

GSAVT-General Assembly

Thursday, February 4, 2021

5:15-6:38 p.m.

Remote CART

>> Sorry about that.

Every time it's something different.

We are just on the cusp of quorum.

>> How many left?

>> I think that's it.

I think we finally hit it already.

Wow, this was a fast one.

>> All righty.

Let's begin.

Our agenda is slightly modified from before.

Basically main modifications are -- since we are meeting in two weeks I figured it would be good to talk about resolutions in the next meeting and we have plenty of time for comments.

So I hope that's okay with everyone.

And two, I think after last meeting I did a little bit of thinking, I thought the open forum at the ended was a lot better because we can have a lot of discussion topics throughout the meeting and just save all conversations towards the end and I think that will give us more time for discussing things as well.

If everyone is okay with that, can we get an adoption of the agenda?

A motion to adopt, a motion to adopt the agenda.

>> So moved.

>> Second.

>> Seconded.

>> Great.

With that, can we also get an approval of the minutes from the last time?

>> Move to approve the minutes.

>> Second.

>> Great. Are we forgetting anything else before we move on?

I guess not.

Let's begin.

All right.

So let's discuss -- I think these are the only two resolutions that we have on the docket right now.

I know we have got them, but please take time to read them and discuss on February 18th meeting.

All right.

So the first thing I'd like to talk about is the cost of living survey that we will be sending out to everyone.

This will go live Monday morning, so that's what, 3, 4 days from now and the goal is to analyze the cost of living for Virginia Tech students that graduate.

I would like to get a thousand response out of graduate students out of this.

Over the course of the next 3 to 4 weeks.

Ideally by the end of February, would be good, but I think we can extend it to maybe the first week of March or so but I think a thousand responses would be good.

This, I'm really going to push this to you delegates and everyone that's on this call to really ask everyone to take a look at your monthly expenses, take a look at your pay stub and see what all the deductions are and answer as accurately as possible.

Based on the previous survey we did, I kind of based on some answers, I kind of got the impression that people are not as acutely aware.

I got a lot of rough estimates and I'm asking as granular as we can and in the next slide, pretty much the entire survey that we are going to ask.

Additionally, a similar survey will be sent to students UVA, VCU and GMU, those are the institutions in the commonwealth of Virginia and they are comparable to Virginia Tech.

So we will send that out to them as well.

So that's the overall survey that we will be asking.

I think what we can do for you guys as well is in the chat, they can drop the Word Doc if it's easier for you to read it on there.

Feel free to either read the slide or open it up via the Word document and take a quick glance at it only pause a minute or so just to give everyone time to read everything.

And at the ended of the minute, maybe I will open up the floor for a couple of minutes to see if we missed out on anything or you think anything else should be added in here.

>> Yes, the captioner is here.

You need to turn captions on on your screen timeshare, though.

>> Hey, Maruf?

>> Yes.

>> I guess for A, is it possible for people to choose multiple options, depending like an event they are half TA or half GRA, whatever specific combination?

>> You know, when I think when we designed the thing, you can put check boxes so you can put all of the above.

>> Cool.

>> Is food missing or am I misreading that?

>> Grocery budget is 31.

>> Thank you.

>> And we will hold another additional 2 minutes to whatever think you may think may need to be added or feel free to ask questions about the design.

>> This might be a silly question, but in regard to question 4, parking, is that something that you're asking about parking passes or like metered parking if you go to campus?

Maybe a little bit of clarification of how people are using parking since there are so many different options.

>> So let me flip the question to you, like, I think what do you think would be the best way to ask it?

>> Is it going to be like a yes-no question, fill in the blank question?

What is the format for how they are going to be able to respond?

>> How much do you pay for parking a semester?

>> Okay.

>> If you're doing a daily pass and you go once a month, so four months in a semester, the way I would figure is that you pay 20 bucks a semester?

>> Yeah, maybe clarify in your question that it can -- I don't know if I would initially include to think of a daily fee if I had gotten a parking pass.

>> Maybe parking cost and then if it needs to be calculated on an individual basis, people can do that.

>> Sure.

>> All right.

Seeing as there are no additional questions, I'm going to move on and if you do, please --

>> I think that there were some in the chat, just so you know.

>> Oh wait.

