

VIRGINIA TECH
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
STRATEGIC PLAN





I. WHO WE ARE

The Student Government Association at Virginia Tech was established for the purpose of:

- Expressing opinion on University affairs as the Legislative Branch deems appropriate and necessary.
- Establishing, within the law applicable to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, an effective means for advising and responding to the University Council, University Commissions, the Administration, the Faculty Senate, the Board of Visitors, and the public on University Affairs.
- Participating in the formulation of academic and education policies which concern more than one college, division, or center at the University.
- Considering policies, programs, and other matters as the administration, college faculties, student organizations, and individuals of the University may propose.
- Affording avenues and procedures whereby communications within the University may flow freely, fully, and systematically.
- Helping create, maintain, and protect a University environment conducive to the richest growth of scholarship, learning, teaching, research, and respect for dignity and rights.
- Accepting and sharing responsibility with the Administration and Faculty in all efforts to improve the stature and value of the University.

A. Mission:

We desire to reinvent the role in which student government serves in undergraduate students' daily life by creating and pursuing positive change based upon their needs. We embody the motto of "Ut Prosim," and selflessly serve the students, by establishing a lasting dialogue, which will inspire real progress and encourage individual empowerment. Finally, we are steadfastly committed to enhancing the collective experience of the entire Virginia Tech community and providing a voice to every viewpoint through active feedback and outreach leading to a unified Hokie nation.

B. Vision:

We will make Virginia Tech a leading institution by:

- Hearing and acting on student concerns
- Improving quality of life
- Appreciating collective unity through difference
- Embodying an "Actively Caring" culture
- Building leaders that serve a larger purpose

C. Values:

- Passion... for the students, Student Government Association, and Virginia Tech
- Respect... for those inside and outside of the Hokie community
- Transparency... between the students, Student Government, and administration
- Empathy... for one another in every interaction and decision
- Integrity... doing what is right, especially when no one is watching
- Friendship... establishing and maintaining personal relationships
- Genuineness... being true to yourself and others
- Selflessness... in serving those before one's self



D. Structure

The Student Government Association consists of three branches: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.

- The Executive branch is led by President Brandon Carroll, Vice President Shane McCarty, Treasurer Joey Zakutney, and Secretary Ellen Cupp, which are popularly elected by the entire student body each April. The branch consists of Executive Director Sharon Meehan of Outreach, Stephanie Jasinski of External, Diane Revalski of Programs, thirty-six directors, and over eighty committee members.
- The Legislative branch is led by Speaker of the House Jeremy Sutherland and Speaker of the Senate Katie Collins. The House of Representatives is made up of a representative from each of the 719 student organizations. The Senate is made up of 35 Senators, each of which is popularly elected by their respective college constituents.
- The Judicial branch consists of Chief Justice Erica Swanson and nine associate justices.

Goal N^o.1: Lifestyle

The Student Government Association will work to enhance the campus experience for the Hokie Community and provide change affecting student life.

Objective N^o.1: Increase the opportunities for students to be actively engaged in improving their own Virginia Tech experience.

Student Outreach Ellie Spitzer & Marco Leung, Co-Directors of Student Outreach

For the sake of communicating the student voice to the University Administration, the Student Outreach committee will collect data to support legislation and provide students with an avenue to voice their concerns

- **Extreme Makeover: Campus Edition**
In an effort to collect student feedback and opinions on pre-selected issues, the Student Outreach committee will organize Extreme Makeover: Campus Edition, which will be a three-day program. In the past, hundreds of students have been seen flocking to the Drillfield to voice their concerns. This year, we have four locations and expect to obtain feedback data on five questions, related to a number of issues, for each of the three survey days.
- **Open SGA Meeting**
In an effort to be visible and hear student concerns, the Open SGA Meeting will allow students to sit in and see how the SGA executive branch operates and be able provide feedback in our decision-making process.
- **D2 Dinners with SGA and Administrators**
In an effort to encourage lively discussion between the SGA officers and selected administrators, students will be able to enjoy dinner with these individuals.
- **Write Out Wednesday**
In an effort to poll students and obtain quantitative data, the Student Outreach committee will be implementing a series of biweekly events, with dry erase boards for ideas and updated surveys for opinion polling on different issues at an on-campus booth.

