



Richmond College Student Government Association

2020-2021

Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, September 1, 2020

“To create and ensure the highest quality of life for Richmond College.”

I. Roll Call

II. Visitors

III. President’s Report

A. Rules for meetings:

1. Be attentive
2. Keep meetings concise, and around the 9:00 conclusion mark

B. The Student Equity Summit will be at the end of September; those dates will be mandatory for the RCSGA, and senators will be required to attend at least one of the three events held per night. More information is forthcoming.

C. Voter registration, Africana Studies, and Free Speech will be major policy focuses for this legislative year.

IV. Vice Presidents’ Reports

A. Administrative

1. More camaraderie events soon-to-come! The Admin. committee is accepting suggestions
2. Admin. has developed voting procedures for the Class of ‘24 elections, which will be sent to the body.

B. Academics

1. **VP Greven will be attending the faculty senate meeting this Thursday** to discuss the recent letter sent to the administration calling for student oversight

of interim policies, and is also working with WC to revitalize the General Education Curriculum.

2. Any specific academic issues that arise may be brought to the attention of the Academic committee.

C. Finance

1. REMINDER: At this stage, clubs are not allowed to distribute any items due to COVID concerns. For the same reason, CSI is not currently allowing the creation of any new clubs. The Finance Committee does not intend to contest these regulations.

D. External Affairs

1. The External Affairs Committee has been meeting several times throughout the year, and intends to forge stronger connections with student organizations in the future.

2. The Committee also intends to work with housing to better address student concerns.

V. Class Chair Reports

A. Class of '23 Report: If interested in a movie night in the Greek Theater, reach out to Chairman Engstrom

VI. Dean's Report

A. Members of the body should continue to advise their friends to comply with COVID guidelines, and avoid large gatherings.

VII. Announcements

A. Senator Manley is working on a food survey on campus, and those interested in working with him should reach out.

B. Senator Walker is working with an organization that deals with voter registration and civic engagement.

VIII. Open Floor

A. President Polcari: Recently, a letter was sent to the administration requesting student oversight over the enforcement of COVID policy. Senators are advised to read the letter and provide feedback.

1. Dean Boehman: After a recent conversation with Dean Genoni regarding the letter in question, Dean Boehman would like to hear student concerns.

2. VP Greven: Several concerns are outlined in the letter, but a few of the primary thrusts are that (1) The Student Body recognizes the need for a shift to campus safety, but rejects the idea that there exists a necessary trade-off between fairness and safety. The letter takes contention with the fact that under the current system, there is no vehicle for student oversight when it comes to violators of COVID policy. The letter goes on to state that including organizations such as the Student Conduct Board is a viable option practically, and can even accommodate the University's need for swift action by acting from a position of review.

3. Senator Modi: Several instances of "dangerously fast" justice have cropped up in the short span of time students have been on campus. Faculty is distanced from campus life, which makes judgement by a body of one's peers all the more necessary.

4. VP Spear: The Dean's office has released a letter emphasizing the need for drastic measures when public health is called into question. Senator Spear is reluctant to believe that any administrator would purposely harm the interests of a student. The Student Conduct Council is also more likely to be lenient, increasing overall risk.

5. Senator Manley: Part of the purpose of the University is providing a space for students to feel safe, but part of that safety should be protection from arbitrary justice. The idea of a Rapid Response Team in the Student Conduct Council is necessary and practical.

6. **Senator Modi:** Would RCSGA be open to a system where a student can appeal to the Student Conduct Council after the Administration makes a decision?

7. **VP Greven:** Punishments may be less severe with SCC oversight simply because sentences currently being handed down are inordinately severe. The University already utilizes the SCC in incredibly contentious cases; the necessary trust is already in place. Also, in extraordinary instances, the SCC could review decisions already made by the administration. By acting as a review body, both safety and due process are protected. Bias is also more worrisome when it's more concentrated.

8. **VP Spear:** It's unclear whether or not the Student Conduct Council has the ability to take a holistic approach to the current situation, and act in the interests of faculty, staff, AND students. Also, the SCC cannot disclose the results of a session, so transparency will not be affected to any large degree. Keeping someone in a state of uncertainty through the appeal process suggested in the letter is inefficient and unfair to the student.

B. Dean Boehman: To clarify on the question of the SCC, issues involving suspension or expulsion do not usually go through the Student Conduct Council, but to the administration. The student is given a sanction that can be accepted or denied; if denied, the process of appeal goes through a board in a process that can take up to 45 days. The faculty do not believe that the student body will uphold the interim policies, and so pressed for the current set of rules.

IX. **Closed Meeting**

A. Focus on personal initiative; make your own projects, goals, and resolutions to pursue. It's crucial to get things done this semester

B. It's a good idea to prepare for a conversation on Greek Life beforehand, so we can table the issue until the next meeting.

X. **Adjournment**