Chair Koopmann called the meeting to order at 12:08.

New member Arvind Sohoni, MSA Student representative, was introduced to the committee.

Chair Koopmann introduced Vice President Sue Eklund to the committee.

VP Eklund introduced Johanna, who deals mostly with “critical incidents” to the committee to give a presentation on how the Office of Student Affairs deals with such situations.

Joanna noted that following the Virginia Tech incident, the office decided to do a review of the processes and procedures of security. One thing that could be improved was that not much of the University campus knew they could call on the Office of Student Affairs for information and/or help.

PRESENTATION:

DSA overview

One main responsibility of the office is student mental health. This program uses a comprehensive approach: research, innovative programs, and sharing information. The Mental Health work group plays a large role in bringing different offices on campus together to share and collaborate on mental health issues.

DoS “Area” vs. “Office”:
DoS Area works on programs for students, like SAPAC, LGBT, International Center, DoS Office oversees all area programs and focuses on campus climate and critical incidents.

DoS Office is the central area for dealing with incidents: hate crimes, a high-profile student death, working together with students to get counseling etc.
Campus Climate
The Office works with initiative groups and the Expect Respect campaign to address campus climate. Expect Respect is a campaign to primarily report hate and bias incidents to give support and get an idea of the campus climate. There is also a sponsored student group working to get the message out.

Critical Incidents
There are 6 DoS Staff to manage different kinds of critical incidents. They work to address incidents with a system of intervention and care for students: ex. in a conflict between a number of students, staff might split up to make sure all students are being supported. The office also serves as a central organizer for helping students navigate and work with the right resources. In a large incident with media involvement, the office focuses on maintaining consistent and accurate information, as well as distributing that information responsibly.

Policies

Emergency Suspension: this is a response for a student who is a danger to themselves or others, and may be voluntary or involuntary withdraw (all thus far have been voluntary)

- How does insurance work with students with mental health issues who may not have coverage once they withdraw?
The office actually spends a large amount of time working to address this. In the case of some grad students, the department has financed some of their care. In other cases, they’ve helped students identify some community resources. However, this is, in fact, one of the areas we recognize needs to be improved upon. Another way we’ve worked to help students is offering parents who know there is a pre-existing problem, the option of purchasing tuition reimbursement insurance.
  - Maybe we could track the families who purchase that insurance, in order to learn more about how people are leaning about student’s mental health before they come.

Examples of “Critical Incidents”
  - Groups of students
    o Fires
    o Death of student
    o Hazing
    o Natural Disaster
  - Individual Student
    o Academics
    o Assault/stalking
    o Hate/Crime/Bias
    o Injury
    o Missing Students
    o Physical or mental illness
Chair Koopmann asked if there is a system for dealing with overprotective parent situation? And also, do you deal with determining the issue of hazing--what constitutes hazing, and if it is actually that serious?

In terms of helicopter parents, we don’t see much of that in actuality. Usually if a parent calls, there is normally a really good reason for them to call us. For such “helicopter parents” we sometimes transfer them to CAPS counselors who help work with the parent to help them understand the transition to college. In those situations where parents are worried they haven’t heard from their kids, we’ve sent emails to students just to establish contact, or maybe even ask if they need help dealing with their parents.

In terms of the hazing issue, there are lighter situations which student organization groups and the Greek Life office deal with on their own. We’ve interfered in a respectful way to pull out the most serious incidents, and safety issues, and have also established an anonymous hotline to report hazing. The University policy and student organization rules specifically prohibiting embarrassment and psychological abuse, but most often those issues dealt with are much more serious.

Reporting a Critical Incident
DPS, Housing offices, Academics, personal contacts, hospitals (working strongly with psychiatric unit and inpatient services), CAPS, and SAPAC all work with conveying information to the office about situations.

The DoS office partners with 20+ other resources and offices on campus, literally going through a checklist, to make sure they address all possible concerns for a student.

Contact DoS About…
Disruptive students in academics, student organizations etc. helping you manage the resources you may need.
Distressed students, again helping you navigate the resources available to them.
Complex problems involving outreach and resource navigation.
Hate/bias incidents

- In the case of students or grad student living off campus, how are we able to intervene with a student who is missing or who we suspect to be severely distressed? If DPS cannot go there?
  - AAPS has been extremely cooperative, helpful and sensitive in partnering with us to deal with those situations.
- For example, a grad student who might have employment as a GSI, dealing with mental health issues, will not always willingly resign their post. How do you deal with that?
  - There are a number of policies that apply to the situation, and we have worked out situations in the past where we were able to relieve a student of their GSI position, while also maintaining counseling services through department funds. We work hard to balance between our responsibility to
the grad student in supporting them, and also making sure the undergraduate being taught are not suffering academically.

MThrives is a case-by-case referral program designed to help students deal with insurance issues, negotiate scholarship and academic issues, and help with transitions in critical health situations.

Oftentimes people are hesitant to talk, after the Virginia Tech situation, about students with mental health issues and “dangerous” students. But these situations are coming up, and our office is unique in doing outreach services, keeping in touch with students, families, hospitals and departments. We can handle the difficult situations of confidentiality and managing safety, care and collaboration.

- How does the student-athlete discipline process interact with DoS? Is this the responsibility of the athletic department?
  - All the student-athletes are also students. However, they often they become so isolated, they assume things will all take place in “the world of the coach.” We partner with the Athletic Dept. on many things, and have been working with them and making some strides this year.

- Perhaps you could also work with libraries to train student workers to deal with the difficult situations that come up while overseeing that space.

Chair Koopmann thanks guests for coming.

Chair Koopmann then brought up the issue of student-athlete class registration. We really need to work with student-athletes to help them get priority registration. At other universities, student-athletes get the classes they need, and don’t have as much difficulty dealing with faculty resistance to make-up exams and special circumstances.

It was also pointed out that they also don’t receive credit for being on those teams, maybe there’s something that can be done about that, like in the case with dance and marching band.

The committee agreed to send recommendations concerning all the student communities who presented in October to Colleen to compile for next month’s meeting.

The committee welcomed a second new member, MSA-representative Anton Vuljaj.

Chair Koopman convened the meeting at 1:38.