

# VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## Council Agenda for November 9, 2014

Time: 7:00pm

Location: College Center 223

“Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.”-Albert Einstein

### 1 Call to Order

Start: 7:05

### 2 Attendance ..... Operations

### 3 Consensus Agenda

- a. Vassar Bikes(Capital) .....\$892.50/\$892.50
- b. Council of Black Seniors (Discretionary) ..... \$500/\$1000
- c. GAAP (Conference).....\$1113.06/\$1113.06
- d. Devils(Conference)..... Tabled
- e. Devils(Speakers) ..... \$360 plus extra costs for additional groups/\$360
- f. Philaletheis(Speakers)..... \$1000 minus additional contributions/\$1000
- g. WVKR(Capital)..... \$2438/\$2438
- h. Strong(Collaboration)..... \$240/\$180
- i. NSO (Speakers) ..... \$3000/\$3000
- j. 2018(Discretionary)..... \$400/\$397.80
- k. Matthew’s Minstrels (A Cappella Recoding) ..... \$2000/\$2000

\*See notes from Finance Minutes.

#### l. Abby Johnson for BOEA Co-chair

Operations: She was the only applicant, one of the 2017 reps on BOEA, tons of experience, she has run elections before, and she co-managed a lot of things because Casey was so busy. She had a really great interview and ideas and is really excited to take on the position.

#### m. Minutes From 10/26/14

#### n. PreOrgs for approval:

- a. Vassar Model Congress
- b. The Pianists
- c. Kiva
- d. Vassar Mycology Club
- e. Crafts Not Bombs
- f. Traditional Korean Folk Music
- g. unFramed
- h. Novel Noshings
- i. Vassar World Affairs Council
- j. Vassar College Tech Conglomerate
- k. When Geisha Meets Pina
- l. UJIMA: A Groove Society
- m. Women in Science At Vassar

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- n. Native American Students Alliance
- o. Our Club
- p. Brewer Investments Group
- q. Casual Improv

Activities: We finally finished approving pre-orgs, this is the list of what we have approved. Some have stipulations. Vassar Model Congress, it runs like congress but hopefully better. The Pianists are a group of people who want to play piano. Kiva is a microloan organization who will fundraise and make money to give towards others in the community. The Vassar Mycology Club was approved with the stipulation that they could not make beer. Crafts Not Bombs was approved with the stipulation that they de-politicize organization, so they were like “we can do that.” Traditional Korean Folk Music is Traditional Korean Folk Music. Unframed is an art org, Novel Noshings is a book club. Vassar World Affairs Council is an org that already started programming, so we just approved for it for VSA funding. Vassar College Tech Conglomerate is for the drama department. When Geisha Meets Pina is an Alana center org. UJIMA: A Groove Society is a music dance thing in the mug. Women in Science at Vassar incorporates all sciences and women at Vassar. The Native American Students Alliance was approved with the stipulation that they have to organize themselves in better ways than NASA did in the past. Our Club is for alternative programming but we try not to use that phrasing, they will organize things to do on weekends with no alcohol. Brewer Investment Group does investments; they already do it in the econ department. Casual Improv is an improv group that you don’t have to do auditions for.

President: Anyone object?

2017: A quick question, why was Crafts not Bombs required to depoliticize?

Activities: As far as that, finding people to join that who like crafts and want to have topics about political things, that would decrease the amount of people and there would be less interest. Also there are lots of other political orgs on campus, and we didn’t want to approve a lot of things that we had already. We wanted different orgs, for example Pianists is different from other music groups.

President: The political part wasn’t central to what they originally wanted.

Activities: Yes, they wanted to put a spin on it to get more people, but we decided they don’t need that.

President: We will assume we are okay with the agenda and move on.

- 4 Forum on Campus Master Planning .....Art Lidsky(30 min)

Lidsky: So the college is in the beginning stages of developing a master plan, and my friend was asked to help. We plan to bring something to board as a draft in May, so we are in the early stages of collecting information about the college, the number of people, where things are, how many parking spaces we have, space we have, and how we are using it. I wanted to get a time with you all to talk about

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those things that are critical and important to you as students, you think differently from faculty, staff and administration, you live here full time and see the campus in a different way, and have different opinion of what should be included in the master plan. I am looking for concerns from you. A little about the firm, it is a small firm in Boston that only does colleges and universities. We have worked on 450 institutions worldwide, so we are familiar with this style and scale. We are not interested in hearing about plumbing, that is not a master planning issue, not heat, that is a maintenance issue, but broad spectrum ideas. Is this building a good campus center or not, how to use spaces down below, is admissions in the right location, I don't think it is, where should it go? Where it is now is the absolute wrong place. This campus has a mixed bag of architecture. There is the beautiful library and then it is next to that, the lasagna building. Those buildings shouldn't have been put on this campus. So what is appropriate?

