-Clarke, Vice President for Strategic Affairs and Vice Provost for Inclusion and Diversity, gave a presentation regarding initiatives, programs, and long-term strategic plans from the Office of Inclusion and Diversity. The presentation centered around defining the “InclusiveVT” university-wide initiative as the “institutional and individual commitment to *ut prosim* (that I may serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence.” To achieve that vision, Dr. Pratt-Clarke and her office identified institutional goals and objectives that include increasing diversity across all university communities, addressing and improving campus climate, and promoting the understanding of related issues of identity, human condition, and life chances among students. Dr. Pratt-Clarke further elaborated on structure changes that are needed in the university to achieve the InclusiveVT vision. These include the need for diversity engagement throughout all units in the university from the President to individual colleges and departments, resources and support for faculty diversity initiatives and identity/diversity-related groups and communities, and admission diversity programs such as pipeline programs. A special emphasis was placed on inclusion and diversity educational and curriculum initiatives, including the “DiversityEdu” online module required for first-year students, the proposed inclusion of intersectional diversity topics in the Pathways General Education Curriculum, and the “Equity and Social Disparity in the Human Condition” strategic growth area within the Destination Areas. Dr. Pratt-Clarke concluded the presentation and discussion with the announcement of the “#VTUnfinished Conversations” series of events, requests for proposals stemming out of #VTUnfinished, and opportunities from the Intercultural Engagement Center all as immediate initiatives to address InclusiveVT. Dr. Pratt-Clarke answered questions from Commission members, and made available documents related to her presentation to Commission members.

### Committee Reports

Mr. Darren Small, chair of the Student Budget Board (SBB) gave his monthly report. Sixteen (16) funding workshops were held so far this semester, with 298 Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) completing training and able to submit funding requests. Thus far, 103 requests were deliberated by SBB, with approximately \$131,000 awarded, which is ~28% of available funding for RSOs. Mr. Small concluded that SBB members collaborated well this semester, and outlook is positive for a productive year. Mr. Mikey Erb raised the question on the Muslim Student Union (MSU) status at SBB in light of its approval as a University Chartered Student Organization (UCSO). Mr. Chan explained that while being a UCSO allows for MSU to

apply for annual funding from SBB, representation within SBB and CSA is a separate process. Mr. Small also reported that Mr. Fred Lamb from the Black Student Alliance was elected vice chair of the SBB.

### **Constituency Updates**

Ms. Chelsea Corkins gave an update on Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) activities. There are ongoing conversations regarding diversity and what that means to graduate students and the GSA. Related to that, GSA is reflecting on how it can operate as an “umbrella” organization representing and advocating for various graduate student organizations. Also, GSA is partnering with the graduate representatives to the Board of Visitors to address parking policy at the Inn at Virginia Tech.

Ms. Cameron Verano and Mr. Andrew Peck gave updates on Board of Visitors (BoV) student representatives' activities on behalf of Ms. Tara Reel and Mr. Gabe Cohen. Ms. Reel is working with past BoV student representatives to maintain consistency and follow through with long term initiatives, such as advocating for student health insurance coverage to be applied to dependents. Mr. Cohen is working with the Technology-enabled Learning and Online Strategies Office to include a way for announcements important to students to be displayed on the Canvas front page.

### **University Council and Commission Updates**

Mr. Chan gave an update on activities from the University Council. The Council has met on October 3rd, and three resolutions were voted on during their second readings. Two were from the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies (CGSP); both were regarding discontinuation of degrees; these resolutions passed unanimously. The remaining resolution was from the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies (CUSP), regarding adding a faculty member of the Commission on Equal Opportunities and Diversity to the University Curriculum Committee on General Education to address the inclusion of intersectional diversity within the Pathways Curriculum; this resolution was also passed unanimously. Three resolutions were introduced for first readings. Two were from CGSP; both were regarding the creation of new degree programs: The Master of Arts Degree in Nonprofit and Nongovernmental Organization Management, and the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Security Governance. The remaining resolution was from CUSP, where the Department of Science and Technology in Society is renaming itself to the Department of Science, Technology, and Society, pending approval. In addition, Dr. Diane Zahm, associate professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Faculty Ethics gave a presentation to the Council on a proposal for a University Ombuds Office. Mr. Chan announced that in light of this development he has invited Dr. Zahm along with Dr. Ellen Plummer, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Administration, to CSA for a dialogue regarding the proposal.

Mr. Chris Saunders then gave a report from the Commission on Equal Opportunities and Diversity (CEOD). The Commission met on October 10th, and much of the discussion was centered on implementing the intersectional diversity requirement in the Pathways Curriculum for General Education. This requirement is proposed to manifest itself as a required core outcome area: “Critical Analysis of Identity and Inequality in the Human Condition”. This core outcome area requires three (3) credits, but courses may double-count towards another core outcome area within the Pathways Curriculum. Currently, thirty (30) courses from the Curriculum for Liberal Education (CLE) check-sheet were identified as courses that potentially fulfill the proposed intersectional diversity requirement. Long term implementation must address capacity, training for faculty and teaching assistants, and course development in colleges other than the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. Mr. Saunders also reported that there is effort in CEOD to address the expansion of gender identification in the university Banner software as related to student records and other human resources data. The Office of Human Resources and the Office of the University Registrar indicated that Banner is due for a system wide update in November and any major changes can only be addressed after the update is concluded.

There is no report from the Academic Support Committee as the committee has yet to meet.

### **Division of Student Affairs Update**

Mr. Byron Hughes and Ms. Aliana Harrison reminded Commission members that the Division's “Aspire!” awards are still accepting nominations.

### **Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

## **New Business**

There was no new business.

## **Announcements**

- Ms. Meriam Nure announced that the Black Organization Council is hosting “Talking Back”, an event that features Khaled Beydoun, where he will be discussing topics such as intersectionality, islamophobia, Anti-Black Racism, and the 2016 presidential election. The event will be held 10/21, 7pm at the Multipurpose Room in the Newman Library.
- Mr. Peck announced that the Jewish Student Union is co-sponsoring a concert on 11/3 at the Lyric Theatre featuring Shwayze in honor of Daniel Pearl Music Day.
- Ms. Verano announced that faculty in the Roanoke Campus are seeking undergraduate research assistants. Interested students may obtain more information from the Virginia Tech-Carillion Research Institute website.
- Ms. Susan Anderson announced that the United Feminist Movement at Virginia Tech is co-sponsoring the “Clothesline Project” to raise awareness on gender-based violence. Workshops will be held continuously from 10/17 to 10/21.
- Ms. Tricia Smith echoed Dr. Pratt-Clarkes call to attend the #VTUnfinished series of events held throughout October, culminating in the keynote event on 11/16 with diversity workshops and documentary screening as led by Mr. Lee Mun Wah, invited diversity lecturer and filmmaker. Ms. Smith also reminded Commission members that the Intercultural Engagement Center have facilitators available for cross-group dialogues.

## **Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled CSA meeting will be held on October 27, 2016, in the Brush Mountain Room at Squires Student Center.

There being no further business, the motion to adjourn was made at 5:05 p.m. and was passed unanimously.

Recorder: Tracy Newton