

Good afternoon members of the Board,

It's only been a few weeks since we last saw each other, whether it be at that outstanding sesquicentennial celebration or during commencement weekend. Only recently did I feel like I knew what I was doing as a BOV rep, and now it is sadly my last report to you.

While the position of Undergraduate Representative is singular, I have never felt alone in this work. I've got a whole team working with me through the Undergraduate Student Senate, especially our senate President Caroline, Vice Presidents, and senators, many of whom hold leadership positions in cultural organizations, class office, Greek life, and more. Our Senate has held Town Halls and discussions regarding sexual violence and mental health resources, which have informed my reports to you. USS has also provided a great avenue for information to flow from the Board back to the students. After each Board meeting, I presented an update to the Senate on highlights that affect the student body the most. Thus, students worked with administrators who were tackling issues such as sexual violence, the math emporium review, College of Architecture restructuring, international student experience, and others. I am excited to see what the future holds for the USS and proud that I was able to help during this first year.

I've had a chance to do outreach outside the university as well. I was able to travel to Richmond to meet with members of the General Assembly through a USS trip. I have also built a small but growing network of Board reps at universities across the Commonwealth, meeting with the reps from JMU, ODU, and UVA. We have shared best practices and challenges about the role, and highlighted what issues are unique to our respective universities.

Looking to the future, many changes are coming to the student experience next year, especially for incoming students. There will be a completely new model for on-campus living known as the Residential Well-Being Model. This system is meant to address the mental health issues that I have spoken to you about, through Cook counselors embedded within residence halls, integration of our award-winning Hokie Wellness programs, and changing what it means to be an RA (now "Residential Well-Being Leader"). Speaking as a former RA, this model seems like a good idea. I found that the most fulfilling part of the role is getting to know your residents and build a community, but often that was bogged down by menial work. Now, RAs will be able to specialize in what they are good at, and have more support from Student Affairs and Hokie Wellness regarding conduct cases, leadership development, and mental health. RAs are typically

the first responders during mental health crises, but a week of training does not compare to years of experience that new embedded counselors would provide. Since this is a completely new model, some within housing are worried that this all sounds good in theory, it may not work well in practice. Many details still need to be solidified before the start of next semester. Fortunately, there is an ongoing search for a new Director of Residential Well-Being, and I had a chance to meet with one of the candidates recently. If all the candidates are of equal caliber to that one, then I think we will be in good hands.

I spend so much time talking about this new model because along with it there are coming changes to new student orientation. There will be expanded opportunities for virtual engagement throughout the summer, and a longer period of “Weeks of Welcome” right before classes start. This extended orientation period, in combination with a timing closer to the start of classes, is superior to the old system where students crammed tons of information into two days in summer, most likely forgetting everything by the time they start. In addition, the Sexual Violence Culture and Climate Working Group has focused upon integrating sexual assault prevention work into the residence halls. The idea is to encourage bystander intervention, recognition of environmental factors, and increasing the dialogue around consent, alcohol use, and sexuality. This may be accomplished through the new RA training, as well as increasing the avenues for feedback about the culture. Once again, the residence hall is not the only place where sexual violence occurs, but it is a step in the right direction, and I look forward to the expansion of the working group’s scope come next fall.

With a new year comes goodbyes, and I want to recognize Frank Shushok, who will sadly be leaving us for Roanoke College. I’m sure everyone here has a story about Frank, but I would like to briefly share my own. We met in my freshman year after I received an Aspire! Award, and shared lunch at D2. I was intimidated at first, but Frank asked his trademark questions and I realized I could open up and be real with him, and administrators aren’t so scary after all. He invited me to join the Student Life Council, which kept me engaged with current university initiatives throughout my time at Tech. Years later, Frank encouraged me to apply for the BOV position and the rest is history. Frank saw the potential in and mentored so many students in his 13 years here, and he will be missed. Thankfully the office is in the good hands of Frances Keene in the meantime.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board for the opportunity of a lifetime. My favorite thing about this school is the Hokie community, and through this role I have had a chance to interact with more Hokies than I ever could have imagined, whether it be students, staff, faculty, and the Board. It has been a privilege to get a look behind the scenes at how this university works, and in a small way to shape it. It has been challenging and rewarding, and I have learned lessons that I will carry with me for a long time.