iChange Lauren Fialkow, Director of iChange; Sheel Patel, Assistant Director of iChange

For the sake of empowering and utilizing current students and their talents, iChange will hold a series of contests designed to seek ideas, potential solutions, and proposals in an effort to solve some of the University's toughest problems. Mini-contests will occur throughout the year, including an essay contest with the theme "I would improve Virginia Tech by..." an iPhone application development contest to improve any part of the student experience, and a sustainability photo and proposal contest to seek out ways to further green Virginia Tech. The overarching contest will allow for one



student to implement his or her proposal to improve Virginia Tech with up to \$2,000 in SGA funds.

Hokies on Fire Abby Boggs, Director of Hokies on Fire; Kaitlyn Tiplady, Assistant Director of Hokies on Fire

For the sake of enhancing the student experience at Virginia Tech Basketball events, Hokies on Fire seeks to institute the “Orange and Maroon Platoon.” Additionally, Hokies on Fire will provide fifteen students with the titles “Generals of the Student Section” to start a new tradition and help promote Hokie spirit. We plan to continue the legacy of the Blackout Game, introduce the Maroon Monsoon Game, and initiate a Green Effect Game.

Freshman Leadership Experience (FLEX) Lauren Jean Bradberry, Director of FLEX; Kelsey Appleton, Assistant Director of FLEX

For the sake of building student leaders from the onset of year one, FLEX will provide opportunities to improve leadership, share responsibility in a group, network with other students, and serve the community.

Objective N^o-2: Increase opportunities for students to interact with the citizens in the Town of Blacksburg, Virginia Tech administrators, faculty members, and staff to improve the lives of all parties.

Community Initiatives Hayley Sink, Director of Community Initiatives

For the sake of bridging the gap between the Town of Blacksburg and Virginia Tech, Community Initiatives will develop and reinstate programs that will foster and improve current University-Town relations.

- **2010 Community Picnic**

In an effort to strengthen ties between the Town of Blacksburg and the campus community, the Community Initiatives committee will organize a picnic. Local vendors will promote their businesses by providing free food for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members to share in fellowship.

- **30 Days of Blacksburg**

In an effort to promote downtown commerce and help student save money, a variety of discounts will be offered to students through a month long event. Vendors will provide students with a discount each day throughout the month of November.

Tenants Association of Blacksburg (TAB) J. Corbin DiMeglio, Director of Tenants Association of Blacksburg

For the sake of improving relations between tenants and students, the TAB committee will work to establish open lines of communication between both parties and develop and promote current programs to ease off-campus living for students.

- **Off-Campus Housing Fair**

In an effort to create positive housing experiences for students, TAB will offer multiple housing fairs and events.

Faculty / Staff Outreach Sami Owens, Director of Faculty and Staff Outreach

For the sake of strengthening relations and creating unification among the students, faculty and staff multiple new events will be implemented to create open lines of communication.

- **Pizza with Professors (Spring)**

In an effort to increase interaction between students and professors, pizza will be served while students may provide questions, comments, and concerns to improve academic life.

- **Administrative Office Hours (Fall and Spring)**

In an effort to allow students to directly voice their questions and concerns, administrators will spend an hour or two in the SGA office with students.

- **Faculty Appreciation Week (Spring)**



In an effort to show faculty appreciation, a number of faculty members on campus will receive handwritten thank you notes during faculty appreciation week in the spring semester from various organizations.

Objective N^o-3: Provide immediate value for students while also generating funds for long-term Student Government programs and initiatives.