>> Hadn't been seeing that --

>> So -- so for question one, I think we can add -- so question, what is your monthly out of pocket medical expense cost?

Yeah, I think we can add an additional bullet for that under 5 as to what that would be for costs that are not insurance related.

For -- are we going to specify -- yeah.

I think we should include in the instructions that these are really non-pandemic conditions.

Yes, to Emma this would be sent out via Qualtrics and tweeting Facebooking, whatever social media else that we have additionally this will go out in the weekly news and I think they keep reposting it for 3 weeks if I'm not mistaken.

All right.

Any final questions on this.

Sorry for missing all of that.

Yes.

And June, we will include all of the above under sublet number 5.

One thing that I would like to talk about before I move on regarding all the medical costs and I believe you're on the call and please correct me any part if I incorrectly represents something, the way Virginia Tech, you know, I guess gets medical insurance or negotiates medical insurance for graduate students is we have every few years we kind of seek out various vendors and we signed a multiyear contract with the vendor.

It was assigned however many years ago and our contract is officially up with them I think next year, at the ended of next academic year.

So during the next academic year, it's pretty much GSA's time to contribute whatever information that we can.

So we can either A, get better service, same service, better cost, same cost or whatever else is there.

So section 5 is really more of forward thinking thing for out GSA next year can contribute to changing medical insurance for Virginia Tech graduate students.

>> Maruf, the only thing that I would add is that GSA has the opportunity to put people on the committee for the proposal in the development of call for proposal and in the selection process.

So I think that's pretty important, so --

>> Sure.

Thank you for the addition.

All right.

Moving on.

So subcommittee updates.

We will go with student services first.

I'm not sure who is going to present tonight.

>> It's going to be me.

So we just wanted to give another update about Cook Counseling, so really the only difference from the last time Dr. Klein was here, the only real update is that they have officially implemented a beta version of an online appointment scheduling thing.

So we will get this sent out to delegates and hopefully you guys can send that out to the other students in your departments, but I've got that down here at the bottom.

There's an online scheduling beta thing up now and I wanted to remind everybody that Dr. Klein specifically works with graduate students, so she's with Cook Counseling and works with graduate students.

She has drop-in Zoom hours, so you do not need an appointment.

So any graduate student who has access to Cook Counseling service can -- can drop in and speak with Dr. Klein without making an appointment and I've got her drop-in hours here.

We will send those out as well to all the delegates.

She's got her HIPPA compliant Zoom meeting room.

And I've included her contact information there too so if anybody wants to jot that down, Cook Counseling was a student service that a lot of people pointed out as maybe lacking on the student service's survey.

So they -- they are working hard to -- to try to address some of those issues and one of the things was creating this online platform to create -- to schedule appointments.

So we I will send this all out.

I will send to delegates and we can go to the next slide as well.

And then this was just something that I wanted to -- to mention to everybody.

Monica was working on this, graduate school with the career and professional development office.

They're going to be hosting these job search circles for graduate students.

So obviously a lot of graduate students are going to be graduating in the spring or the summer and this is just an opportunity to get in a group of other grad students who are also searching for jobs and get some shared resources, some peer support during that process.

There's two different tracks.

Industry, government, NGO track and then the academia track so that everybody is kind of separated into the different kinds of jobs they're looking for.

This is a scheduling for the actual meeting times for these things but there's some out of meeting sort of like obligations and things that those that are a part of these job circles would take part in to really enhance the experience.

So I think these would be really good for grad students who are starting to look for jobs.

I will have this sent this out as well to everybody so they can get that out to all of the students in their department.

Does anybody have any questions on either of these things?

Cool, thanks, everybody.

>> I see no questions.

Diversity subcommittee.

>> I'm here.

>> Tell me whenever to pull up the slide.

>> Okay, you can switch the slide.

So the diversity subcommittee met regularly last semester and we are meeting every other week this semester.

We will be looking at data sources for diversity within Virginia Tech but we did start looking at diversity and equity but within tech we will be looking at the 2019 graduate student climate survey, by the numbers website, the engineering graduate enrollment information as well as we have like qualitative info from Dr. Shernita Lee and so we have 3 long-term goals and then we have action items under the goals.

So the first goal is to improve transparency as a graduate school as well as the department level related to recruitment for URM students and you can go on to the next.