2015: I think my biggest concern is the idea of student spaces. In the alumni meeting there was discussion about the old college bookstore and what to put there, and a suggestion from alumni was offices, but I can't stress enough that we need to have in this plan collective student space. I don't know that that is necessarily the best spot for it, but it is a great spot.

Lidsky: What do you mean by collective student space?

2015: A space kind of like the second floor of the dining hall, but more accessible, more student friendly, for events. There are lots of problems with nightlife, and we need spaces where students can go and not necessarily need to go to a party.

Lidsky: Yes, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the ACDC is a terrible space for that.

2015: That's the problem.

Lidsky: Should this building be the locus?

2015: It is the center of campus, the Mug is here, but if there was opening, for example if the admissions building is changing, we could give the admissions building to students.

Lidsky: So you want a different kind of space?

2015: We need a space that is accessible, disability wise, I think that it is obviously up to you because you have a broader perspective and know what is possible, but I am very interested in finding spaces for students.

Lidsky: With a campus this size, this building doesn't function very well, and the administrative spaces in here shouldn't be here.

2015: A problem we run into a lot in terms of event planning, is that we often throw Villard Room parties, because we really only have the Villard as a space. And it is next to some of the nicest places on campus. So some of our biggest concerns when throwing events is to make sure that the valuable antique furniture is not damaged.

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At-large: I asked twitter this question, and a response was the lack of accessible entrances for dorms on campus. The only ones that are accessible are Jewett, Davison, and Noyes, maybe not even Noyes, and Main. In Main the bathrooms aren't though. Lots of spaces are not accessible.

Joss: This sounds kind of outdated now, but can you explain exactly what a master plan is?

Lidsky: A master plan is theoretically a view of the future based on academic plans and student life.

Theoretically it should be a sense of the direction that the college wants to move in 15 years, thinking more broadly, an idea of physically changes but also policy changes. If the institution wants change the way classrooms are structured, and wants to provide more informal collaboratory spaces, that is a choice that the college makes, and they find someone to make happen. This is a 15 year time period, none of us can think about tomorrow. It is a vision of where we want to go for the school, a roadmap of how to get there, and every 5 years we step back and see if those ideas are still valid and make changes and move forward. It is physically a map of a vision statement still being developed by the college.

Town Students: This a more of a minor thing, but in main building at the bottom of the college center, students go to the kiosk to get coffee, and its dumb because the line goes in front of the door, and the post office line is perpendicular to that, and it is annoying, because during busy times it is a hard place to walk through, which is silly, because everyone needs to walk through there.

Lidsky: Do you use mailboxes? Okay, we won't get rid of that.

Main: Addressing a middle level issue, the college center in general isn't well used, especially the second floor. It is used for meetings, but there is a lot of dead space, and the first floor is overcrowded because it is too small. Maybe it could be expanded, but it needs to be used better.

Lidsky: What would you put in?

Main: I would spread things out, and make more places for students to sit and do homework. That is really important to a lot of people.

Strong: Going off of Main, I have spoken with my constituents, and we have really noticed how dorms differ in the spaces available, like study spaces and club spaces, and Strong for example has very few.

Davison has study rooms with tables and chairs, we don't have any, and it makes it hard for individuals in the dorm to interact, which is very ineffective.

Lidsky: From what I understand, the big dorms all had dining halls at one time or another, they were closed, and now the dining areas are social spaces, and some kitchens are still there.

President: Depending on the dorm, the kitchens are not really functional.

Lidsky: Should they be gutted, so we can use those spaces in better ways?

President: It is hard to reliably cook in dorms. People want to cook occasionally, so we shouldn't get rid of every public kitchen, but one in every dorm that is not maintained is useless.

2017: Noyes is the dorm that is open all year to house summer students, and in the summer there is no meal plan and the dining hall is not open, so Noyes has more kitchens, 2 per floor. But they are in

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disrepair, none of the kitchens are kept up, and over the summer they are basically the only place for food. Stoves aren't kept in working order, they are frequently broken, and kitchens are very neglected.

President: Also there are rats in ovens...

Operations: I live in the SoCos, and there are no direct paths to get there, so we feel very distant from everything.

SoCos: There's a stretch of road that we take but there is no light and we have to walk in complete black.

Lidsky: Will that change when the bridge building is completed?

Operations: Sort of, but not really.

At-large: From the SoCos there is no way to get to campus without using a dirt path except Raymond Avenue, so at the moment there is no accessible way.

Lidsky: Is the dirt path lit?

President: No.

Ferry: Orgs that don't have an affiliation to a center on campus have a hard time trying to find org spaces, especially since some orgs frequent parlors, and other orgs can't find good spaces. My group currently meets in the Jade parlor, and certain groups meet in dorms, but that fluctuates depending on where members are living.