Hokie Effect Chris Sykes, Director of Hokie Effect; Chris Saccoccia, Assistant Director of Hokie Effect

For the sake of enhancing the student experience at Virginia Tech football games, SGA Orange and Maroon Effect t-shirts will be sold as a bundle to students for \$12 in an effort to promote unity among fans and support for our team.

Fundraising Erin Carroll & Anna Choi, Co-Directors of Fundraising

For the sake of providing financial support to Student Government Association programs and initiatives, the Fundraising team coordinates numerous events that help provide funding while at the same time providing a service and fostering community at Virginia Tech.

- **The Big Clothing Sale**
In an effort to provide an avenue for students to purchase many brand-name articles of clothing at a significantly reduced cost, the Big Clothing Sale will be put on for students.
- **OCM (Off Campus Marketing)/Care packages**
In an effort to provide parents and families with a unique way to encourage their students during finals, the Fundraising committee will be working with Off Campus Marketing to facilitate a Care Package sale.

Goal N^o-2: Voice

The Student Government Association will amplify the student voice.

Objective N^o-1: Increase opportunities to establish an open dialogue among Hokies to appreciate our differences in uniting the community.

Equity and Inclusion Paul Deyerle, Director of Equity and Inclusion; Swathi Ramesh, Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion

For the sake of creating an inclusive environment with appreciation for one another's differences, the Equity and Inclusion committee will develop avenues for open discussion across groups.

- **The Forum**
In an effort to have direct interaction with administrators, The Forum will be facilitated and organized to discuss many key issues that face our campus community.
- **Principles of Community Resigning**
In an effort to have several organizations and departments publicly resign their own copy affirming all the Principles of Community with a focus of "upholding the Principles of Community in their entirety," an event will be held during the March Board meeting.
- **Find Your Voice Campaign**
In an effort to provide students with an opportunity to voice concerns, an online forum to discuss topics related to student life at Virginia Tech will be available.
- **Pocket Principles of Community (PoC)**
In an effort to increase student awareness about the Principles of Community, the SGA will team up with local businesses to offer student discounts to anyone that shows their Pocket Principles of Community card. In essence, the presentation of the



business card sized PoC will show your support for the Principles and a discount will be awarded.

Athletic Relations Eric Rucinski, Director of Athletic Relations

For the sake of improving relations between the Virginia Tech Athletics Department and the Student Government Association, a series of programs will be implemented to provide fans and athletes alike with opportunities to share suggestions and concerns.

- **Athlete/Student Forum**

In an effort to allow the students and athletes to voice their opinions and what they would like to see from SGA and Virginia Tech as a whole, a Forum will be put on.

Cadet Relations Alex C. Walker, Director of Cadet Relations

For the sake of bridging communication between the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and the civilian student body, Cadet Relations will work to open dialogue between the two groups.

- **Cadet Forum**

In an effort to promote dialogue between civilians and Cadets and increase understanding and cohesiveness, a forum will be coordinated. Also, a booth outside of Shultz shall be set-up for Cadets to speak-up on problems and solutions.

Objective N^o2: Provide opportunities for students to voice concerns on a larger scale.

Government Affairs Brittany Anderson, Director of Government Affairs; Nadine Gibson, Assistant Director of Government Affairs

For the sake of improving existing Virginia Tech relationships and increasing student involvement with the local, state, and federal government, the Government Affairs committee will coordinate a series of opportunities to promote student engagement.

- **Voting**

In an effort to strengthen voter turnout in November, Government Affairs will sponsor voter drives with other organizations on campus.

- **Hokie Day**

In an effort to provide students with an opportunity to visit the General Assembly and lobby for Virginia Tech, Government Affairs will organize Hokie Day. This is essential in a time of budget cuts for higher education.

- **Action Political Awareness On-campus and off-campus**

In an effort to expose students to government affiliated jobs, Government Affairs will sponsor a series of speakers who hold various jobs in politics for those interested in pursuing a career in this field. Examples of visitors that will be pursued are:

- Campaign managers
- Political journalist
- Retired politicians
- Legislative aides
- Current Politicians
- Political Candidates

Objective N^o3: Raise awareness of the Student Government Association programs, initiatives, legislation, and issues to all students.