So the first action item for this is to have recruitment enrollment levels for URM graduate students by department be reflective by overall enrollment numbers of URM graduate students and then our next action item is to publicly share departmental recruitment processes and efforts for URM graduate students and communicate the number of students that departments can fund whenever they are actually going out to do recruitment of underrepresented graduate students.

So basically we don't know publicly how departments or are actually recruiting URM students or if -- if and now they are doing recruitment, what -- how much funding they actually have.

And you can go to the next one.

And then the next action item is to create a separate recruitment and retention category for international students that's separate from URM graduate students as well as the general population and this would be modeled after UVA, so basically URM students and international students have different laws or policies that affect them so it makes sense to separate them out when we are counting and looking at recruitment and retention and then the next action item is to create a coalition for next generation professionals that would model the coalition for the next Gen life sciences initiative.

So if you look at the -- by the numbers website from the graduate school and go on the coalition next gen life sciences, you'll see that there's tons of information and data about enrollment and how long it takes to graduate and job prospects, so it would be -- this would be a big ask but it would be amaze if that information were out there for other disciplines.

You can go to our next long-term goal, is to secure additional or recommendations to secure additional funding to support underrepresented minority grad students and then the action we can go on again, the action item for that, the first one is to create a full-time A/P faculty or staff position within the graduate school that solely focuses on recruitment of graduate students and so then this would mean that instead of only having one person who does recruitment and retention for all grad students, there would

be one person doing recruitment and so both of them then could focus more on our URM graduate.

And then we also want to recommend the funds be raised to support recruitment for students and developing countries, so that was one of the things that came out, qualitative data from Dr. Lee.

That information -- there are no funds that she has access to when recruiting URM students.

A couple more action items, I think, if you can go to the -- one more.

This one would be to offer a grant writing course regularly for -- within the graduate school and then for the graduate school to find and secure pre-doctoral began funding to support students' research interests rather than students just tagging along for whatever professors' interests are.

And then we have one more long-term goal if you want to go on to the next slide.

So our last long-term goal would be to improve support of equitable experiences for URM graduate students and you can move to the next slide.

I think we have four action items under here.

The first one would be to create mentorship program and student support group for URM graduate students.

And then we also -- these two relate.

We want to recommend cluster hiring of URM employees for the graduate school, departments and Cook Counseling so URM students would be able to have support from people who look like them and know -- understand their experiences, but the support group relates to Cook in a way because I think that could potentially come from Dr. Klein, that would be something that she would be up for.

And I think we have one more slide of action items.

Can you move onto -- thanks.

I'm sorry.

It's a little awkward not having the thing myself.

But -- and then we would like for department leaders to implement equitable hiring processes for GAs and so this would be overall, but, again, it would support URM grad students and make sure there's checks and balances in hiring laws so people don't wonder if they don't get a position, was it because they are an URM student, like there's not really a way to know, so we think the graduate school has good practices, so if the departments could kind of follow along with those and then lastly, we want to

recommend -- the next action item would be to recommend and implement concrete policies and contracts between grad students and advisers related to dissertation work and it looks the URM students are saying they have less support than non-URM students in regards to their dissertation work.

And I think the last slide just asks if we had questions or feedback.

So any questions or feedback?

>> Or general thoughts, I think.

>> Yes.

Anything.

>> I really like the grant writing course in particular.

I think that idea and the thoughts around that would be really helpful for graduate students and I know that there's some that are offered in various different departments.

I know that was more of a long-term goal but from my department in particular maybe I could send you the professor who teaches, his information for coordinating or something like that if you're interested in that.

I just think it's a really good idea.

>> Yeah, sure, you can send that.

And are you going to comment -- please go for it.

>> Yeah.

I said to Emily yesterday because some of this came out in the graduate education task force report, that we have -- there's a committee that's working on identifying all of the courses and opportunities in the grant writing and for fellowship and I think there are 3 or 4 grad students that are on that -- on that committee and so they are helping to identify all of the courses and Kayla, you can make sure that we have the ones that you're aware of.

And they are going to help with the conceptualization of a website that would be housed in the grad school, so the grad students would have access not only to the courses but the fellowships and a number of other programs and all of that will be done this semester.