You haven't seen the last of me – I will see you all at the Sesquicentennial Celebrations happening over in Switzerland. Speaking of Switzerland, our incoming rep Jamal just got back from his study abroad there. His character and friendliness really shined through the interviews, despite being on a Zoom call with a six hour time difference. I hope you look forward to Jamal's term next year. Thank you.

Remarks to the Board of Visitors
June 2022

Phil Miskovic, Graduate Student Representative to the Board

Good afternoon Rector Long, Vice Rector Baine, members of the Board, President Sands, administrators, guests, and fellow Hokies—

Last week I was in a meeting with stakeholders in the National Capitol Region regarding the housing crisis in that area. As you may know, the University made the decision to close only university-operated student housing in the region last month. At a time when [housing in the US has become harder to afford](#), we've made the crisis worse for our students by removing 65 beds from our inventory before having a new housing solution in place. According to at least one faculty member, students are either dropping out or withdrawing their acceptance because we can't help them with housing.

Stakeholders compare the level of urgency in this situation with that seen in Blacksburg a few years ago, when we over-enrolled freshmen. Rather than saying to the incoming students, "sorry, but you'll have to find your own housing off campus", within a matter of months we had contracts in place and had converted multiple hotels into new dorms for the year. There was a high financial cost, but that cost was seen as preferable to the reputational cost that comes with the alternatives.

Let's talk about reputational cost. Virginia Tech enjoys a high reputation among alumni, prospective undergraduates, and within many graduate programs. We also have a reputation for being a "good value". A recent [article by Money.com](#) ranked the best colleges in America by value. According to their methodology, Virginia Tech was ranked 22nd out of 623 colleges and universities in the nation. We're 8th among our 25 peers. Pretty good.

But when you drill down into the raw data, you get a different picture. Specifically, our average price when factoring in grants is \$21,400, which drops us to 21st among our peers. Average price for low-income students is \$11,930, or 20th out of 26.

This begs the question, are we living up to our land grant mission if we are unaffordable for low-income communities? How does this impact our reputation?

Now let's assume affording to get in the front door isn't an issue. Are we still living up to our land grant mission if some programs are unaffordable for many? What does it say about our emphasis on diversity and inclusion if only students from higher-income families can study abroad, live within walking distance of the Blacksburg campus, or afford any housing in northern Virginia? How does this impact our reputation?

Based on the methodology used for the article, part of the reason we're ranked so high in "good value" is because of high early career earnings (we're in the top 50 at about \$73,000 average). But what about those who want to go into public service or [academia](#) or return home

to Southside or Southwest Virginia where they earn more modest salaries? Are we living up to our land grant mission if our graduates need to pursue private sector careers in economically strong communities in order to realize a return on their educational investment?

Of course, I can't talk about affordability without mentioning the possible increase to tuition and fees.

When we increase tuition and fees, even small amounts incrementally, we make Virginia Tech less and less accessible to some. One percent here, three percent there—it adds up over time. I have a niece or nephew due to be born in just a couple of weeks. Naturally, Uncle Phil is going to not-so-subtly encourage him or her to become a Hokie. But how much will a degree cost 18 years from now?

Are we and our staff in the budget office looking at tuition and fees primarily from a bottom-line, business perspective, or are we accounting for the human component and our land grant mission as well?

I understand all too well the challenges you face in weighing advice and recommendations from staff against the very real needs, concerns, and struggles of those financially impacted by your budgetary decisions. In fact, I believe I have the unfortunate distinction of being the only person in this room who has signed a tax increase into law. It's not an easy thing to do. Raising revenue by creating more financial stress for students and putting them further into debt—should be a last resort, taken only when we fully understand the data, have exhausted all other alternatives, and have plans in place to mitigate the impact on our most vulnerable students.

