General Assembly Meeting Agenda  
November 12th, 2019 - 7:00pm  
Commonwealth B — Squires Student Center  
Roll Call Question: What's one thing you want to change here at Virginia Tech?

1. Call to Order  
a. Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm

2. Roll Call  
a. 45 in attendance  
b. Met Quorum

3. Adoption of Agenda  
a. Motion to adopt agenda  
b. Motion passes

4. Reading of Minutes  
a. Motion to adopt minutes  
b. Motion passes

5. Special Orders  
a. Public Forum  
i. none  
b. Welcome - Heather Wagoner  
i. Director of Student Engagement and Cultural Life  
ii. We are all here to support, grateful for what SGA does, SGA should be the advocate for all 30,000 students and beyond including in Roanoke campus and beyond, take this opportunity and serve people not only know but for decades to come, here to observe  

c. Up with Change - Jack Shebat  
i. Question: What area would you like to see prioritized on campus?  
1. Chapman is sick so Jack is covering the presentation  
2. Asked students this question, the most important thing was dining hall offerings and then fitness

d. Civil Discourse - A Conversation  
i. We have three different pieces of legislation today, it’s okay to disagree with one another, but remember to keep it respectful
Ii. we now have a 15-minute time limit on discussion, this is encouraging to have discussions outside of the General Assembly meetings

Iii. If you haven’t spoken up a lot before please try to do so today, and if you usually speak up please allow others to speak as well

Iiii. We are also sending a doodle poll for people who are interested in legestation discussion forum

6. Officer Reports
   a. Cabinet Report
      i. President – Adil Sageer
         The Director of Hokie effect has resigned, myself and Blake will be picking up the slack, but ideally, we’ll have a new director soon
         We’re still working on the budget with the executive officers, we’ll hopefully have a draft next weekend
         The committee working on restructuring how university governance works met, there wasn’t much to talk about this week, but we will continue to meet
         If you have any feedback please pass it on
      ii. Vice President – Blake Barnhill
         The budget should come next week
         Alan has a class at this time which is why he comes in late
      iii. Chair – Sadie Faith Andersen
         Just because you’re on a committee doesn’t mean you only have to do things within that committee, you can do anything that you want to see a change in
         You’re not limited by your committee
         Please know you can come to us at any time, it takes a lot of self-starting, if everyone here did one thing a year, we would do more than the SGA has done in a year
         We’re all here for the same reason, we’re all here to help the body
         Hopefully with the editing beforehand we can make edits with less than 60 people and that will take away some of the time we spend here editing
         We want to have a discussion not a debate, it’s okay to agree to disagree
         It’s okay to vote however you can, everyone can talk in here, everyone can talk to each other
Think about civil dialogue, we have a variety of voices and we can come up with a variety of conclusions will still being respectful, things are not black and white so please remember that personal attacks are unproductive and can hurt people.

Remind everyone to keep it an intellectual space, it’s not a safe space, it’s a brave space.

Try not to roll your eyes or be insulted if someone disagrees with you.

In here it’s easy to feel criticism here is criticism is against you, but the criticism might be about the position not you.

The goal here is to use reason to think through arguments and to use reason while listening to the other person.

You get back what you put in.

iv. Secretary – Victoria Dashevsky
Victoria will share next week if she has anything she wants to share.

v. Treasurer – Alan Balnor
Not present

vi. Advisors – Scott Nachlis, Gabby Singh

Create a timeline, start somewhere, continue to take steps, even if something that was brought up doesn’t align with your committee you can and should still help.

Gabby and I are here as a resource.

We are more than happy to help.

There’s a lot of sickness, a lot of projects, and exams. Make sure you’re taking care of yourself. You can’t lead other people if you’re not leading others.

7. University Governance Commission/Committee Reports

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

- 5 Majors approved and checksheets in Spanish and Russian revised

CSA:
- Tackling the issue of student governance at the university level, discussed what we think the problems are and what we think students have domain over, and we’ll discuss solutions later
- Will be electing a new vice-chair of CSA

8. SGA Committee Reports
   a. Academic Affairs
      - survey about the campus, sending it out again so a lot of constituents can respond
   b. Campus Development
      - Have been working with the climate group, it was really Natalie our committee can’t take credit
      - Legislation for Bike racks
      - Working with scooter groups, we’ll have legislation coming up soon
      - We’re running out of projects, we’ve been really efficient if anyone has ideas for future stuff let us know
   c. Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility
      - President of JSU came to talk to us
      - Town Hall is this (Thursday?)
      - Natalie is presenting her legislation today
   d. Student Health and Wellness
      - Figured out what we’re doing for our town hall
      - Started working on two pieces of legislation