Lidsky: So do we need more spaces in this complex?

Ferry: There is not that much room in Main, but if there were other spaces in the area.

Lidsky: What is the biggest org on campus? That would need a space?

President: The theater org we are talking about has a large general body, and no set meeting spots.

Cushing: I have a lot to say. First, to comment on Town Student's point, I definitely agree. I think the Kiosk is very, I think a Starbucks café on campus is really important, but the placement is not a good place, the line is so long that people can't enter, and on Tasty Tuesday it is even worse. Also another thing, the space below the college center, to have a café in there would be really really nice. The Retreat is not enough, it is always crowded, there is nowhere to sit, so it is not enough.

Lidsky: From my understanding, there is the ACDC, the Retreat, the Kiosk, and the second floor of the ACDC acts as a café. Are those the only dining areas?

Joss: You can't get food after 11pm on Sunday and Monday nights because the resources aren't there, and after midnight until recently on other days. And there are meager selections.

Lidsky: Is there one other food service in the library?

Cushing: It has coffee and packaged snacks.

2015: Students staff the late night food location, which takes up their time, and they are always closed during finals.

Lidsky: Is there pizza nearby? Can they come on campus?

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Cush: There are off-campus places, but you need to pay with your own money, and we already pay for dining bucks and swipes, so we don't want to spend more. About the kitchen, my house kitchen is disgusting and people who want to cook are disgusted. There is a big mass in the oven and we can't get it out. A lot of people love to cook and still go there and try to clean, but it is disgusting. A renovation of the kitchen would be really great because it is being used by a lot of Student Fellows who want to cook for their fellowees. Another issue, Cushing house is being renovated, but the only thing they are doing is painting the bathrooms, they keep painting over and over, and it looks clean, but it is not clean. General renovation would be really nice, because it has been a long time.

At-large: I also asked on twitter, and someone asked if you have any idea about the future location of multidisciplinary departments?

Lidsky: From what I know there has been a sort of competition. Teams have developed concepts, mostly placing them all over the edge of Main, beyond Main, but there has been no decision yet, or a decision on which team to move forward with.

President: We are approaching time, so we will stop taking speakers for the speakers list. You can email to me more questions or comments.

2015: I want to put an emphasis on a tech update, there are resources we are not using, the campus is behind.

Lidsky: Is the campus entirely wireless?

2015: Sort of.

Lidsky: If I went outside and sat in the middle of the grass, can I connect? How is tech in classrooms?

2015: It varies.

2016: Machines are not up to date, and for Computer Science, in the first two months of class we couldn't do lab.

Student Life: I'll make this fast: how closely are you working team with the team of people redesigning the college center?

Lidsky: As far as I know, there isn't one yet.

President: He's working with that.

Student Life: Maybe it is under you.

Lidsky: For all major things we are waiting for the end of the campus planning process, and it will come out of the campus planning process. What happens to this building will also come out of that.

Student Life: There is a committee working with an architect from the Art History department, looking at the use of the college center space. I would be very frustrated if this is happening separately and if there is no communication.

Lidsky: I didn't know about that, so update me.

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Student Life: I will. Also, looking at the way some student spaces are populated, food that is not terrible would really help populate some areas. For accessibility, many students are passionate about this and are upset that so few spaces are accessible. Carolina had to help carry a man upstairs to see his daughter enter college, which is unacceptable. We also need places for student bands to practice. If a student band does not have a relationship with the music department, it is hard to practice, which leads to people practicing in dorms, which leads to conflicts. I will send the President information about the architectural redesign of the college center to send to you.

Davison: For kitchens, don't gut them, because they are frequently used Davison, instead of gutting, I think a renovation is a better way to go about it. We've been renovated, and our basement is really nice, but it isn't a good use of space. The only part used is for a pool table by the elevator. There is a long expanse of open area, a lot of room, a lot of things, but nobody wants to use it? I don't know, but it is all well lit, nice, and we are not doing anything with it.

Lidsky: Question: when I think of dorms on other campuses, I've seen small collaboration spaces around the building, fitness centers, what works on this campus? What would be attractive?

Davison: If it were possible, to put a café or eating option would be great. It might change the dynamic of the dorms, but people would use it a lot.

Lidsky: If we put a café down there, can anyone access your building?

Davison: Yes! Anyone can access any of the dorm buildings. I am not sure if it would be unfair, or create a rift, but it is accessible and ADA compliant.

Lidsky: Do all dorms have elevators?

President: Most don't have elevators, and some have freight ones that we can't use.

Student Life: Directly responding to Davison, most basements are scary, but if they weren't, they could be really amazing spaces.

Lidsky: Another question about scary, what places on campus at night are you nervous about walking to and from?

