

MINUTES

Commission on Student Affairs Meeting

October 15, 2015

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Squires Student Center – Brush Mountain Room

Attendees

Samantha Reed, Greg Purdy, Matt Chan, Jackie Fisher, Alexis Medina, Mohammed Seyam, Morgan Sykes, Lauren Surface, Mikey Erb, Nicole Nguyen, Joycelynn Acheampong, Margaret Appleby , Aliana Harrison, Pat Finn , Luke Carroll, Byron Hughes, Jared Coplon, James McClellan, Tuna Shankar, Brian Young, James Orr, Hunter Gresham, Susan Pedigo, Susan Anderson

Guests

Tom Brown, Angela Simmons, Joe Edens, Bernice Hausman

Call to Order

At 3:34pm, Chair Jackie Fisher called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Tuna Shankar made a motion to approve the agenda; Mr. Greg Purdy seconded, the agenda was approved.

Faculty Senate Resolution

Dr. Bernice Hausman presented the Faculty Resolution to CSA, explaining the intent of the Faculty Senate to establish a more formal role for faculty in governance. Compared to peer institutions, where they have a primarily faculty-run governance system, Virginia Tech's faculty has less influence in governance. With this resolution, The Faculty Senate hopes to better oversee curriculum and other policy changes which directly affect faculty. The resolution states that any resolution going through Commission of Faculty Affairs, Commission on Research, Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies would then go through a 4 week consultation period with faculty senate. Faculty senate will add an appendix to the resolution stating whether it approves/endorsees or does approve/endorse the change, but Faculty Senate has the right to waive this consultation if the Faculty Senate believes no further discussion is needed. Dr. Hausman emphasized the hope for a

more formal role in governance, not more power, as well as the idea that this resolution does not create a “veto power” for the Faculty Senate.

During discussion, Ms. Morgan Sykes asked why faculty could not intervene informally, as was the case with the Undergraduate Honor System, without the need for this resolution to change the governance structure. Dr. Hausman explained that some departments and commissions are not as accommodating as was the case with the Honor System.

In terms of who could waive consultation from a resolution, the response was that the Faculty Senate waiver committee would decide and that individual commissions themselves would not get to choose whether or not their resolutions were waived from consultation.

Mr. Mikey Erb explained that the repercussions of approving/disproving a resolution through Faculty Senate could cause these resolutions to look less desirable and could cause issues. Dr. Hausman explained that this is essentially the point of the resolution, hoping that resolutions that do not have faculty approval or backing do stand out.

Mr. Greg Purdy explained that by giving the Faculty Senate more time and power of review over these commissions, an imbalance of power in the shared governance structure is created due to students and staff not having extra time and review. Dr. Hausman responded by saying that students and staff could also request a more formal role in commissions that deal specifically with matters relevant to their constituents.

Ms. Fisher asked why the faculty senate representatives serving on those four commissions aren't sharing information in the way that students and staff representatives do. Dr. Hausman replied explaining that the faculty represents multiple colleges and their representatives do not always fully represent the university across disciplines.

Mr. Matt Chan pointed out uncertainties by students about the new dynamic and implications this resolution would create and Dr. Hausman continued to emphasize that this is not a quest for power, but would improve academic success at the university and make faculty feel that their voice had an impact. She then went on to emphasize that this seemingly “quick fix” for the structure of governance was recommended by the President and Provost.

After a lengthy discussion back and forth, Ms. Tara Reel concluded that the mixed opinions on this resolution may be resolved through a formation of a task force to further assess the need for change in governance structure before a resolution like this passes.

New Business

A. National Pan-Hellenic Council Constitution Changes: First Reading

Tavianna Williams, the Assistant Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, presented the Constitution changes for the National Pan-Hellenic Council. These changes were made to make the language more consistent and update the Constitution to fit what the organization actually does today.

Mr. Matt Chan and Ms. Susan Anderson suggested multiple grammatical edits, as well as some extrapolation on unclear wording.

Mr. Matt Chan suggested to have amendments to the Bylaws not have to be submitted to CSA.

Ms. Tuna Shankar explained that the SGA Representative Position explanation needed to be changed due to the SGA switch to a Unicameral System.

B. Delay in Adjournment

At 4:52 PM, Mr. Matt Chan made a motion that the time of adjournment be fixed to 5:15 PM to allow for all agenda items to be discussed. Mr. Mikey Erb seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

C. Asian American Student Union Constitution Changes

Ms. Panisa Jiumdumneakij, President of the Asian American Student Union, presented the Constitution changes for the AASU. These changes were made to clarify some language and to adequately convey the goals and standards of the organization.

Commission, Committee, and Sub-Committee Updates

The committee on the CSA Operation Manual met to create an outline as to how the operation manual is going to be formed. More details are to come in the future.

Announcements

Jared Coplon mentioned that he was required to attend class on a religious holiday due to the fact that he would be faced with an unexcused absence and lowered grades if he

were to not attend. Dean Brown replied confirming that it is the discretion of the faculty member to decide whether or not to allow students to miss class on religious holidays. Dean Brown will be asked to attend a later meeting to further discuss the issue.

There will be an event on Friday, October 23, from 3-5 PM in celebration of the Graduate Life Center's 10th Anniversary.

The GLC will be hosting a happy hour this Friday, October 16, from 4-6 with a cash bar.

The GSA Beer and Wine Social will be held on October 23 from 5-9 PM. Entrance fees will be \$10 for food and drinks, and \$5 for just food.

Ms. Tuna Shankar reminded the Commission that next week is Homecoming and that everyone should buy the Maroon Effect Shirts for the game.

Ms. Alexis Medina announced that RHF is hosting a Homecoming Dance in the Old Dominion Ballroom from 7-9:30 PM on Saturday, October 24th.

Adjournment

Mr. Matt Chan made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tuna Shankar, and passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.