9. Unfinished Business
   a. Bill to Amend the By-Laws and Increase Accountability Amongst Committee Membership (15 min)
      - Jonathan says before we continue the discussion, we need to talk about the definition of an absence that Jackson sent out over email
      - The definition of the absence for GA meetings is different than the definition for committee meetings which is important to consider
      - Caroline motions to delete line 3
      - Seconded
      - Discussion: Megan: do you plan to alter the line or just get rid of it?
Caroline: I don’t think it’s relevant, the absence has already been defined, so why do we need it in the legislation
Jonathan: The absence defined was for general assembly meeting not committee meeting, I would argue we need it

Vote: Nays win, the motion fails

Dani says I’m just a little confused because wasn’t it just said a committee absence was defined as missing an entire meeting so why would we need it here
The GA meeting definition isn’t necessarily for committee meetings
The legislation is just saying what you guys want Judicial Branch to interpret committee meeting, but it’s not in the Bylaws

Stephen: I want the GA to acknowledge that there are few reasons someone would miss a meeting, either they’re sick, they have academic commitments, or they’re not interested. I think this hurts people who are sick or have academic commitments, not those who are not interested. As a committee chair, I’ve had people miss for various reasons - I have a member who gets off work at the same time that committee meetings start, our main reason for being at Virginia Tech is to get an education, if we’re afraid to go to study sessions because we’re afraid of getting kicked out of SGA. The way the legislation is written, sure it stops three, but it also stops one and two. Unless the judicial branch wants to set their standard for what they want to see for an appeal, I’m going to vote no on this. There needs to be some standard through judicial that can be used for future assemblies from someone that’s not going to be here in 10 years’ time. I’m going to be voting no and I recommend others do as well.

Motion to vote
  - Seconded
  - Yays win in favor of voting on the bill now
  - Voting by speaking, voting by hands
    - Nays win
  - Bill Fails

10. New Business

a. Resolution in Support of Encouraging Virginia Tech to Take Action on Climate Change (15 min)

  Reading of Bill: encouraged to check out ASH reports to see where schools are on various climate issues
  Sara Beth: Can you take the h of my name?
  Jonathan: would you maybe be able to reflect the percentage of votes for in the faculty senate?
    - Natalie: it was like 34 something for it and 4 something against, I believe it also passed in the GSA and I believe it is being brought forward to the staff senate; there’s strong support for it and I believe it’s important for us to listen to the student body’s voice
  Jonathan: section five reads, therefore, comma it be resolved
• Seconded
  • Grammatical so it doesn’t have to be voted on
  • Sara Beth: awesome job Natalie, I think somewhere the two appendixes have to be referenced, wait never I see it it’s there
  • No further discussion, Sadie: you can motion to vote today if you want to
  • Scott: the only reason you’d waive a second reading is if something is super time-sensitive, and it would be different if it didn’t pass, the whole reason of having two readings is so you are doing your due diligence from their constituents so you’re not just voting on behalf of yourself but also what your constituents what
  • Jonathan: the faculty senate acknowledges that there’s a difference of opinion in the faculty senate and in VT as a whole, but climate change is (important?) towards the human species, I think the wording of this is very good, so I would encourage everyone to vote in favor of this bill
  • Stephen: seeing as how we would waive the second issue for timely issues, climate change is a timely issue, I motion to waive it
  • Seconded
  • Michael Byers wants to second Scott’s point with holding precedence for why we have the second reading, if we’re using the reasoning used for waiving the second reading, we can wave all of them
  • Jack: I think we can wait an extra week on this one, I want to see what my constituents think
  • Stephen: we are playing catchup with university governance right now, it’s gone through an lot of review, I want to waive the second reading
  • Natalie: what Stephen said about climate change is really true, the university has dragged its feet on this issue, I think if we waived the second reading it shows how important this issue is
  • Vote on if the second reading should be waived
    • Scott: an abstention is you don’t think you can have an unbiased opinion or can have a fair representation of your representatives, it’s not that you don’t care
    • Hand Cout vote: 26 in favor, 15 opposed, 2 abstentions
      • Need ⅔, the motion failed, we will not be voting this week
    - Sara Beth: I encourage you all to vote yes next week
  • Natalie: This is legislation I have been working on for a while, I’ve talked to a lot of people, I’d like to encourage you if you don’t have comments today please look at the legislation and bring comments next week

b. Resolution to Thank United States Veterans (15 min)

