



**Committee on Student Communication – Meeting minutes  
Friday, January 12, 2018, 9:30 a.m., 258 Student Center East**

**Members Present**

Boyd Beckwith (Director, Student Center), Katie Leaman (GSTV General Manager), Alec Prevett (*Underground* Editor-in-Chief), Bryce McNeil (Assistant Director for Student Media), Spencer Vaughan (Album 88 General Manager), Anna Sandy (*New South* Editor-in-Chief), Meredith Pruden (General student at-large)

**Members Absent**

Jeannie Barrett (ex-officio), Christina Maxouris (*The Signal* Editor-in-Chief), Jody Brooks (faculty, at-large), Douglas Metcalfe (faculty, Communication), Graduate student at-large (vacant), Undergraduate student, at-large (vacant), Nicole Motahari (Digital Media Group General Manager),

**Guest**

Danny Varitek (*The Signal* Online Editor), Taylor Dudley (Digital Media Group Social Media Manager)

**Call to order**

Meeting was called to order by Bryce McNeil at 9:37 a.m.

**FY2019 Budget Allocation**

Bryce reported that the Student Activity Fee Committee allocated \$188,016 to Student Media for FY2019. He noted that there were some significant factors the Committee would need to consider when deciding how to allocate these funds. First, *The Signal's* advertising revenues were drastically reducing. Second, GSTV was considering a name change and thus may restructure some of its positions and pursue promoting rebranding. Third, related to this, the Committee could consider eliminating the Digital Media group budget and incorporating the functions of the app within various media groups.

Anna noted that the *New South's* contest remains a solid revenue source and that it was unlikely it would request any additional funding with one exception: She believed *New South* might benefit from re-adding an Assistant Editor to its budget request. Boyd recommended that if *New South* exceeded revenue expectations to work with Bryce on identifying expenses that would help for FY2019 that qualified for encumbrance.

Spencer felt Album 88 would benefit from a new Music Director but that it wouldn't necessarily involve a large budget increase, relying instead on shifting positions and/or attrition. Taylor agreed that the Digital Media Group could be contracted but felt that a digital marketing budget would benefit all the Student Media groups, to which Meredith agreed. Boyd added that the Student Center's new Digital Marketing Specialist, when hired, could advise groups on how to spend this money.

For the aforementioned reasons, Bryce felt that a good deal of the additional money would benefit Student Media best if allocated to the Central Media fund so that it could provide budget relief for The Signal (if needed) but also provide digital marketing funds for all groups. He reminded the leaders that he would be meeting with them in the upcoming weeks to discuss ways to distribute the funds.

### **Media Head Postings**

Bryce noted the biggest logistical challenge for selecting Media Heads would be trying to interview as many candidates as possible before Spring Break. He also noticed that several members of the committee will be attending conventions during Spring Break.

The committee agreed that the best day to post the positions would be on Monday, February 12th. None of the current members believed that there would be a high volume of internal applicants for the Student Media leader positions. Bryce stated that if it takes more than a day to complete, the Committee would likely be called upon to interview further candidates outside of a Friday.

Anna inquired the posting of additional positions. Bryce said they would likely be posted between Feb. 19th-23rd but that the deadline would allow for unsuccessful media head candidates to apply if they so choose. Spencer argued for a deadline that was as close to Spring Break as possible.

### **Media Heads Update**

*The Signal*- Danny reported that team delayed its website redesign but had officially relaunched it the week of the meeting. Two focuses of the redesign were to accommodate a digital-first approach to storytelling and to make online advertising more appealing to clients. Several third-party platforms have approached *The Signal* with website partnership pitches but the staff was approaching these opportunities cautiously. Bryce added that there is a business class that will be working with *The Signal* throughout the semester to help with marketing as well.

Album 88- Spencer reported that the staff has decided to have WRASFest 2018 at the Mammal Gallery and Bryce will forward a contract draft to the venue for April 14<sup>th</sup>. This show will feature all local acts and be of a somewhat smaller scale than last year's show. The newest application window would open online on January 15<sup>th</sup> and remain open for two weeks. The staff met in December to discuss methods of implementing Spintron into playlist reporting.

*New South*- Anna reported that the online mini issue with the theme of "Hunger" would be released in January. The next paper issue was scheduled for release in April. The staff was considering reading ideas to promote this issue as previous issues were not released with as much fanfare. Meredith recommended as much cross-promotion as possible, including PSAs on Album 88.

*Underground*- Alec reported that issue VII.i has been released. The issue was ready in December but the staff decided to have them shipped to coincide with the beginning of the semester. They have seen good pickup in the English department and will be distributing in Library Plaza as well. For the first time, the team was using Submittable to attract and manage submissions.

Digital Media Group- Taylor reported that recruiting for podcasting and developing podcast ideas has gone well but scheduling recording sessions has been challenging. She is working with the volunteers to solidify scripts for reads before Spring Break.

GSTV- Katie reported that the staff has developed a new inventory system and training manual. She has consulted both production and news staff on rebranding ideas. The most popular suggestion with staff is to brand the acronym "CBN" with "Cat Box Network" representing production and "College Broadcast Network" representing the news. The production team favors more creative names whereas the news team wanted to brand its show with something simpler. She wanted something a broad name that would indicate the wide range of content that could be found. The goal would be to design a website with a layout similar to on-demand services such as Netflix and ePix.

Boyd expressed concern that the name might not accurately reflect the content of the group. Meredith and Danny each recommended gathering focus groups outside of GSTV to further test the appeal of the name. Katie suggested that the next Wednesday meeting for new volunteers might be a good starting point to test the idea. The committee agreed that whatever the new name would be, branding (logos, etc.) would be a key function in determining its success.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting was scheduled for February 9, 2018 at a yet to be determined time and location.