At-large: SoCos, also the TA path. Someone put in an art installation and I couldn't tell if the person was real or art. There is no light past the bridge if you go to the TAs, also for part of the section you have to either walk on a road where there is no light or walk between trees and forest. It makes you feel really unsafe because no of lights.

Lidsky: Are there blue lights near there?

At-Large: If you can get all the way across the bridge, but nowhere near where there are no lights.

President: A number of times I would have to run so far to get to blue light. The policy that you can see one anywhere is not accurate in terms of actually reaching it.

Raymond: I've heard talk about changing the computer clusters in every dorm, which include a computer and a printer. There has been talk about getting rid of the computers and moving the printer

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to the MPR. I want to stress that we should keep dorm computers. I know students who don't have access to personal laptops, or even if something happens to their laptop, it is important to have them in dorms, especially if far from the library.

Lidsky: Is it true that they really want to stop having computers in dorms?

Raymond: There has been discussion about it.

2017: To bring up basements again, they have a lot of space but are badly lit. It is industrial storage lighting rather than lighting for a utilizable space. Also back to the College Center, there is nowhere in the building where you can just be comfortable in a group. Rooms like this could be, but they are always locked if no event is happening. The only place is the retreat, but seating is hard to get, it is café style, and you almost feel guilty taking up a table.

Lidsky: And that is not necessarily comfortable.

2017: Yeah and only other place is the rose parlor, but that has antique furniture.

Lidsky: Yes its precious.

2017: Yeah it feels a little too regal. Other couches and furniture items are shoved into various corners of the second floor but are never used. It seems weird sitting in a dark corner of a hallway. So that is one of the issues.

Lidsky: Good description. Thank you.

President: We have reached the end of list. If anyone has more to say, or anyone in the general audience, email [ysa@vassar.edu](mailto:ysa@vassar.edu). Thank you for coming in, it was super helpful.

Lidsky: Sometime in February, I will be back to get reactions. Thank you very much.

5 Forum with CIE ..... (10 min)

CIE: Hi everyone, CIE stands for the Committee on Inclusion and Excellence. We began on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, so we had a late start, most orgs start in September, so we have only had 2 meetings, so there is not too much to report. The 1<sup>st</sup> was not super productive, we were figuring out what shapes the CIE will take. It is not an official commit, we can make recommendations, and hope recommendations are acted upon, but we have no authority to make them happen. We were discussing what that meant and how to move forward if we are to move forward, and the general consensus is that we should move forward. Last year the school decided not to move forward with our recommendations. It is important to keep in mind; our committee only has the ability make recommendations. So we recently had our second meeting last week, so we were talking a little more about recommendations and made an annual report to Cappy, and I'll go through with them. One recommendation was about the transitions program, legitimizing it within the college and giving it proper funding. Transitions is in its fifth year and the first cohort already graduated. This subcommittee is working to continue to support the pre-org program, and highlight what transitions has contributed to the broader Vassar community, and gathering data and analyzing progress of transitions students. Also the goals of the subcommittee are to



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think of how transitions student transition out of Vassar, because low income first generation students face different obstacles. Yeah. The second sub-committee is a faculty training subcommittee, based on recommending to have faculty attend workshops and discuss class, race, and gender within the classroom setting. So the focus is to assess the needs of faculty and make this training seem more appealing to faculty. We are specifically looking for in-depth inclusion. Some issues faculty expressed was that it was awkward to sort of not be able to meet halfway, not have the language to connect, whether it is with a pre major advisee, or in the span of a semester. So with faculty training we are looking into also doing an examination of the pre-major advisee process, considering an additional feature to what the summer workshop looks like. Third, we have a subcommittee based on financial aid and transfer students. We are pushing for more talk on how to include transfer students in the Vassar community. The rate of incoming transfer students, from community colleges too, is around 11 or 12 every year, and not all are able to attend new student orientation, so basically we are involved in looking at financial aid distribution, what sorts of programming transfer students need to adjust to Vassar life, especially a junior coming in with only 2 years left, and a lot of gathering of data about the experiences of current transfers and highlighting the importance of the need blind policy. I also forgot to mention, this subcommittee was preexisting and is being carried on from last year. Finally, we have the preexisting gender and sexuality committee. The purpose is to work on talking about sexuality and gender on campus and we hope to connect with campus life centers, like the LGBTQ center. We are considering strategies to address border issues on sexuality and sexual relations.