To the last point, I have a proposal: whenever staff proposes tuition or fee increases, the Board should be given a comprehensive analysis of the impact on students, broken down by demographic, and compared to our peer institutions. Funding should be automatically set aside to increase need-based aid so that there is no adverse impact to low-income students.

There is much, much more I'd like to say on this and the many other issues facing students but I'll have to leave that in the very capable hands of my successor, Anna Buhle. I also invite you to read the attachments to my report.

I want to end by thanking the Board for the opportunity to serve as your graduate student representative. It's been an amazing year getting to know each of you and the inner workings of the University. I've learned an incredible amount.

As a result of the exposure I've been given here, I've accepted a graduate assistant position with the Office of Student Affairs, working to mentor student leaders. I'm even adding higher education administration to the long list of possible career paths I'm considering post-graduation.

(As a side, I'll point out that Julian Burruss was appointed our 8th president while still working on his PhD).

I also want to take a moment to recognize some of the many people who often go unnoticed, those who work behind the scenes to make our meetings a success: Kari, Kim, Ellen, and others who keep me and Paolo on track. VTPD for their constant presence and professionalism. Facility and catering staffs. And the audio, visual, and other IT technicians who make our meetings seamless, even when we forget to speak into our microphones. Thank you for all you do for our university.

Finally, if you're ever in the historic Town of Crewe, be sure to look me up or at least stop by and visit our award-winning railroad museum.

Thank you.

Attachment 1: Top issues facing graduate students

Attachment 2: After Action Review

Attachment 1: Top issues facing graduate students

Graduate students are an inherently diverse constituency. Some come directly from undergrad and may still be supported by their parents. Others are farther removed from earlier education and completely independent. Still others are supporting their own families and may be working while trying to pursue a degree. Some have assistantships, many do not. They come from across Virginia, the United States, and the world to earn degrees that will take them into industry, academia (research and/or teaching), and public and non-profit sector careers.

The issues graduate students have are as diverse as their individual circumstances. Broadly speaking, these concerns are not unique to Virginia Tech; nor are they new concerns. They are complex, without easy solutions. When solutions are created to address issues, other related concerns arise. While we may never be able to fully solve these issues, we need to continue to keep them at the forefront of decision-making at all levels of the University.

Top issues (in no particular order):

1. **Affordability:** In order to be competitive among our peers and maintain a positive reputation as a desirable place to earn a graduate degree, we need to ensure Virginia Tech remains affordable. Directly related to affordability are:
 - a. Tuition and fees: are we living up to our land grant mission by remaining accessible to prospective students from low-income communities, or have our costs priced out those individuals? Can a student afford to return to Southside or Southwest Virginia after graduation to live and work, or must they live in more economically developed regions in order to earn a higher salary and realize a return on their educational investment?
 - b. Stipends: are the stipends we pay graduate students sufficient for cost of living? Do they reflect the value and cost-savings graduate students provide the University in terms of research, teaching, and other work?
 - c. Housing: are we engaging with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders on innovative solutions for the affordable housing crisis? Are we viewing the needs of graduate students with the same urgency as undergrads? Are we giving equitable attention to the diverse housing needs of each of our extended campuses?

2. **Mental health:** Especially in a post-COVID environment, mental health has become a key concern for graduate students. Work-life balance, affordability, and world events all contribute to the increased awareness of and need for mental health support.

While clinical services are required for some, other mental health support structures—like anonymous peer counseling, whereby students can call to talk to someone and/or vent their frustrations; and whereby peer counselors can connect callers with resources they may need—are lower-cost, community-based systems that can help a large portion of those in need.