Technology John Ryding, Director of Technology



For the sake of meeting the technological needs of students, communicating effectively, and providing innovative technologies, the Technology team will develop a new SGA website, support the development of a mobile application platform, and work in conjunction with the Computer Science Department to provide website developers opportunities to use their talents and skills for student organizations' sites.

- **SGA Website**

In an effort to provide opportunities for students to participate in weekly polling, view and comment on the current status of our initiatives, gather information about services and programs, the SGA website will be reformulated.

Marketing & Public Relations Harry Rosenbaum, Director of Marketing & Monika Zota, Director of Public Relations

For the sake of communicating ongoing SGA events and programs to the Hokie community, the Marketing & Public Relations committee will work to reach students, faculty, staff, administration, and community members through various media.

- **National SGA Journal**

In an effort to allow communication amongst other SGA's, a national SGA journal shall be created. This will allow the sharing of ideas and create stronger relationships among schools.

Goal N^o3: Ut Prosim

The Student Government Association will embody our school motto.

Objective N^o1: Increase opportunities for students to perform service, better themselves, and the Blacksburg community

The Big Event Dan Knisley, Director of The Big Event

For the sake of expanding Hokie community to the Blacksburg regional area and supporting the university motto of "Ut Prosim," the Big Event is a mass community service project with hundreds of jobs, such as raking leaves and painting fences. These services are all provided at no cost to the local community and its citizens. The Big Event is one big day for one big thanks to all Blacksburg and surrounding residents.

Relay For Life Whitney Law, Director of Relay for Life

For the sake of expanding Hokie community to the Blacksburg regional area and supporting the university motto of "Ut Prosim," Relay For Life is a national event in partnership with the American Cancer Society that allows for us to come together, as one community, to honor and show hope for those whose lives have been affected by cancer. Last year, Virginia Tech raised over \$500,000,000 for the American Cancer Society, giving Virginia Tech the honor of having the number one Relay For Life in the country.

Goal N^o4: Sustainability

The Student Government Association will assist all Hokies in developing a more sustainable future.

Objective N^o1: Increase educational awareness on the environment and opportunities for students to be actively engaged in Virginia Tech's commitment to go green.

Green Initiatives & Sustainability Alex Funk, Director of Sustainability; Nathan Latka, Director of Green Initiatives

For the sake of aligning with the sustainability needs and goals of the students and administration at Virginia Tech,



Green Initiatives & Sustainability will work to promote and enhance current university sustainability programs.

- **Green Effect Football Game**
In an effort to increase recycling and sustainability awareness, Green Initiatives works with students participants in collecting trash at home games.
- **Green Effect Basketball Game**
In an effort to increase recycling and Green-awareness, Green Initiatives will work to get students to participate in collecting trash at the Green Effect Basketball game. This will help spread the word that VT is committed to sustainability and recycling.
- **Big Event: Green Edition (BEGE)**
In an effort to spread knowledge and practices of sustainability throughout Blacksburg, the Big Event will incorporate green initiatives into existing service projects to promote a green environment. Ideally, a few full-scale energy audits and/ or weath-erization would occur to provide homeowners with long lasting value.

Goal N^o.5: Transportation

The Student Government Association will work to improve transportation for students.

Objective N^o.1: Improve on existing transportation models and provide better alternatives for students.

Transportation Brianna Farr, Director of Transportation

For the sake of meeting the needs for 43% of students that consider transportation the most important issue, SGA will work to develop programs to ease transportation on and off-campus.

- **Real-time GPS tracking on Blacksburg buses**
In an effort to provide students with adequate information on current bus location, Twitter.com will provide students will real-time updates on exact locations of BT buses. Research shows that an increase in predictability and reliability in public transportation systems increases ridership.
- **Rideboard for Carpooling**
In an effort to provide students with opportunities to save money on gas and travel easier, an online rideboard will be used to provide carpool drivers and riders a way to connect.