Just some background, we have around 20 people, and we can't meet regularly, so it is not feasible to talk about all of the issues in one biweekly meeting, so we split into subcommittees, who then present to all of us. A lot are chaired by special members, not always deans but whoever has special interests in the topic. This year we are looking at 3 more subcommittees, which are unnamed but have loose names. The first is an assessment of the mission statement. I know not all of you have read the student handbook, but if you read it four years ago, there was a diversity mission statement, and 3 years ago it became combined with the original mission statement, and then in the past 2 years it has vanished. There is a whole committee that deals with the booklet, and I am not sure what happened to the diversity statement. We want to figure out what led to it being admitted. If you Google Vassar and Diversity, there are a lot of admissions statistics, but not a statement about our commitment to diversity. Second, we want a committee for international students. There is a new director of admissions this year, and he wants to look at how international students are adjusting to Vassar, and wants to look at the number brought in by Asian countries. English professors, and professors in general, have concerns that they have skills less than what is advertised in their admissions portfolio. The director of admissions wants more time to look and see if that is a problem. Last, in the past 5 years there has been a significant expansion in diversity at the college level in terms of what groups are

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drawn into Vassar. It is significantly more diverse than 5 years ago. I want to see what student experiences have been with this. Cappy is very interested. We want to see exactly how much good diversity has done.

2017: Question. You said the CIE is 20 people, what is the makeup? Administrators, faculty, students?

CIE: It is hard to say. We can't all attend one meeting, so lots of people are absent. There are lots of administrators and lots of administrators invited. There are at least 3 students, not sure about faculty, but I think it is split evenly.

President: The thing with diversity, it is nice to look at the good, but it is more important to look at how we are supporting diversity. We bring it in to make numbers look good but don't validate these students' experiences, so are you looking at those issues too?

CIE: I believe that it is. I believe it goes hand in hand. The last subcommittee addressed it in notes, but it was brief, but I can ask.

President: I just want to make sure we are not tooting our own horn.

Operations: Since the CIE makes recommendations, do you make it to the CCO, the committee on college life?

CIE: They are directed to the deans and Cappy. Past recommendations have gone through but not this year.

President: Thank you.

6 Forum with CAT..... (10 min)

CAT: Hi, me again, I wish I could address computing clusters but that has yet to come up, everyone is interested in that and I can ask. So CAT has been productive, e began to meet early in September.

Traditionally we meet in November, a grant is applied for every year. CAT is given a little over \$10,000 to distribute to faculty to use to introduce technology to classrooms. For example we have interactive pictures of cathedrals and grand architectural projects, and you can zoom in and explore with a panoramic view. We also have assisted model building. A lot of stuff is brought into classes as a trial to see if they are useful. We are entering that part of the year where we are reviewing grant applications.

One application is spawned from CAT. Professors want to review papers in a number of classes to assess the degree to which plagiarism is a problem at Vassar. Faculty has complaints that there is no system to address plagiarism. A majority of other institutions have a subscription to Turn-it-in, and have a way to check plagiarism if they please. These programs are not widely used at peer institutions, but they are available. We want to know if this is a significant problem. Another big thing, the notion of distant learning, a notion that surrounding ourselves with technology is distracting students, making them unable to at a deep level get to know a text, and faculty are displeased with the level of computer use in class. There is a professor at NYU who started banning computers in classes. Professors are

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wondering if this is a good thing. There is something soon meeting at Vassar, a weekend devoted to the issue of distracted learning. It is kind of bigger than CAT, the issue is really strong obviously.

Town Students: I am wondering, on using computers in the classroom, are you looking at a campus wide change? Right now it is different from professor to professor, course to course, and there shouldn't be any sweeping no-computer- in-class movement. For me, it has been that every professor will have their own policy, which seems legit.

CAT: In terms of having an overwhelming campus policy, no, it will depend on the context of the class. I wouldn't expect some kind of ban campus-wide, that would be very uncharacteristic.

President: thank you for coming in.

7 Forum with Food Committee..... (10 min)

Food Committee: Hi, I am the food committee chair. There are 11-12 of us depending on the meeting. We meet with the person in charge of campus dining, and the person only in charge with the ACDC. The ACDC, Kiosk, Retreat are all part of campus dining. Sarah King was the chair last year, so one thing I've continued from last year, students can give feedback on the blog. Also there are biweekly food committee emails, and the first one was this past weekend, and they will go out for the rest of this year. My personal goals are 1, to increase worker-student dynamic. Workers feel like they are just workers and students don't know who is making their food. There is a dividing wall, and we are trying to break that down. We have a few projects; we have had some interviews with staff members to get to know them on a personal level. We have interviewed TC, who works at the grill, and found out he is really into art and music, and you can read about him when you go in there. WE are implementing kitchen tours, but they are never usually utilized, so we are trying to get more to take tours, but frankly there is not a lot of interest, students don't want it. But if you do want one, just contact me with a group of 8-10, and you can go on a 30 minute kitchen tour. Next goal is food awareness about nutrition. Many Freshmen have said they have no idea about portion sizes and are overwhelmed with it all. We are having a speaker discuss how to perfectly proportion a plate in the ACDC, what is a good plate, and we want to have a little marker of food groups, this is how much plate should be taken up. Last, sustainability. We want to increase local foods, in the ACDC especially. Right now 25% of food is locally sourced, which is really impressive compared to other institutions, and because Upstate New York growing season is limited. There is room for improvement, and we want to get UpC compostable cups. Those are our big goals. We also want to implement a stir fry station demo. We will have a chef there with little samples and a recipe card, so if you don't know how to do it, there is a time where you can talk to someone who knows how and you can figure out how to make food and utilize the stir fry station. We are also currently working putting something in freshmen orientation week on food. Freshmen have contacted us saying they can't eat any food and don't know how to address allergies, and that they are finally figuring out who to contact in November is concerning. The Dean of Studies

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has been unresponsive, because orientation week is set and packed and they don't have room. Right now that is a goal.

Student Life: Has there been any conversation about improving ingredient labels?

Food Committee: Yes! This is an Aramark problem. The technology communications system has been down, so this is on the company, and it is a big issue we have been addressing every meeting, but it is something the college can't control, it is the company, but we are working to address it.

Jewett: The Stir Fry thing is a good idea, but my only concern with that is that there are already lines at dinner time, so have there been talks about expanding the stir fry station?

Food Committee: We haven't talked about more burners, but there is a lack of utensils, so we are talking about getting more utensils and more ingredients. We never talked about expanding, but I can bring it up.

Activities: There have been complaints about the website.

Food Committee: There is actually a new website being put out as we speak, so it is different if you have looked. It is under construction and the company is working on updating it. It is not necessarily the college but we are addressing it.

Main: Are we dealing with Aramark and our relationship with them?

Food Committee: We have talked about it briefly, but we do not have a lot of say in the contract. We have a leeway in locally sourced foods, but we don't control prices.

2018: In terms of the Stir Fry, instead, I think examples are a great idea, but maybe we could put out recipes so students know how to make food and don't have to go to the demo.

Food Committee: There is booklet with 3 or 4 different recipes.

2018: Maybe a poster would be better?

Food Committee: We are talking about PR in the ACDC. There are a lot of locally sourced foods that people don't know about, so we are considering more posters.

Joss: Thanks. Have we been composting lately?

Food Committee: That has been a big issue. The ACDC has composted everything in the past, but an issue is that the butter packets are getting put in the compost which contaminates it. We are working on addressing how to get students to take the packets and put it in the little containers by the dish drop-off. Everything in the past has been composted, but the problem is getting students to put items in the right bin. It is a big PR thing.

Joss: To speak to local, are we having trouble finding people to take our compost?

Food Committee: I am not sure specifically, but you can talk about it with the sustainability committee. I don't know much about that, sorry.

2016: A couple of years ago they expanded the stir fry beyond all the veggies. I was going to ask why they took that away?

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Food Committee: I didn't know about that, but now that I do, I will contact them about why we can't do that.

2016: For butter, an alternative could be a chunk of butter instead of packets.

Food Committee: That has been looked into, and I'm not sure why we don't.

President: Yeah, we used to have chunks of butter.

Food Committee: I'm not sure why we changed that. I'll work with sustainability on that.

President: Thank you for coming in.

### 8 Executive Board Reports

#### a. Operations.....(7 min)

Operations: We recently got back from the Seven Sisters Conference, at around 3pm today, so shout out to the driving people. We will debrief the conference after this. In terms of what Operations is working on, this Saturday is the constitusithon, where we will be updating the constitution. A few things are out of date and need to be up to date, because the external review, not an audit, is happening. There is a contract on the table, Chris Roellke is paying half of it and we are going to submit a fund app to finance this week for the other half. This person would be coming in and doing whatever we tell him. He has a list of people he wants to interview but there is flexibility. Operations will be discussing this Wednesday, so feel free to contact me. I think that's it. Also we have been thinking and talking about Tasty Tuesday for next semester, so we are working with Campus Activities to make that work.

At-large: What facilitated the change from referring to it as an audit rather than an external review?

Operations: An audit is less clear because it is often associated with financial things, but this has nothing to do with finances. It's the same thing, it is no different, and it is just so that money is not assumed to be involved.