3. **Community:** In some respects, graduate students lack a broad sense of community, the history, tradition, rituals, and beliefs that create a common “Hokie Spirit” from our diverse parts. The following paragraphs attempt to explain levels of community, where graduate community is lacking, and the benefits of working toward a stronger graduate community at all levels.

Description of Community

Let’s assume there are four levels of community for graduate students, shown in Figure 1 below: the Graduate School, Near Internal, Far Internal, and External. External factors influence community but can also be influenced by community

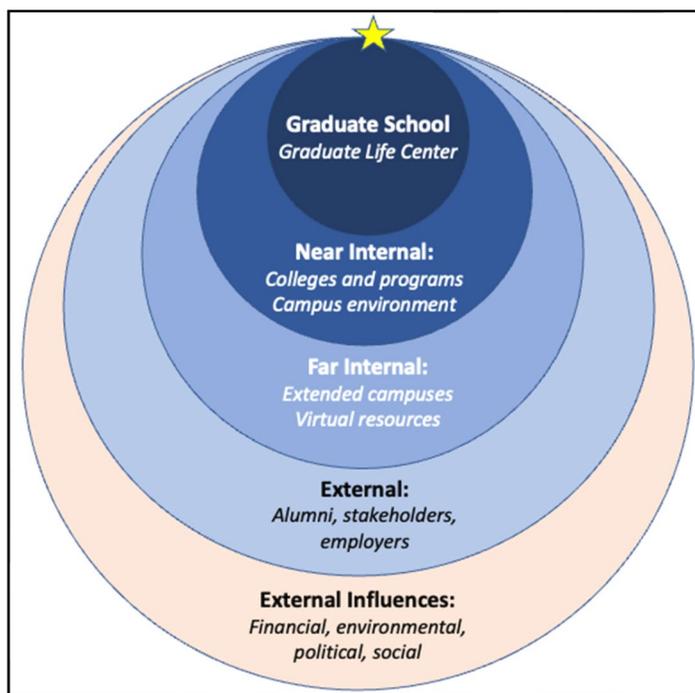


Figure 1: Levels of community

The first level, Graduate School primarily serves graduate students in need of services and ensures no student falls through the cracks. They offer a plethora of academic, financial, mental health, and quality of life resources, annual events, GLC space, and student representation. This level of community is strong, thanks to the hard work of Graduate School leadership and staff.

The second level, Near Internal, are all graduate students on the Blacksburg campus. These are University-level resources and services (primarily marketed to undergraduate students), as well as any resources and efforts within individual colleges and programs. Community at this level is hit-or-miss. Community-building efforts are disjointed and dependent on individual programs. There is no common unifying “Hokie” culture.

The third level, Far Internal, are students on extended campuses or those taking classes virtually. There are some resources available through Blacksburg campus and some through extended campuses. Some on those campuses perceive that their needs ignored (housing in

NCR, for example). Like Near Internal, community-building efforts at this level are disjointed and dependent on the individual campuses. This makes the campuses feel separate from University and not a part of one community.

The fourth level, External, refers to alumni, parents, friends of the University, donors, fans, employers, and other stakeholders. Engaging with this level of community comes primarily from Homecoming, sporting events, and fundraising solicitations, as well as branded merchandise. Here there's also significant, underutilized opportunity to connect graduate students with alumni in more substantive way through networking; and to tap into graduate alumni network for financial and other philanthropy.

External influences—policymakers, stakeholder organizations, competitors, and peer and aspirant universities—both impact community, but can also be impacted by community. For example, if external stakeholders (influential alumni, for example) and PT grad students in positions of power feel as part of an ongoing community, there's untapped opportunity to greatly influence the environment.

Benefits of a Stronger Community

- Communities form social networks, which serve as safety nets and informal insurance networks for community members
- Strong communities have strong social capital. Social capital can supplement and supplant limited resources
- Reciprocity is critical to communities at each level—individuals not only take from the community, but they are willing to give to the community, trusting that their gift will be reciprocated at some unknown point in the future
- Lifelong relationships are created through engagement with community. This is especially important for alumni engagement and fundraising

Attachment 2: After Action Review

As some of you know, my professional background is in emergency management. Part of the emergency management process is to conduct an After Action Review (AAR) following each event, identifying the strengths, areas for improvement, and an action plan moving forward. With that in mind, I've created a very brief "AAR" for my time in this position.