• Reading of Bill
• Questions
• Stephen: where is this going to be posted?
  • Conrad: it’s going to Veteran’s affairs
• Sara Beth- do we need legislation to say this
  • Scott - should be voted on if its on SGA behalf or on Behalf of undergrad students
  • SaraBeth - for future reference if members sign a letter there would not have to be legislation
    • Scott - would get messy
  • Stephen- if committee wrote something would there need to be legislation written
    • Scott - yes
  • Jonathan - how did you find the sources
    • Conrad - just the internet
• Discussion
  • Stephen - amend to remove 1st line
    • Vote on remove 1st line
      • Motion passes
  • Jonathan - amend to change VT to VPISU
    • Vote to change VT to VPISU
      • Motion passes
    • Jonathan we should use full name on university “Virginia Polytechnic and State University”
  • Dani - Likes idea of bill, but it can be considered controversial (line 3-5 and paragraph 3 of appendix B)
  • SaraBeth - there are some students that might not agree with certain lines of the letter because of their views in the US military
  • Drew- what is controversial
    • Dani - Some people have a different view that the military doesn't provide global peace efforts
    • Caroline - line 2 of paragraph 3, not entirely true. The military has overstepped
  • Brogan - Thinks 3rd paragraph should be removed, it is far too detailed
  • Stephen - we are talking to vaguely
  • Jonathan - I agree with Stephen. Source 1 is an opinion articles are not necessary; some are very right wing and Christian.
  • Jonathan- Motions to remove source 1
    • Discussion
      • Stephen - where is it from
        • Jonathan - author is a commentator for heritage foundation, a right wing think tank. Providence journal is about Christianity and foreign policy according to website
• Conrad - Any think tank is controversial, the writing in this article was the least controversial he could find.
• SaraBeth - It is a Christian magazine, it is not a scholarly source
• Stephen - Objects deleting source. It shouldn’t matter who the author is because its an opinion piece. Not fair to remove source because of where the author has published before.
• Megan - based on time we should make motions to be mindfully of everyone's time
• Jonathan - motion has been made. Respects but disagrees with Stephen. Is not giving opinion of Author just pointing out differences with the source in comparison to others such as USA
• Caroline - getting rid of Source 1 does nothing bad
  • Vote on deleting source one
    • Motion fails
• SaraBeth - motion to extend by 10 min
  • Motion passes
• Jack - Motion to waive second reding
  • Discussion
    • Caroline - got rid of line 1 so it’s no longer time sensitive
    • SaraBeth - It’s not time sensitive so it shouldn't require waving a second reading
    • Conrad - wanted to get it out sooner because it shows more care
    • SaraBeth - it could have been done earlier to have it out by veterans day
      • Vote to wave second reading
        • Motion passes
  • Discussion
    • SaraBeth - motion to delete 3rd paragraph in appendix B
    • Dani - speaking in support, it is controversial because there are reports and news headlines about military violence towards civilians
    • SaraBeth- Should be taken out because it takes nothing away from legislation but curtails controversial aspects of it
• Drew - the statement does not condone all the military has done, simply talks about the good things
• Stephen - This letter is not about US military transgressions
• Jonathan - Encourages members to vote against removing entire 3rd paragraph, specific examples can be found. Make more subtle changes
• Scott - conversation can become a slippery slope, uphold facts. Point of body to represent students
• SaraBeth - we represent the entire student body, people would not be happy with paragraph 3.
  • Vote on removing 3rd paragraph
  • Motion fails
• SaraBeth - motion to extend by 10 min
  • Jonathan - supports it
  • SaraBeth - 2nd reading is gone so we should iron things out
    • Vote to extend time
    • Motion fails
  • Jonathan - moves to reconsider the vote
  • Sadie - the vote to reconsider is not debatable
    • Vote (reconsidered)
    • Motion fails

• Voting on bill
  • Scott - there are grammatical issues
    • SGA is Student Government Association of Virginia Tech
    • Sadie - it was fixed
    • Scott source 6 should be deleted because Line 1 was removed
    • Jack - reference to source 7 should be changed to 6
  • Voting on resolution to thank United States Veterans
    • Motion passes (Legislation passes)

11. Announcements
• Dylan - be proud of yourselves tonight
• Jonathan - we were making grammatical corrections before voting, it is not appropriate. Discussion needed to be had today, but not proud of the legislation that passed
• Sadie - legislation forum - small group to discuss legislation
• Brogan - people should go home and think about who people in the body are representing. The body represents constituents not themselves
• Caroline - End sexual violence presidents committee - will have open listening sections on this Friday and next week on Tuesday. Great way to get involved with title 9 and student conduct

12. Adjournment
   Motion to adjourn
   Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm