

Graduate Student Assembly
Delegate Meeting Agenda
March 20th, 2008
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Graduate Life Center at Donaldson Brown
Multipurpose Room

- I. 5:40 – Call to Order
- II. Approval of Agenda - Electronically
- III. Approval of Minutes, February 28th, 2008 – Electronically
- IV. 5:40 – Announcement about Take Back The Night

Take Back The Night will be held on March 27 starting at 7 p.m. Meet up by the chapel – candles and purple ribbons will be given out for the march. The event includes a march and stories of survival and should be over by 9:30 p.m.

V. 5:45 – Dean DePauw

The percent of the health insurance premium paid by VT will increase to 82.5% next year – it is currently 80%. Dean DePauw will continue to push for it to be 90%. Dean DePauw is also trying to get payroll deduction for graduate student comprehensive fees. This would be for those on assistanceships and would be mandatory, though individuals could opt out of the program. Dean DePauw didn't think your account would get frozen if all of the fees were not paid for by a certain date, but she said she'd look into it. In response to delegate questions, Dean DePauw states: 1) the payroll deduction for fees would hopefully be done over the course of the academic year, 2) the fees would be pretax, 3) this system would pay the engineering fee so engineering students wouldn't have to, and 4) it is unlikely VT would allow the university's portion of the health insurance premium to be used toward a policy besides GM Southwest. Dean DePauw emphasized the health insurance committee should convene in the fall to survey the questions and concerns graduate students have.

VI. 5:55 – President's Report

Thank you to those who attended the Town Gown meeting last week! Joe hopes to draft the topics/resolutions discussed at the meeting this summer. USLA nominations have been submitted and status of the awards will be announced at a later time. The GSA Happy Hour was a great trial run and another will take place this summer. The Big Event at George Mason is coming up soon and the local press will be attending.

VII. 6:00 – Chair / Cabinet Reports

A. Cabinet Report – Laura F.

Patricia Hyer gave a talk on the governance structure at VT. If anyone is interested in sitting on a commission or committee, email Toni (astroter@vt.edu). Priority will be given to: 1) those currently on that commission or committee, 2) those who contacted Toni via email (based on date and time received), 3) those who attended the Cabinet meeting, and 4) those who contacted Toni via email after the last Cabinet meeting.

B. Chief Justice of the Honor System – John K.

This year, the Honor System has heard cases mostly on plagiarism or falsification, held training sessions for student and faculty panelists, and worked on implementing a similar justice system at NCR. The constitutional review committee will meet soon to modify the University Honor Code constitution. In response to a delegate question, no, the results of cases aren't currently published but he will look into publishing the types of violations must often dealt with, etc.

C. Grad Rep to the BOV – Brennan S.

Brennan gave a powerpoint on shared governance. He emphasized that University Council advises the President in formulating policies and the Board of Visitors is the highest governance level at VT. Commissions are formal organizations (they exist all the time and have regular meetings), advisory committees are on an as-needed basis, standing committees are those addressing community interest (like athletics), and constituency

organizations (like GSA) are those that create legislation. Brennan also emphasized that while shared governance is cumbersome, it is like that for a good reason.

D. Treasurer Report – Brandy H.

Gave a report detailing aspects of the GSA's budget including delegate meetings (\$286 per meeting for pizza and beverages), the ski trip (\$246), and wine socials (the last one turned a profit of \$375). There is currently \$9833 in the generated account and \$8543 in the budgeted account. The generated account contains money the GSA gains as profit from events → this money is primarily from the Graduate and Professional School Day. The budgeted account contains money awarded to GSA from VT's Budget Board and must be used in the way it was allocated. Delegates wishing to better understand how budgeting works at VT are encouraged to join one of the 2 budget boards. In response to a delegate question, it was clarified that the new Board will determine how much money should/will be allocated to committees and program chairs.

VIII. 6:20 – Old Business

A. Fees Resolution (2nd Reading) – Mehdi N.

A motion was made to alter the Fees Resolution to include the phrase “including payroll deduction” in support of Dean DePauw's efforts with payroll deduction. The motion was seconded and discussion ensued. Upon voting, the motion failed → 11 in favor, 22 opposed, and 4 abstained. A motion was made to strike the phrase about the \$45 fee from the resolution. No second was given. It was clarified that the GSA's Fees Resolution is part of a multi-dimensional effort and that clarifying the GSA's stance on the issue is important. A motion was made to pass the Fees Resolution as it. The motion was seconded, no discussion ensued, and the motion passed → 43 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstained.

IX. 6:39 – New Business

A. Grad-Undergrad Mentoring Program – Kevin F.

Kevin proposed the creation of a graduate-undergraduate mentoring program. A delegate suggested perhaps this could be implemented through departments rather than at a university-wide level. A signup sheet was passed around for delegates interested in participating. A delegate suggested the program be called GUMP.

B. The Big Event –Leah W.

The Big Event, a community-wide volunteer event, will take place April 5. Those interested in participating should meet at the GLC at 9:15 a.m. As was mentioned earlier, there will also be a Big Event taking place at NCR with George Mason → delegates interested in helping should contact Joe (jwm@vt.edu).

X. 6:52 – Comments & Suggestions from the Floor

XI. 6:55 – Adjournment

XII. 6:55 – Announcements

- A. Volunteers requested to help set-up and teardown at the Research Symposium! Contact Natoshia.
- B. Now accepting applications for GSA Program Chairs! Apply by March 28th!
- C. The Big Event – April 5. See <http://www.sga.vt.edu/bigevent/> for more info.
- D. Wine social / awards ceremony – April 11. If you have suggestions about it, email GSA.
- E. Join our Relay for Life team! Visit the GSA website for more information.
- F. Proceeds from Cold Stone purchased on April 3 from 5-8 p.m. will benefit the BGSO's Relay for Life team.

GSA Executive Board

President: Joseph McFadden (jwm@vt.edu)

VP of Membership: Antionette D. Stroter (astroter@vt.edu)

VP of Programs: Laura Freeman (lamorgan@vt.edu)

Secretary: Sasha Marine (scmarine@vt.edu)

Treasurer: Brandy Huderson (bphuders@vt.edu)

Program Chairs

Webmaster: Fleur Gooden (fleur@vt.edu)

TFP: Ashish Ranjan (aranjan@vt.edu)

GRDP: Haiyan Cheng (hcheng04@vt.edu)

Research Symposium: Natoshia Raishevich (natoshia@vt.edu)

Graduate & Professional School Day: Jonathan Moore (s2jrmoor@vt.edu)

Historian: Phillip Zellner (pzellner@vt.edu)