#### b. Student Life.....(7 min)

Student Life: First, I want to address a question asked in last council meeting, the number of EMS calls on Halloween. There were 11 intoxication calls and 4 hospitalizations, which is the same as last year. But there was no dorm damage. Next thing, the Title IV survey is happening. We have had conferences with our peer institutions, and some of their surveys are absolutely terrible, so our survey will be good. There is a concern about how long to make it. We want to also include questions about interpersonal violence and stalking, but we don't want it to take an hour to complete it, because that could be really traumatizing, so we want to balance questions so that we have the greatest amount of questions and also have it not be terrible to take, so those are things we are working on. In terms of food, Rebecca is going full speed ahead and talking to Chris Roellke about how we don't like Aramark, so that's happening. We have a project about supplying laptops to students on financial aid. Some have access to laptops through different programs, but it is really messy, there are no written

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rules, and financial aid isn't sure what we are talking about. In terms of BIRT, assuming we are to finish the letter before the operations meeting, a letter will be submitted to the VSA council. BIRT has been trying to get a public database for months. This is really not controversial, we want database. Students can use a login system and all reported bias incidents will be available, and when something happens we will get an email. The information will be available, but if you want to see it you don't have to. We tried to have a mid-semester report of bias incidents sent out, but that was also blocked. Something else, those who don't know, for 2 years the exec board has been trying to get exec positions on work study, because the position's hours make this job inaccessible to students who have to work 11 hours a week for works study. Coming from Chris, he said thank you for sharing the VSA proposal, it seems to us that if the VSA wants to compensate for accessibility reasons, it is within the VSA's power to do so. If the VSA wants to maintain independence, it would not be appropriate for the college to fund it, but if the VSA wants to make the arrangement a priority in their own budget they can do so. So that's what is happening with that. In terms of the 3 B's conversation, we met with the HSAs, the Freshman class council, and House Presidents, to talk about the expectations plus a set of rooms versus none and no rooms. It should be in writing, because this is all so vague, and it is controversial, so if you want to talk to Ramy or me about it, because you are pissed at Reslife or at the VSA, if you are pissed about how it was handled, I'm sorry. People are really angry with the way it is being handled, and I want to say that I am sorry. I think that's it.

Operations: A point of clarification, there will be more in writing. But because the timeline is that we need this by thanksgiving break, the document will be brought to council on Sunday, because we need 2 weeks to pass it.

9 Debriefing of the Seven Sisters Conference ..... Operations (20 min)

Operations: As I mentioned, we went to Wellesley this weekend, 10 of us total. The theme was “learn engage advance discuss.” I am not sure that they went with the theme but it was cool that is spelled “lead”. The main thing was we talked about the coalition and how to improve it. Basically, all the schools want to be more involved with each other and increase communication. There were a lot of breakout sessions. Does anyone want to speak for the one on Finance?

Ferry: We spent most of the time trying to figure out how other schools did their dispersal of money to student orgs and to students. We have approximately \$250,000 more than our sister schools' student activities, and we seem to be functioning a lot better than every single one of them. Smith stopped giving orgs budgets, so mostly people were fascinated with how we were doing it. I didn't get whole lot out of that session.

President: but you have a whole lot to give.

Operations: Residential life?

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Joss: The thing between us and the seven sisters is that we have designated senior housing, and a lot of their seniors live in dorms.

....: For part of it we had to explain how our dorms are filled with freshmen and sophomores and a small group of juniors. We were vastly different from every other school in the Reslife discussion, so they were really interested in that. We had to explain that we have 3 senior housing options that are on campus but sort of off campus. There was discussion about how most of them have more residential halls than us. The discussion they put forward was about where campus centers are in terms of residential halls and the impact that has on student life and night life. We seemed pretty different in our living situation compared to other colleges.

Joss: For all of the people there who were involved in this initially, they all said that they have systems similar to house teams, so that is proof that it works, and that is can work.

...: There was frustration about the time spent comparing structure, and that we have to give background before talking about issues, so we didn't get a chance to bring up the VSA 3 B's discussion.

Strong: I had an interesting experience, because I ended up staying in a room with a Wellesley girl, which gave me a different experience on the first night, in that we did get to talk about that. She was the House President in her house. While the position was extremely dif than the one Vassar holds, it was interesting to hear that most of our sister schools' house teams don't get nearly as much money or nearly as much programming as we do. Another one that they were surprised by was the issue we are facing with the 3 B's. At their institutions, it was kind of a given, because presidents are an employee of Reslife, and are not elected, but appointed by Reslife. So that was an interesting take on this.

Raymond: They did not have as much of a relationship with their student bodies, because all of the house presidents have a council, and just one House President speaks at the council as representative of all of the house presidents.

Cushing: It was weird that they were not being elected, but that was just Wellesley. Others were elected. The other thing, houses needed to have fundraisers to have any kind of programming, and were surprised that we get money, so that is a good thing.

Operations: Programming:

2018: our programming a lot better, especially financially, because their orgs don't have ways to get money, they are set with a budget, and they don't have enough money for orgs. They had huge problems with attendance of events, in that they have so many but no one shows up, and I haven't really seen that at Vassar. We talked a lot about issues with finances. Some org budgets roll over, so if the previous org didn't know how to budget, they left the incoming org with zero money.