There's -- we are working -- we talked with the associate dean in the various colleges about how we all can work together so that maybe college of science takes a lead with the NSF grant and biomedical takes the lead on NIH but it would be open to all grad students and there is, so there's a lot of progress that's being made and I will try to -- I will make sure that you are all updated and I don't -- I can't remember all the grad

students who were on this, so -- on the task force, maybe some of you associated with GSA are there.

Anyway.

It's going to happen.

>> Awesome.

Thank you.

Thanks for sharing and explaining.

Yeah.

I wasn't sure if it was public.

It's awesome that you chimed in.

And it looks like another person said that the dissertation contracts would be especially a good idea and thanks Kayla, I will write that down, you sent me the info.

Any other feedback or questions or critics or whatever, anything?

Okay.

I think I'm done then.

Thanks.

>> Thank you.

Just a reminder to all the subcommittees, I would like work to be published on website, please coordinate with Sharon, director of communication so we can get something published and it doesn't have to be every week or month, but whenever you feel like you want to put something up, just e-mail her and get it put up, but I would like something at minimum put up at the ended of the semester just so we can have public records of what we've done.

And I think this would be good for transitioning into next year.

All right, moving on.

Standing committee, we will go to judicial first.

This is a lot of the constitution update so pass this off to Aidan.

>> Cool.

Just going to update on some of the main points from what we talked about a couple of weeks ago now that we've solidify it.

The first thing is we are still undecided with the name because we know that certain people have strong opinions one way or the other about the use of student and the name.

If you have an opinion, we would love for you to speak up.

The next point, if you want to click next, is --

>> So I looked -- I don't know why my computer is like slow, like I'm clicking next and there's a 30-second delay.

>> It's okay, build suspense.

You have to -- you have to tease people, that's how you get them.

So -- go on.

>> We decided just to say at two delegates per department or program, whatever is relevant and, yes, the last thing was in addition to graduate students and professional students, we've added directly in who is represented, we added accelerated masters students because that's a group of people who are not really classified as undergraduates and not really classified as grad students, on paramedic, even though in the final years of such a program, you are primarily taking graduate courses and you're basically a graduate student in terms of your standing.

So I wanted to say that for accelerated master students, thank you for reminding us about this and I wanted to say this for everyone so that if you have or know of any other groups of people like accelerated masters students that we might be overlooking, that it would be great to let us know about that.

Oh, I had a question.

Oh, for the naming, it's between the graduate Senate and the graduate student Senate.

If you have another possibility, you can let us know but it seems like those two are kind of the -- for professional students it's something in the title.

If you have strong opinions on the name, you can contact us as well as if you are have another thing -- so to June's statement, graduate and professional student Senate has been mixed because the physics department's organization is like the graduate physics student society or something.

It's also GPSS so to save the physics students from a lot of headache, at least GPSS is being cut as an option.

>> Much thanks.

>> Yeah.

Well, you have to contend with Jack who wants to beat you up and take the name.

I think with those, those are the couple of things that I would love to hear about and I'm going to put my e-mail in the chat, again, if you have any -- anything to tell me or us as a committee, then just let me know.

And I guess now I will open to, you know, some sort thoughts, questions, et cetera.

>> So before we kind of open the floor for questions, I want to preface for all of this to go in the semester, this should be done by next assembly meeting.

We need to be like squared up with whatever work we have in the constitution by the next assembly meeting.

>> Yes.

>> And open the floor for questions.

>> To Roshan's, I think that Maruf was saying that most other organizations on campus were trying to be known as a Senate, is that correct?

>> Yeah.

The goal of governance is to identify everyone in Senate so everyone will be in the Senate now.

>> Yeah.

Like I'm saying --

>> Let's put it this way, if we are considered a governing body, then we are a Senate. You want to form like your own student group, you can be --

>> Yeah.

But I mean, I like the attempt.

Like I said, I'm not making the rules here, I'm just trying to get something that is relatively represented.

Post graduate Senate.

PS.

I mean, I like the name ideas coming in.

>> Professional graduate Senate, PGS.

>> Yes, since my question didn't get read, did the SGA have anything of us claiming the accelerated masters students because that looks like something they would probably prefer to have --

>> Wait, I'm sorry, can you repeat that?

>> This is Kevin here.