Selected Initiatives and Programs

- **3-5 = 10% Dining Incentive Plan**
In an effort to better the customer experience at dining halls, an incentive to dine at alternate times in order to cure overcrowding shall be provided. The week of September 21st-25th, students will be able to use a coupon to save 10% off of their meal. *(Lifestyle goal, objectives 1 & 2)*
- **The Hokie Coach Mentoring Program**
In an effort to provide entering freshmen with necessary advising on a variety of organizations and academic plans, SGA will coordinate a program in which mentors, a year older in the mentee's same major, are able to offer advice on academic advising and help bring each student into the Hokie Community from day one. *(Lifestyle goal, objective 1; Ut Prosim, objective 1)*
- **Curriculum for Liberal Education (CLE)**
In an effort to address the expressed concerns about the current purpose, structure, and learning outcomes of the Curriculum for Liberal Education, the University Curriculum Committee for Liberal Education (UCCLE), Student Government Association, and Office of Academic Assessment will develop and enact a marketing campaign and survey to assess the effectiveness of our current CLE. *(Lifestyle goal, objective 2)*
- **Cook Counseling**



In an effort to better the perception of Cook Counseling, the SGA is working towards helping to rebrand the perception and offer potential solutions to overcrowding, turning students away, and limited resources. Cook Counseling is currently seen in a negative light by many students due to personal experiences and/or shared experiences of others. (*Lifestyle goal, objective 2*)

- **Silverware Savings Initiative**

In an effort to prevent an increase in meal plan prices, SGA will promote and ask the students to sort their silverware and dispose of their own trash at D2. (*Lifestyle goal, objective 1*)

- **President's Council**

In an effort to voice student concerns, a President's Council of fourteen underrepresented students will provide feedback to the Student Government Association and the Office of the Associate Vice President about concerns biweekly over dinner. (*Voice goal, objective 1 & 2*)

- **SGA Roundtable Conference**

In an effort to cultivate long-term relationships with schools within a five-hour radius of Virginia Tech and create a streamline of communication between our student governing bodies, the first student government conference hosted by Virginia Tech shall be coordinated. The format will be a roundtable discussion. (*Voice goal, objective 2*)

- **Actively Caring Thank You Card Campaign**

In an effort to promote caring for others while boosting Hokie morale, the distribution of appreciative cards and a medium for recognizing good behavior will be implemented. (*Ut Prosim goal, objective 1*)

III. JUDICIAL BRANCH

For the sake of fulfilling all of the responsibilities of the Judicial Branch mentioned in the Constitution and Bylaws to the utmost extent, the Judicial Branch will assign duties within the branch to reach our goals: to involve the general undergraduate student body in the SGA, to establish an effective balance between branches, and to uphold standards of honesty and fairness.

Goal N^o1: Active Engagement

To actively engage the entire undergraduate student body in Student Government

Marketing Alexis Cohen, Associate Justice; Emmanuel Koduah, Associate Justice

For the sake of increasing student interest and involvement in SGA, the marketing team will advertise the open elected positions to encourage students outside of SGA to seek one, use "create your debate" to engage students and ensure their concerns are addressed, distribute "vote" t-shirts to increase voter turnout, market the inauguration and increase awareness to the students, staff and administration.

Events Morgan Eackles, Associate Justice

For the sake of providing students with information about the candidate and the results of the elections, the events planner will work to increase student involvement in creating the Debate, and increase turn out by attracting students with an engaging moderator at the Debate and speaker at the Inauguration.

Goal N^o2: Establish balance

To establish an effective balance between all three Student Government Association branches

Legislative Liaison Michael Mabeus, Associate Justice



For the sake of maintaining the Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Bylaws and keeping the Legislative informed about the Judicial, the legislative liaison will act to revise the documents when deemed necessary by the Judicial to present for legislative approval, present official interpretations of the governing documents to the Legislative, and inform both branches about the initiatives of the other.