Ferry: I don't know that that was true. The finance discussion talked more about that, and it was not necessarily all of the schools. Some couldn't go into debt, and definitely all could apply for funding, but

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the funds didn't come from a VP of Finance, so they have to go through different kinds of heads to apply for different things. Some come from students, some from faculty.

Operations: Student representation?

2017: This was largely a prelude to the actual Seven Sisters council meeting. We started off by discussing about how exactly the Seven Sisters work together. The conversation turned to various forms of social justice co-ops, and we realized that we are all trying to move in the same direction, but we have taken individual ways towards it so far, so there was a little talk about communicating more with each other. If we agitate for policy changes more together than on our own, which would entail communication with those who have managed to make progress, such as the SAT/ACT optional switch some schools have managed to make optional for admission. There was more discussion amongst the colleges to make the agitation for progress more uniform. We talked about how to move past the community discussions, for example with the bias incident last year, there was a community discussion but then we move on and don't do anything. There was an interesting thing Smith was doing. It formed a committee with students and administration that meets once a week to try to move past issues like that, and it is bringing in another to put together a report on race, sex, and gender and their effects on the atmosphere of student life at the college, which was an interesting thing. Wellesley has a mandatory diversity, class diversity, training amongst administration, faculty, and staff. After that, the conversation turned to social justice requirements, where most of the discussion stayed, and spilled into the Seven Sister council meeting. Everyone was very in favor of making some sort of roughly uniform requirement across all Seven Sisters. Also there was discussion about trans-inclusive admission policies, and how Mount Holyoke went about doing it and how Bryn Mawr is going about doing it. They have gotten the president and administration to publish schedule various things and announce definitively in writing that something is going to happen. Announcements will be made, and a solid schedule will go out there.

Operations: I went to the president and vice president meeting. I was myself and acting as the president because she couldn't attend. I got to talk to other student body presidents, and I had a meeting after with the Seven Sister council which I'm on, and 2018 was there. Basically we talked about a focus on tangible things that each school does that work well. Wellesley has fundathon, where the president helps funds small projects.

President: Like an auction?

Operations: Yes, kind of like a funds auction. People were fascinated that we have 5 vice presidents, and we talked little about structure. I had 2 counterparts at every school, because I learned I am like a secretary. The council thought that in terms of facilitating communication between the schools, the president and vice presidents worked better for that, so I will give the president their contact information. I got a few ideas but I will email them to follow up so I can explain better.



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Strong: A small point, I found the experience valuable, and I think we should maintain those relationships, but I also wonder if it would not be valuable to find another resource to interact with schools that are also coed.

Joss: 2017, can you expand on the forum regarding admission policies regarding trans students?

2017: Recently, that has been a lot of the basis for discussion recently, with 2 colleges, Mills and Mount Holyoke, which are women’s colleges, and have changed policies, and began admitting trans women.

There was a lot of discussion on several levels that they have to work through in agitating a trans women inclusive admissions system, first of which is to really identify what exactly it is they are pushing for. At Mills, trans members can apply, and trans members can still attend if they identify as male after already attending. Female-designated at birth individuals are allowed to attend. It seemed that a lot of discussion was very limited, having it inside a college group that inherently did not include trans women and designated male at birth non-binary individuals. We talked about the conflict among their student body and among groups pushing for changes in admissions policies. I don’t remember enough specifics, but students had a hard time agreeing on what exactly they want to see happen. The second level is convincing administration, which they believed was extremely unlikely to go well. There is a lot of work to do there. One thing that I think needs to happen is that they need to begin having forums and communications with trans women and with not just people already admitted, because that is leaving out the most crucial voice in the discussion.

Operations: Following that, what I kind of got out of the conference, was that I am wondering what our place is in the Seven Sisters and if we belong there. Historically, we have been. But Vassar does not have the issue of transgender admissions. While there are issues we have mutual interest in, I am not sure if we necessarily should be in this place. There was a lot of focus on the empowerment of women in a women’s college, and I am not sure if our place there makes that disrupted or diminished. This isn’t a question for council to decide but it is good to think about.

### 10 Open Discussion

Academics: This is a reminder that tomorrow at 6:30 pm there will be a wonderful free dinner for first and second year students to talk to peer advisors. I encourage everyone to come. Also, tomorrow is the submission deadline for the fall preview newsletter, so if you would like to be in submit to me by tomorrow.

Student Life: Are any departments underrepresented?

Academics: Multidisciplinary programs are. Music and Philosophy don’t have anybody right now. It is roughly in the high 20s, low 30s, so the majority of departments are represented, and more than last year. Regardless, it will be split by division as well. Biochemists very well represented, but they can talk to other science departments as well.

Joss: motion to adjourn.

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End: 8:49