It looks like the undergraduates would want to keep the accelerated masters students --

>> I think that for the majority of the duration of the program, you're an undergraduate but in a lot of cases your last year or maybe two years, you're primarily a graduate student, you just have the name accelerated master student.

>> So you don't think SJ would want to keep those students?

>> Sorry, I'm see if there was a question related to this.

>> I --

>> Go ahead.

>> Go ahead.

>> Okay.

My -- my opinion right now is no.

What the current model of restructuring is they are looking at lifetime things and not academic things and if you call it accelerated master student, your final years or 3 semesters whatever it is, your academic concerns come in and that's when we can maybe better address it.

>> Okay.

Because in my experience people who wanted to stay for masters an extra year typically never considered graduate students in -- I'm fine taking them, I just wanted to --

>> I think to that point, I kind of like what Jack said, like if they wanted to participate in GSA they could.

Like I don't think GSA would have a problem with them.

I think according to like hokey spa, you are an undergrad until you grad -- like you get all of your undergraduate credits, however, you -- you become an accelerated master's student in my experience last semester or year and you can take, you know, graduate classes, some people start looking into their research and stuff like that.

So, I mean, it's kind of a weird situation where like you are kind of both, but I thought it was beneficial like if somebody wanted, if they were already forward thinking towards their graduate program and stuff and if they wanted to more associate with GSA, that we could certainly take them.

So that was just my thought, but I mean, I think it could potentially be either like they could kind of choose.

>> Okay.

Thanks for the thoughts, guys.

>> The Senate professional graduate students -- I don't think we should not -- there's a smaller organization with the same initials.

Was that the only reason?

>> At physics department.

So far, yes.

I think the physics people would certainly appreciate not having to overarching governmental structures to have the same exact acronym.

>> To be fair, at the time I sent the suggestion, I don't think anyone else had any opinions so, you know --

>> I'm just trying to be cool.

I don't want someone to come back and say, Aidan, why did you let this happen and for me to be like, well, I don't know.

>> All right.

I think by the next meeting we will have an official poll with a few options and we will officially decide then and incorporate all of that to the final document.

Did you have a question because I saw you --

>> Yes.

What about switching the words as somebody suggested putting the professional first, I believe?

It was kind of the same title but switching the words.

>> Yeah.

I would be okay with that.

I'm okay with what was GPSS as well.

I'm just going to say that if someone worry to come up to me and have a problem, I would have someone else tell me why that's not a good enough reason for this, you know.

I mean, it's not a big issue.

I don't think anyone has really raised an issue with it but it's just something that is true and I'm throwing it out there for people to consider and keep in mind.

>> All righty.

Thank you, everyone.

We will document all of the names and come up with a poll for next time.

>> Yeah.

>> All right.

Finance committee, is Alexis here?

>> Yes, I'm here.

>> Great.

>> Okay.

So we've been working on the phase 1 of the graduate student board and it's set to begin march 2021 and then it's going to end on August 2021 and at that point we will move on to the next phase.

The operating budget that -- sorry if my Internet is a little bad, so the operating budget that we will have for pilot phase 1 is \$50,000 and that may increase as we progress with this.

And then it's under review by the GSA delegates and the SECL and we will make sure that you guys have a chance to read this and go over everything before it moves forward.

Okay.

Next slide.

Okay, so this is the plan and the intended timeline for everything that we are doing right now.

So first, we are going to have the SECL review and the delegate review and we will receive comments, feedback and recommendations at that time and that will occur now till February 9th.

And then the following week, we are going to address the recommendations as the finance committee and then the following week after that we will have the E-vote and after that, we will have the CSA review and vote and then the pilot phase will begin.

Next slide.

>> I should have put in here -- I didn't realize until earlier today that CSA needs two readings to this so the date my get pushed back, I think the 18th will be the first reading and the second reading is two weeks after that.

There's some adjustment to that, other than that, it's accurate.

>> Cool.

So as we mentioned last week, sorry last meeting, time flies, but we are going to have 3 members of the finance committee including the finance director of GSA and the chairman of the finance committee and the secretary of the finance committee.

So these people, the chairman and the secretary will be people that are not on the finance committee.

I don't know if that's a little confusing, but there's going to be two -- basically two additional delegates that will serve as the secretary and the chairman, I think.

Oh, never mind.

Sorry.