This document should not be seen as a criticism of any individual. In any organization, unwritten policies, processes, and "ways of doing business" develop over time for a variety of well-intentioned reasons. Also keep in mind that this evaluation was written from my own perspective, without collaboration (as AARs normally have), and may be missing critical context. Nevertheless, I include it with my final report.

Strengths

1. Openness of administration and senior staff

Throughout my experience, the administrators and staff I have worked have been exceptional when it comes to genuine concern for graduate students. When the Graduate or Undergrad Representatives come to the administration with concerns, administrators and staff do an excellent job of either working to resolve those concerns, or at least explaining the broader context of the situation. Stakeholder engagement is also positive in other ways, including planning new and exciting initiatives. Administration provides forums for open discussion of issues (the President's Advisory Group, for example), and everyone is quick to respond to inquiries for data and more information.

2. Openness and approachability of the Board

At any public college or university in Virginia, Board positions are part-time, voluntary, and generally filled with individuals very successful in their fields of work. Given this, it would not be surprising if Board members seemed aloof or otherwise disinterested in the concerns of students. This is not the case at Virginia Tech—our Board is composed of an incredible group of leaders who demonstrate genuine concern for the student experience and the issues we face. Every member I've worked with over the last year has been engaging, keenly interested in the issues students face, and has treated representatives like colleagues. This kind of collegiality is necessary for strong member-representative relationship and is something we do extraordinarily well.

3. Spirit of *Ut Prosim*

From Board members to administration to staff to stakeholders, everyone approaches the roles and issues from a perspective of how to best serve the Virginia Tech community, rather than themselves. This spirit of selfless service permeates all aspects

of our university. We may disagree on processes or details, but even in disagreement, we can trust that everyone involved has the common good foremost in mind.

Areas for improvement

1. Stakeholder engagement

As mentioned in the “strengths” section, administrators and staff are open, responsive, and engaging when issues are brought to them. But in other areas, stakeholder engagement on policy is less apparent, especially when dealing with fiscal matters. For example, at our November meeting, at the request of administration, the Board approved a mid-year 9.1% increase in rates on all major meal plans.

Meal plans are required for all students living on-campus—graduate or undergrad. The Code of Virginia requires public comment for any proposed increase in tuition or mandatory fees. However, though *required* for many students, meal plans are not considered *mandatory*; thus, no public comment period was required by Code, and none was offered.

Moreover, neither the undergrad nor graduate representatives to the Board were made aware of proposal until it was presented in committee. The process and proposal were entirely without involvement, engagement, or even awareness of those students directly impacted or their representatives.

The same criticisms can be leveled against the mostly opaque budget process that leaves out key stakeholders (i.e., students, those most impacted by tuition and fee decisions), until a single, state-mandated public comment period. Generally, this public comment period occurs after the majority of the legwork is done on the budget and feedback received is seen as unlikely to influence decisions.

As a public administration student and practitioner, I can attest that it is a much easier, more efficient process if we make decisions, present them to our constituencies, and make minor adjustments based on feedback. But as desirable as that may be for both bureaucracy and leadership, failing to engage stakeholders in the process from the onset misses the opportunity to understand different, external perspectives. We also lose out on any innovative alternatives that come from collaborative discussion.

2. Representative involvement

A significant amount of a student representative’s time is spent explaining to our constituencies what the Board of Visitors is and, subsequently, what our roles are. While annual representative recruitment efforts are beginning to yield more applicants (such as a nomination form included in this year’s process), lack of awareness likely still accounts for relatively low application rates. Lack of awareness also means fewer students come to us with concerns.

