Student Town Hall Meeting Minutes
Thursday, Oct 3, 2013
Time: 12:30pm
Location: Foster Hall Room # 300

Attendance: Dr. Michael Shackleford, Chief Michael Wallace, David Meadows, Mr. Jahliel Thurman, Mr. Corey Scott, Mr. John Griffin, Ms. April Bennett, students and staff members.

Meeting brought to order with introductions from the panel members listed above, along with present departmental staff representation. Mr. Jahliel Thurman, SGA President, delivered an opening statement and welcome.

Topics/Concerns Discussed

Student Concern #1 New printing procedures
VSU student desired an explanation for the new printing procedures on campus that directly affect students printing access and capability.

Mr. David Meadows responded to the above student concern as follows: A new printing, faxing, and scanning agreement has been established with ESI, the provider of all campus printing services. VSU is moving toward the 21st century. It is not economically feasible for each office to contain desk printers. The new printing procedure allows anyone to print to any printer campus wide using their VSU 1 card. Computer lab printing is currently being reconfigured. Students may also register their VSU 1 card at any printing machine. Students also have free scanning capability from the new machines.

Student Concern #2 Quad A&B fire drills frequency
VSU student expressed concern regarding the number of fire drills and the frequency of fire drill in Quad A & B residence hall. The student mentioned that at least 20 fire drills had taken place in a short period of time.

Chief Michael Wallace responded to the above student concern as follows: Sometimes alarms may go off or be triggered in buildings that differ from an actual fire drill. There may be something triggering the alarm to sound. The Fire Marshal and Safety Manager will check both Quad A & B for possible alarm triggers.

Problem later identified by safety staff. A faulty elevator switch had been the result of numerous alarm triggers in both Quad A & B. Safety officers and/or facilities management are working to have the faulty elevator switch repaired.
Student Concern #3 Classrooms over capacitated.
- VSU student expressed concern regarding the number of students allowed to attend classes that are not validated. These non-validated students take up space in the classrooms but their attendance is not recorded in the class availability report, as a result registration continues to fill the unaccounted spots.
- Some professor do not like for students to stand and will not teach a lesson with student not seated. Professors have made students without a seat leave the classroom (resulting in the student missing the lecture).

Student Concern #4 Professor/Instructor course section assignments
VSU student expressed concern regarding course instructors. The student reported that there was no professor assigned to her class for 2 weeks. As a result her class was 2 weeks behind schedule. The student wanted to know how course sections opened to students without an assigned professor.

Dr. Shackleford responded to student concern #3 and #4 as follows: I will notify the VP of Academic Affairs however in certain circumstances adjunct professors were not brought on until after the university financial verification was established to pay adjunct professors.

Student Concern #5 Campus gate access
- VSU student expressed concern regarding gate accessibility and security. The student witnessed a Macy's gift card being used as identification to pass through the campus main gate on Oct 2, 2013. The student also feels that the front gate (by the Greek rocks) should be open and/or gate hours extended.
- Other students also agreed and express their desire to open additional side gates during weekend daytime hours.

Chief Michael Wallace responded to the above student concern as follows: Additional gates are closed due to lack of officer manpower and are not financially able to man multiple campus gates. There is not currently enough campus traffic to open other gates. Chief Wallace express that he would revisit traffic patterns to make possible adjustments. As a result of the current gate access procedures campus victimization has declined. I response to the above listed student concern Dr. Shackleford directed the DPPS to complete a one week survey of the campus gates.

- Student also expressed concerns of only motor vehicle drivers being required to show identification when entering the campus gate. Student gave the following example: a car full of people attempting to enter the gate and only driver is asked to show identification. What about the passengers?
• Student expressed that VSU 1 card swipe does not work at UAE apartments. Student should not be made to park in the Food Lion parking lot when visiting other students that reside in UAE.

• Student suggested VSU 1 card be swiped at the campus gate to verify ID is valid and up to date. Has witnessed former students gain access by using old VSU 1 cards.

Mr. David Meadows posed the following question related to the above student concern: Do gate security guards know what to look for to verify current student ID cards versus old student ID cards?

Chief Michael Wallace responded to the above student concern and question posed by Mr. David Meadows as follows: Students are responsible for their guests. If a student brings guests on campus they are responsible for their behavior, however the DPPS will periodically swipe cards and conduct identification checks as a means of verification.

Dr. Shackles responded to the above student concern as follows: VSU students “trip” when we question their guests and other friends of students. The students are not supporting the campus safety mission by doing so. Community visitors often case the basketball court and steal student items. Student should be more safety and security conscious. We need students to help get the word out about safety and security. Help us help you.

Additional student comment/suggestion: UAE holds identification of VSU student and non VSU students as collateral during visitation.