The chairman and the secretary will be the other finance committee members and then we will have the additional executive board member which is Maruf probably and we will have 3 graduate student assembly delegates in addition to that.

So it'll consist of having people, so if anybody is interested in joining, you can e-mail Tawson at tawson@vt.edu.

>> I think I sent a link.

As mentioned in the timeline, this is kind of a fast-moving thing.

So please provide all comments and things to that document by February 9th.

We will be having a few meetings next week to ensure that all of this gets around the time that we proposed.

And I will open the floor for questions to Alexis or myself.

All right.

Seeing as there are known, we will go to the executive board updates.

I will be -- is Sabrina on the call first of all?

I don't think she is.

Okay.

So I will speak on her behalf.

The board of visitors' representative application is open.

Please apply.

If you want more information for what the board member does and all of that, please contact Sabrina Sturgeon, she's our rep this year.

The application is due February 12th, but it may get pushed back but that's not official yet but pretend it's February 12th.

And the link for all of that is there and I think that was also included in the agenda.

So please get more information there.

And, of course, apply.

June.

>> Okay.

Something exciting should pay attention, wake back up.

Potentially we may have a social event in person in May, looking into the first week of May.

Some of you have already started filling out the survey I posted right at the beginning of the chat.

Please fill that out now so I have an idea of what you want and it's not just what I want.

I would be happy to do what I want if I don't get information from you.

But I would like it to represent what you want to happen and what you would like to be there, so please fill that out for me and bring anything to my attention that may not be sitting right with you or you think should be included.

The idea is to have it at an outdoor venue.

This is Glade Road Growing, the farm there and the Rising Sillo Farm Brewery and the address at the top-right hand corner of the slide in the clouds.

You can look that up and find that it is a, I guess it's about a mile and a half off of the bus route, path called the Heritage Trail so people can use biking, they can walk, there's also the opportunity to park a limited number of cars and we can look into transportation as well for people with disabilities that might be able to be negotiated with Blacksburg Transit and the date I'm looking at is early May, I'm asking people that any day works better for them than others.

So I'm pretty much on the survey have laid out all the days and potentially a few different times and the idea was to have it so at least every graduate student would get a free drink and I'm also looking into seeing if I can negotiate a free meal at least for all of you delegates that show up, kind of like as a thank you for being a delegate, but also maybe also for the graduate students that show up.

If it was not going to be free, it may be cheap.

Again, negotiated with the venue to be like maybe 3 to \$5 for something like pretzels and cheese or a vegetarian option.

So I'm still in negotiations about that.

If you have strong feelings about what should be going on especially around the food, maybe you should be e-mailing me about that.

And I would appreciate the feedback and ideas.

And as with the CDC guidelines and the university restrictions, it would be socially distanced, there would be limited attendance.

It would be a ticketed event that you would be required to RSVP prior to so the only people showing should be very aware of what's going on and they will be let in as they are basically accounted for in the RSVP.

So that's kind of like what I have so far.

And this kind of goes with what I came in here into office as you would say on about buying local and supporting local businesses.

This is also a very green business that engages in organic agricultural, has solar panels, is zero waste, sourcing food locally and brews its beer and Kampuchea which is nonalcoholic fermented drink there on the farm as well.

There's a lot of outdoor space for people to be able to spread out.

You can bring picnic blankets and I think you can even bring your own food and I could also talk to them about that as well.

And I just have some questions that I've been soliciting feedback for.

Here I am copying the link again, and I have pasted again the link to the survey in the chat.

If you would like -- oh, also, I'm asking if anybody first off would want to be part of the committee to plan this and be there but also do you play the guitar, do you do stand-up comedy, do you want to do a slam poetry, share your talents with the fellow graduate students.

This could be an opportunity also just to have some fun and do something like that, open mic, bring your guitars, banjos or whatever, I think that could be really fun and a great opportunity for all of us to share and have a laugh maybe if somebody is good at comedy.

Yes, I would love to see Maruf do a comedy routine as well.

Okay.

So that's all I have for you.

If you have feedback for me or questions, feel free to e-mail me.

Also I can pause for a second if anybody wants to vocally ask me any questions or any ideas of what you want now.

>> One thing I didn't think to say, this is Emily, it might be helpful to just put your contact info and or whoever you want and ask if people have access needs or accommodation needs, whichever for people with disabilities who may have food allergies or whatever.