One approach to increased awareness of the positions is to increase presence of representatives at university events. This doesn’t mean Board events, donor receptions,

and other infrequent occasions; but rather the more frequent public-facing events involving senior administrators. If the event is (1) high-level; (2) public-facing; and (3) directly or indirectly impacts students, representatives should be made aware and involved. Examples include Homecoming activities and other festive events; facility openings and other milestone activities; and major public announcements. While the President is the face of Virginia Tech, representatives should have a ubiquitous secondary presence in the public-facing side of the University.

Having a constant student presence would not only increase awareness of the position, but also increase the symbolic nature of the role and highlight the University's emphasis on students.

3. Actively engage student representatives for information

Student representatives are given near total discretion in how they carry out their responsibilities. These representatives, who are traditionally appointed for a single one-year term, may not have a strong grasp on how to execute their role until their term is almost over.

Currently, providing the Board with situational awareness on the issues facing students is focused on the representatives bringing to the Board issues important to students. While this is important, it at least partially overlooks half of the Board-representative relationship potential: Board members seeking out specific information from representatives.

Student representatives are the Board's eyes and ears on campus. We have the ability to gather data and provide it to the Board. We can inquire about specific issues or concerns and provide the student perspective. For example, a discussion at a recent meeting focused on the Math Emporium. It would not be difficult for us to seek out and provide to the Board different student perspectives on the Math Emporium, if that data was requested in advance.

We are here to serve the Board, to provide information on the student perspective the Board deems critical. A formal system or process developed by the Board to request data gathering from representatives on issues seen as important to the Board would benefit both the Board and representatives as they develop relationships with Board members and learn the finer skills of representative leadership.

Proposed Action Plan

1. Engage stakeholders and/or their representatives in key policy process
 - a. Collaboration should be viewed as the default approach to all policy-making
 - b. Administration should create a collaborative element to the budget making process

- c. If an item is to be included on the Board's agenda of significant importance to students, administration should engage student representatives before the meeting
2. To increase community awareness of Student Representative positions, symbolic nature of the role, and highlight the University's emphasis on students, administration and staff should include Student Representatives in all events that are (1) high-level; (2) public-facing; and (3) directly or indirectly impacts students Include student representatives.
3. To take full advantage of the Board-representative relationship and to gain broader situational awareness early in decision-making, the Board should develop a formal system or process to request data gathering from representatives on issues seen as important to the Board or its members.

Staff Senate Constituency Report
Virginia Tech Board of Visitors
June 6- 7, 2022 Presented by Serena Young, Staff Senate President

Rector Long, members of the Board of Visitors, President Sands, administrators, and guests: Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you about Virginia Tech's staff.

2022 Staff Awards

These last couple of months have been busy ones to say the least. As with each closing of spring semester we have the opportunity to recognize some of our extraordinary staff. I wanted to highlight the award recipients below:

The McComas Leadership Award Recipients:

- **Maryann Cline** from VT's Animal Cancer and Research Center
- **Sharon Dunn** from Vet Med
-

Presidential Principles of Community Award Recipients:

- **Tamarah Smith** from the Office of Summer and Winter Sessions
-

President's Award for Excellence Recipients:

- **LaTawnya Burleson** from College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences
- **Julie Carlson** from Hokie Wellness
- **Connie "Lynn" Heffron** from Vet Med
- **Max Ofsa** from University Libraries

Staff Career Achievement Award Recipients:

- **Kathy Dowdy** from Student Affairs
- **Lynne Tolbert Jones** from the Women's Center
- **Melissa Wilson Obenhaus** from the Office of Career and Professional Development

As I have mentioned many times before, we have so many talented staff here at Tech. Staff that not only excel in their day-to-day jobs but exemplify what UT Prosim truly means by going above and beyond. I am so honored and proud to work alongside and represent these amazing individuals!