**Student concern#6 Effectiveness of calling 5411**

VSU student and RA in Moore hall expressed that calling 5411 when incidents occur in the residence halls has not proven affective. The student stated that as an RA when she has called 5411 she was told by an officer “RAs can’t call us for everything.” As a result of her concern the student sent an email to Dr. Briggs and her current RE to make them aware.

Chief Michael Wallace responded to the above student concern as follows: We do not condone officer’s negligence and would address this concern.

**Student concern#7 Pants down and hats on in buildings**

VSU student questioned if the university could fine students that do not wear their pants appropriately or wear hats in buildings?
Mr. Corey Scott responded to the above student concern as follows: The student code of conduct states that pants must be worn at the waist line and hats must be removed in buildings.

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student concern as follows: Students can be sent to JA for this form of conduct violation but not enforced in any other way.

Mr. David Meadows responded to the above student concern as follows: Politely ask students to pull up their pants or take off their hats in buildings. We can change this behavior by ladies requiring improved behavior, ladies have the power.

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student concern as follows: Don’t allow young men use foul language around young ladies.

**Student concern #8 Dining Facilities**

VSU student expressed concern regarding Jones Dining Hall hours of operation and break down time frame. Student questioned if Jones dining hall closes at 2:00 pm when should the staff members began putting food away? Student has witnessed spilled food be put back in a food container while standing in line. Student has also observed staff members closing food lines and putting food away 15 minutes before 2:00 pm limiting student’s meal options.

Students express a need for healthier food in the dining facilities. The food is most often greasy, cooked with lots of butter, and/or fried food.

Students wanted answer concerning the closure of Foster Hall dining corner and express that such closure inconvenienced students. Student with course schedule related conflicts feel they should be allowed to carry out food from Jones dining hall for convenience.

Student question: Why can’t students sell food?

Mr. John Griffin responded to the above student concerns as follows: Food in the dining facilities should not be put away until 2:15 pm. If food is put away before 2:15 pm students should locate or request management right away. Student’s select the food menu options by sending in suggestions. Mr. Griffin encourages students to bring recipe ideas from home to introduce to the dining staff however student bringing food from home to serve or inviting other companies to bring food to serve to students is a liability for the campus.

Mr. David Meadows responded to the above student concerns as follows: I decided to close Foster Hall and I made this decision based upon the student
max versus our vacancy rate. Economic issues created a perfect storm, enrollment declined; as a result our dining operation was negatively affected. We chose to keep Gateway and Jones open, extend hours of those 2 facilities and close Foster Hall dining corner. This decision was made to keep student fees from increasing. An attempted was made to delay the closure of the Foster Hall dining corner but the circumstance could not be avoided.

Mr. John Griffin responded to the above student concerns as follows: to further accommodate students Austin’s Grill is now available at Gateway. 700 students are served in 2 hours (8-10pm) time frame as a result of the extended hours at our Gateway location. Carry out food would create cost for carryout containers.

Mr. David Meadows responded to the above student concerns as follows: a survey will be sent to all students in 2 to 3 months to revisit food services and the possibility of brand restaurants on campus. Be on the lookout for the email communication.

**Student concern #9, Athletes study hall**
VSU student expressed concern regarding student athletes teaching themselves during study hall and questioned what is being done to assist athletes in maintaining their academic performance.

**Student concern #9 Freshman administration testing and Faculty evaluations**
VSU student expressed concern questioning what could be done for students to take the freshman administration testing more seriously. She has had to “hunt” down professor evaluations from previous semester because they are not being submitted in a timely manner.

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student concerns as follows: I will take this concern to the VP of Academics. There are no consequences associated with the scoring of the test. We can do better job of explaining the purpose of the assessment. Will coordinate with Dr. Ridley in this effort.

**Student concern #10 Grading scale and Registrar**
VSU student expressed concern regarding professors that still give +s and -s as grades. Student does not want GPA affected.

Dr. Shackleford responded to the above student concerns as follows: the + or - will affect a student’s graduate GPA but not undergraduate GPA. A decision has been made to eliminate the + and -, will research to verify everyone is using the same grading system.

In closing SGA President, Jahliel Thurman provided an update on SGA initiatives.
• SGA will be promoting a scanton happy hour M-F to give away pencils and scantrons to help students prepare for final exams.
• SGA will also be promoting Trojan pride efforts by trading any college t-shirt for a VSU t-shirt. Shirts collected will be given to the local homeless shelter.
• An Entrepreneur fair for students to advertise their talents will be held in the near future.
• Crush Fridays will be introduced to students to bring a student union “vibe” to Foster Hall.
• SGA is currently attempting to improve the shuttle schedule for students.
• Male initiative program by VP of SGA, Hysheem Calier will be introduced in the near future. Its purpose will be to mentor male students.

Mr. Thurman also thanked all who attended in support of the Student Town Hall meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.

Minutes submitted by Ms. April M. Bennett