



Senate Brief - February 16, 2023 Meeting

GPSS Game Night - Friday, February 24

The GPSS will be hosting a Game Night on **Friday, February 24th from 4:30 PM to 8:30 PM** in the **Graduate Life Center, Meeting Room C**. We will bring some of our own games, but please feel free to bring some of your own favorite games! Snacks will be provided!

Defend VT Students and Employees' Privacy and Security

Virginia Tech's executive administration recently indicated that it plans to use an artificial intelligence system that would comb through every device (computer, phone, etc.) connected to the Virginia Tech network. There has been an indication that this is not limited to equipment owned by the university and would include ANY device relying on the institution's network.

It has been claimed that this would be implemented to detect "cyber-security" threats. However, very little information has been given regarding this misguided policy that harms the privacy and security of VT affiliates. There is now a petition to call on the community to come together, stand up to this policy, and ask the administration important questions regarding this system.

[Please read the petition and sign it here.](#)

Student Health Insurance Survey

The GPSS and SMI (**Student Medical Insurance**) have put together this survey to gather some feedback about the Virginia Tech Aetna Student Medical Insurance plan from students themselves. The results of this survey will be used to understand what services students are currently getting as well as what they would want out of their health insurance plan. This will be used to advocate for insurance plans in the future that better match with student needs.

This survey is completely anonymous. Respondent emails, ip addresses, locations, and any other identifying information is never saved. Response data will not be made public.

The survey will first ask you questions about your current or past experience with the VT Aetna plan, then questions about your ideal health insurance plan, then finally some questions specifically about the SMI office.

[Please click here to fill out the survey.](#)



Graduate Research Development Plan Reviewers

Reviewers from all disciplines are welcome! Must be a graduate student engaged in research at Virginia Tech, and not a current GRDP applicant. Each proposal consists of an "extended abstract" describing the context, motivation, methods and impacts of an applicants' research, in addition to a budget and timeline for completion of proposed work.

Minimum time commitment is 1.5 hours from January 30-March 10, 2023 - including half hour-long training session and review of at least two proposals. Volunteers may be assigned to review proposals within their general area of expertise, or entirely outside of it. All work can be done remotely.

If interested, please fill out this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/7jgsxb8gra1Dt6Eg9>.

Additional background on the GRDP: <https://gpss.vt.edu/programs/grdp.html>.

Please contact Cissy Ming with questions at cissym@vt.edu.

*Note that we are especially seeking reviewers with backgrounds in science/engineering and quantitative methods.

GPSS Travel Fund Program Applications and Reviewers

Graduate students presenting research conducted at Virginia Tech are eligible to apply for the Spring 2023 Travel Fund Program! Grants may cover registration, lodging, meals, abstract fees and other costs of presenting at an in-person or virtual conference with a start date from April 1-June 30. Students from all disciplines are invited to apply, even if your conference abstract has not been officially accepted.

Applications due February 27, 2023 at 11:59 PM. Please e-mail cissym@vt.edu with any questions, and visit <https://gpss.vt.edu/programs/tfp.html> for full details and information.

We are also looking for volunteers to review applications. Applications can be reviewed from anywhere and with any schedule before March 5th. Email cissym@vt.edu with how many hours you would like to commit.

Parking Survey

Virginia Tech Transportation Services requests that members of the Virginia Tech community in Blacksburg provide their feedback on parking experiences on campus. Please fill out the survey here: <https://virginiatech.questionpro.com/a/TakeSurvey?tt=OcMZsn2q8pM%3D>



Community Outreach

Fundraiser for Earthquake Relief

A disastrous magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck Turkey and Syria on February 6th. The Turkish Student Association at Virginia Tech requests that students donate to the Turkish Philanthropy Funds' Campaign at <https://donate.tpfund.org/team/479874>. Credibility of the philanthropy can be checked through two sources ([Charity Navigator](#), [Great Nonprofits](#)).