So I know you mentioned that you want to do that, but if you put it on the advertisement it's helpful.

>> Yes, especially that's important, Emily for when we do RSVP's, that's a field so people can request accommodations and also notice dietary restrictions or requests.

And Aidan said they have a ton of outdoor space.

It's a whole farm.

Any comments questions?

Okay.

Fill out the survey, thank you.

>> I will consider doing a comedy bit.

Will not confirm that, though.

Thank you, June.

Programs.

Is Martina here?

>> I'm here.

Nothing new or to update since the last time we met two weeks ago.

Things are continuing to move along.

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail, but we can continue on with the rest of the slides, Maruf, because we've already seen this material.

>> Okay.

Quick question, when is the deadline for all of that because I don't think that was on this slide for --

>> So they aren't open, the program -- excuse me.

The abstract submissions for research symposium are due next Friday and that's on the top of the form.

>> Great.

>> And the weekly emails.

>> All righty.

Thank you.

>> Yeah.

>> And now we've reached open forum with a little under 40 minutes left if I'm not mistaken.

So I will open up the floor, fill questions and whatever you want to talk about, today's topics, new topics, you name it.

If I could ask that please use the blue hand function and let me acknowledge you first.

How do you really feel about the naming because that got a lot of attention and maybe we can decide a name now.

>> I personally like graduate Senate or graduate student Senate.

I think graduate and professional student Senate is slightly long, but just my opinion.

I don't necessarily care.

>> I for myself have no strong opinion as long as I don't have to like orchestrate someone complaining to me about this detail of the changing of the constitution.

Of all the things that I could argue about, this is the one I least feel like arguing with someone about.

That's the entirety of my desires and opinions.

>> Thank you for your honesty, Aidan.

>> Yes.

>> I would like to just point out that it's faculty Senate, staff Senate, undergraduate Senate, so it could be graduate Senate to keep it consistent, but --

>> I thought post graduate was an interesting option as well.

>> We have a question in the chat about the vaccines.

Can we confirm the most up to date vaccine info for graduate students?

There's a parking refund?

>> Yeah, I can't talk about parking refunds.

That's not my responsibility.

Graduate GAs, GRAs are in one seat and that has been confirmed multiple times when we get to 1C, the 1C groups includes you all as well as faculty staff at tech so it's a large pool except for those that are -- that fall into 1A and 1B.

And as the Provost put out a statement today which includes this, so essentially that's the most updated information that I have.

As I get additional information, it's usually posted on the university's ready site and I can get it to you all if I find out something -- something different.

And can I just also -- I want to go back to professional, just to make sure you will all choose the name but we have pro-professional degrees, that's the DVM and MV.

And that's part of the reason for wanting to include the professional because they have they're not always included or think of themselves as grad students.

So that's why it's important to if you don't name with professional, then it's very clear that they are included, the governance changes, the whole governance system that will be changing.

It is your Senate, it's your Senate that will be representing professional students.

The DVM and MV.

That's just FYI.

>> I think that while you're speaking Dean DePauw there's another question in the chat.

>> Yeah, is that about graduate students that work for the university in some capacity?

>> Yeah.

I think the more clear get to the point question -- I guess the Provost says they are anticipated to be one 1C.

>> Yeah.

Let me -- what I understand is right now you are in 1C.

It is -- that's where you will be.

The language that he's using this is many the health department changes its mind, which is not expected, anticipated or anything, so I would not have used anticipated to be I understand why he would say that.

Sorry, we are -- that's the -- you are in -- right now you are in 1C.

>> I think the only example right now I could give is a real-world example, initially when the rollout happened, I think 1A was 75 and up.

Age 75 and up and that changed to 65 and up.

So I think the anticipated part comes if the definitions change then we have to anticipate that.

I'm not speaking for anyone.

That's just my opinion.

>> And that did change but that's been the only real change and that was the CDC, you know, change, I believe that then moved that category but the -- I don't anticipate any -- I don't think there's going to be any change.

CDC is not going to get into who is working and who is not working and so faculty, staff and grad assistants are people who are working for the university and that's GAs, GTA and GRAs.

And our vaccines for remote students are being considered, yes, they are.