Employee Appreciation Day

Beginning in 1993, the university has celebrated staff each year by hosting a Staff Appreciation Day in May for staff and wage employees. This year Human Resources turned this event into the first-ever Virginia Tech Employee Appreciation Day. Included were faculty, staff, and non-student wage employees. In addition, the Hokie Wellness Health and Benefits Fair was combined to provide an enriched program for all. Staff Senate and AP Faculty Senate hosted a booth at the fair to share the information about shared governance. There were over 3,000 individuals who attended and from most accounts the event was a success and lots of fun.

Commonwealth Telework Policy

As you know Bryan Garey and his amazing team have put a lot of time and effort into our future of work program, with President Sands' ongoing support. On May 5th, 2022, the Commonwealth of Virginia published a new telework policy. Bryan and his team have worked tirelessly with the Governor's Office trying to resolve this issue for all of Tech's employees affected by this new policy. This policy could have potentially effected thousands of employees, but we recently learned only the university's classified staff are affected. The university is giving all classified staff the option to convert over to university staff should their new telework agreement not be approved. This could be a good option for some, but there is still concern because some classified staff don't see converting to university a good option given their leave balances and the changes that would take place. This is an issue that we need to stay vigilant about.

Fifteen Dollar Minimum Wage

We are all feeling the pain at the pumps, buying food, and pretty much anything at this point. Staff would also like to support the present work/efforts in raising all employees here at Tech to the \$15 minimum wage. This is slated to happen by 2026 with gradual increases, but with our current inflation rates, housing cost, childcare etc., people can't afford to wait until 2026. They need this extra support now to be able to take care of themselves and their families. We should not have any employee or student at Tech that must decide whether their bills are going to be paid, their family gets fed, or having enough gas to get back and forth to work, but we do. Please consider making this concern a priority and not waiting until 2026.

Staff Morale

Staff morale continues to be at an all time low. We have had a 25% increase of individuals to leave Tech and it's about a 50/50 split between Faculty and Staff. There are many reasons they are leaving but one thing isn't being seen and that is, in most cases it's not about the money. Leadership and supervision issues, harassment and bullying, and inflexibility and inequality are at the top of list of issues affecting retention. These concerns and issues have been talked about many times before from the constituents and little to no action has taken place. Action is needed now. This issue should be a major priority moving forward.

It has been a pleasure being a part of the Board of Visitors this year and I thank each every one of you for all you do! I look forward to serving this next year with you as well and can't wait to see what we can accomplish.

On behalf of Staff Senate, I would like to thank you for listening today. I appreciate your attention and I thank you for the opportunity to share Staff thoughts. I look forward to sharing our ongoing progress and collaborating with you all to make this year the best one yet!

Sincerely,
Serena D. Young

Administrative and Professional Faculty Constituent Report
June 7, 2022
Presented by Holli Gardner Drewry, A/P Faculty Senate President

Good afternoon, Rector Long, Board members, President Sands, Provost Clarke, administrators, and guests. I am honored to be here to represent more than 2,000 administrative and professional faculty members.

In the two months since my last report, the A/P Faculty Senate has almost concluded its inaugural year. The election of senators and officers for FY23 is complete and representatives are identified to fill university commissions and committee positions. Later this month, the senate will meet to complete installations and set the agenda for our second year.

Top of mind for A/P faculty across the university is the Job Architecture Project. Due to this project's impact on A/P faculty, the senate has scheduled monthly updates from Human Resources on the project progress at our senate meetings.¹ The senate recognizes this is a complicated process and believes the outcomes will allow for improved equity in salaries and competitive compensation among A/P faculty performing similar work. And as you have heard in other presentations, this project will also align job descriptions and titles, and help identify career pathways. The senate looks forward to opportunities to contribute to the project.