Executive Liaison Matt Banfield, Associate Justice

For the sake of increasing communication and establishing a more effective checks and balances system between branches the executive liaison will inform both branches about the initiatives of the other, ensure that the Executive is abiding by the governing documents, and present official Judicial interpretations of the governing documents to the Executive.

Logistics Jeff Moore, Associate Justice

For the sake of cooperating with the other branches on general endeavors, the logistics director will be responsible for financial, administrative and organizational tasks internally and externally.

Goal №3: Uphold honesty and fairness

To uphold standards of honesty and fairness in all aspects

Technology Ben Roble, Associate Justice

For the sake of making decisions public and available and ensuring that the voting system is secure and accessible, the Director of Technology will update the website, send out surveys, manage the listserv and put significant effort into researching and installing the best possible voting system.

Candidate Advisor Casey Whitehead, Associate Justice

For the sake of meeting all of the candidates needs while ensuring a fair election and campaign process, the candidate advisor will act as a liaison between the Judicial and the candidates, by providing all necessary information to the candidates about election rules, and reporting back to the judicial any questions or concerns the candidates have about the process.

Clerks of the Courts Richard Painter, Clerk of Court; Daniel Ferro, Clerk of Court

For the sake of securing unbiased, well informed decisions from the Judicial Board, the Clerks of court will investigate all claims filed, report them to the Judicial, provide all evidence necessary to make an informed decision and keep record of all past decisions.

IV. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

A. House of Representatives

The House of Representatives consists of student representatives from each of the 719 student organizations at Virginia Tech. Individual representatives represent the collective undergraduate student body on campus and community issues. They also provide organizations with beneficial campus notices, opportunities, and information. Finally, they provide legislative oversight by reviewing and ensuring the Executive and Judicial branches are operating in the best interests of the undergraduate student body.



B. Senate

The Senate consists of 35 Senators, popularly elected by the peers from their respective colleges. These individuals are mainly responsible for improving on ideas from within SGA and from external groups by writing legislation and passing a resolution. Senate meetings are considered “open meetings,” therefore allowing any member of the Virginia Tech student body to attend. They welcome any guest speakers or students who have ideas concerning change on the VT campus. Senators from each of the colleges will be organizing a forum for their constituents to present accomplishments, current status on initiatives, and receive feedback from the students regarding lingering issues specific to their college that could be improved.

Events at a Glance

Government Affairs, Voter Drives: September- November

Green Effect Game: September 19th

Dining Incentive Plan: September 21st- 25th

Maroon Effect Game: September 26th

Extreme Makeover: Campus Edition: October 19th – 21st

The Forum: October 20th

Orange Effect Football Game: October 29th

30 Days of Blacksburg: November 1st- 31st

Big Clothing Sale: November 8th-11th

Write Out Wednesday N^o.1: November 11th

“Our Future?” drillfield picture: November 21st

Write Out Wednesday N^o.2: December 2nd

Hokies on Fire, Maroon Monsoon Game: December 6th

Government Affairs, Hokie Day: February 3rd

Write Out Wednesday N^o.3: February 3rd

Hokies on Fire, Blackout Basketball Game: February 13th

Write Out Wednesday N^o.4: February 17th

SGA Roundtable Conference: February 26th- February 28th

Faculty Appreciation Week: February-March

Write Out Wednesday N^o.5: March 3rd

IChange, iPhone Application Contest: March

Atheletic Relations, Dodge Ball Tournament: March

Write Out Wednesday N^o.6: March 17th

Equity and Inclusion, Principles of Community Resigning: March 22nd

Write Out Wednesday N^o.7: April 7th

Relay For Life: April 9th

Big Event: April 17th

Blacksburg Community Picnic: April 18th (tentative)

Write Out Wednesday N^o.8: April 21st