There are -- well, right now there are -- there is testing going on in northern Virginia, so you can sign up to be tested and when we get to the implementation or the vaccination, there will be a plan.

It's probably already in place but not announced.

There will be a plan to get it out to students outside of Blacksburg.

Who is administering the vaccines, we are not administering the vaccines.

That's all done by the department of health right now.

>> Regarding the question about legislature saying that we might get a bonus, it's unclear.

That's -- if that does happen, it'll be kind of an across the board thing for everyone in assistantship and that will happen in December if it does happen.

And so there's real no information.

There was a question earlier about undergrads changing their name and, yes, the undergrads will be known as the undergrad student Senate.

I forgot what the question was about the transportation fee.

Can someone repeat that because that was like some chats ago and I can't find it at the moment.

>> I'm asking all the questions I think some people have, so one of them is what's up with that transportation fee refund, is it happening or are they just saying maybe it'll happen, so get excited.

>> So the official statement is the board of visitors has to approve on it and they -- their next meeting is March 17th, sometime in mid-march and once that happens we will figure it out or see what actually happens.

Jack, I see your hand is raised.

>> Yeah, it's about a different issue if we want to talk about the transportation fees, though.

>> Do we have final questions or comments on transportation fee?

Jack, go ahead.

>> Cool, is there any sponsor of the bills coming to the next session particularly the environmental security service?

>> Not that I'm aware of.

Not that I'm aware of at the moment.

>> Okay.

I would like -- if somebody could reach out and I have ethics concerns about the proposal specifically considering the problematic language about overpopulation on the resolution and then also the xenophobia on page 7 of the actual document as well as misrepresentation of climate change and I wanted to raise the ethical concerns as a comment but I would like to hear the reasoning behind the specific language choices and maybe it's just uncaredful stuff or whatever, but I would -- I would like to talk to somebody if that's okay.

>> Sure thing.

We can arrange that for next meeting.

Any other questions?

>> Can I ask which document, Jack, because I looked through some of them but --

>> Yeah, so the -- the concern I have is on the -- all of the concerns I have are on the resolution and motivation for security center and they point to overpopulation creating security concerns and that's a heavily -- the deeper issue, though, on page 7 of the foundational document that they include as appendix with the resolution where when they are talking about their purpose, they are talking about climate refugees in a particular xenophobic way that I find that town ethically troubling and I want them to not do that or establish a center for it.

>> There's a question, I guess, around elections.

When was the last day for people to put themselves up for an exec position for next year, have people considered this or told their friends about it?

I guess by next meeting we could have brought up the concept of an election, but I will, you know, ask someone from the judicial committee.

Aidan, Ben and Phil are the judicial committees.

[Laughter]

>> I thought this was -- yeah.

I have no idea.

We have not thought about that at all because of constitution stuff, but that can be brought up at our meeting next week for sure, our committee meeting next week.

Yeah.

I think we will talk about it and forward whatever info we think of to everyone.

>> In the meantime may I suggest that anyone who is interested in running for a position, please get in touch with the current E-board person who is at the position you're in the mood for, would like to get more information about, we have -- we are all open books and we are ready to talk to you.

>> All right.

>> If you don't want to ask any more questions, you can motion to end.

>> I will give people 30 seconds before I motion to end the meeting?

>> I compiled the short list of possibilities of names that I could find in case anyone else was also not keeping track of possibilities that were being thrown down in the chat.

>> Thank you, Aidan.

>> Yeah.

>> Okay, seeing no further discussion, I move to adjourn.

>> Second.

>> All right.

Thumbs up, party sign, whatever to officially -- all right.

Thank you, everyone, for coming this evening.

Our next meeting is on February 18th, stay tune, that's two weeks from today.

Agenda and everything will be sent the Monday prior and you guys have a solid briefing of what's going to come up.

I think one thing I forgot to mention for next meeting is I think the tuition and fee thing proposal should be live by then.

I haven't had an official date of when that's going to happen but it should be live by then, so we will talk about that next time.

And, of course, going back to the top of the meeting, make sure to send out the survey to all of your constituents.

That would be live very soon.

Yes, happy spring break to everyone tomorrow.

And to our captioner, thank you for coming and captioning for us.

And I will stay live till 7:00 if you guys want to chat.

(Ended 6:38 p.m.)

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