The senate continues to receive concerns from A/P faculty members regarding unwelcome climate and working conditions that don't fall under the umbrellas of diversity, equity, and inclusion or gender-based violence and harassment. Stories of hostile work environments, bullying, and unfair treatment have been shared. Some A/P faculty members feel unable to make official reports because of fear of retribution or fear filing an official report may potentially harm a significant other's advancement opportunities. I am sure you agree that a welcoming and positive environment is vital to retaining talent and protecting the university from risk. For that reason, I urge you to consider adding "Workplace Climate" to "Campus Culture and Climate" on the Enterprise Risk Landscape list.

Other areas the senate is focusing on this summer include:

- identifying ways to support supervisors and encourage an environment that allows them to exercise their professional judgment to manage equity in the workplace. The recent changes in the telework requirements from the Governor's office have created some challenges. While this ruling did not directly affect the work agreements of A/P faculty, many A/P faculty manage employees impacted by the state's new process. The decisions on the submitted requests are pending.
- collaborating with the provost's office and the office for policy and governance, A/P senate leaders are reviewing the A/P faculty section of the faculty handbook, with particular attention to the Grievance and the Allegations of Unprofessional or Unethical Conduct processes
- learning more about the work situations and challenges for A/P faculty working outside of the New River Valley with a specific focus on extension employees located in each county²
- looking forward to contributing to the work of the Task Force on Freedom, Expression, and Inquiry, and,
- continuing coalition-building efforts with the other areas of shared governance. A/P faculty senators want to find ways to work together to create a truly shared governance experience. For example, Staff

and A/P Faculty Senate representatives recently hosted a shared governance table at the employee benefits fair to answer questions and encourage colleagues to participate in their representative senate.

As you can tell, the A/P faculty continue to embrace the opportunity to be active in university governance. I welcome your feedback and look forward to sharing additional updates on the work of the A/P Faculty Senate.

1. I paused to thank Bryan Garey for supporting the monthly reports.
2. For example, when the university is open on a state holiday Extension offices are required to be open, but many Extension offices are in public buildings that are closed to the public for the holiday.

Constituency Report for June Board of Visitors Meeting Faculty Senate

1. Summary of past Academic Year

- Faculty Senate meetings:
 - Full Senate meetings (every other week): 16 (including two closed sessions)
 - Cabinet meetings (every other week, alternating with Full Senate Meetings): 14
- Processed resolutions:
 - Commission on Faculty Affairs: 5
 - Commission on Student Affairs: 5
 - Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policy: 15
 - Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policy: 7
 - Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs: 7
 - University Council: 2
 - **Total: 41**
- Presentations:
 - Student Village Master Plan (Nov. 12th, 2021)
 - Climate Action Commitment (April 8th, 2022)
 - Standardized Test-Optional Policy and Report (March 25th, 2022)
- Statements:
 - Academic Freedom (Fall 2021, [link](#))
 - Against Targeted Harassment (Spring 2022, [link](#))
- Major Accomplishments:
 - Finalizing and approval of the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws
 - Discussion and Faculty Senate Approval of the New Shared Governance Model including the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Council
 - Development and codifying of resolution commenting process
 - Streamlining Faculty Senate related processes: communication strategies, record-keeping, hybrid mode, closed session

2. Faculty Senate Theme for Next Year

The separation of faculty into disciplines, and of the university into colleges, colleges into departments, and departments into programs, creates intellectual and administrative barriers to developing a faculty consensus on issues that need to be resolved through university-level governance.

In the next few years, the Faculty Senate will need to develop methods for ascertaining and shaping an overall faculty view on issues that come before it. To do so will require consistent and timely engagement between senators and their departments, between departments and college faculty associations, and between faculty associations and the Faculty Senate.

Many of the structural and procedural changes required to facilitate this level of engagement will be completed at the start of the 2022-2023 academic year. We need to focus now on changing the governance culture, on demonstrating to faculty and administrators that working with the Faculty Senate leads to tangible results, and on asking for greater faculty engagement, particularly from senators. Structures and processes are important but useless if we lack the commitment to apply them for their intended purposes. As Faculty Senate leadership, we consider helping bring life to this new system of governance our most important responsibility in the coming year.