

VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Council Agenda for November 23, 2014

Time: 7:00pm

Location: College Center 223

"...if eating cake is wrong, I don't want to be right." -Lorelai Gilmore

1 Call to Order

Start: 7:03

2 Attendance.....Operations

Absent: Town Students

3 Consensus Agenda

- a. Vassar Greens (Discretionary).....\$500/\$420
- b. VCTV (Capital) \$700 + cost of security tags/\$700
- c. Crafts Not Bombs (PreOrg).....\$100/\$200
- d. Unbound (Discretionary).....\$270/\$270
- e. ASA (Discretionary).....\$500/\$1000
- f. Minutes From 11/16/14

Finance: Okay, so does everyone have the finance meeting agenda and fund apps in their packet?

Anyway, the Greens are collabing on some event that they want to do with um... Cushing, and they had enough money but the cost of musicians went up and they needed supplemental funding.

Cushing: So, this event is basically, the event name changed, it is now "Effecting Change Through Art" and it is less of an activist event, but it will still have the theme. It is an art space open to all students and faculty in the Villard room. We are reclaiming the Villard space as a place where students can express through art. There will be an open mic and you can submit any kind of art, we will have a projector, it will be really nice, a lot of food, and it is right before the vice party, so you can come get dinner while looking at art then go to the party. I'm going to send all of you, mostly the class presidents because I already sent the house presidents an email, that you can send to your constituencies, because we need submissions. So yeah. That's it.

Finance: VCTV made a capital request because they want to buy new items for club, that was on top of a \$3000 capital fund app that was approved in the spring. I also found out that they have no storage space, and none of their stuff is tagged, so they will collab with Activities to make sure that they don't have \$4000 worth of stuff stolen. Crafts Not Bombs got a \$100 operating budget, they are a new pre-org. They want to craft and sell crafts on Etsy, and use the money to donate to anti-drone causes.

Unbound needed money for a play, they want to make it better, and they couldn't do it without money. The last one is ASA. Every year they go to a conference and they have always been able to pay out of budget, but this year it is more expensive, the place where they're going is Cambridge, and there is not an ASA grad there for them to stay with, so we gave them a \$500 fund. Any questions ?

Comments? Concerns?

2017: Question about Crafts Not Bonds, when they were certified it was under the agreement that it was not as a political org, so I am curious as to this now.

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Activities: I had talked to them, they have the option within the org to do whatever they want with the fundraising, some are selling their crafts on Etsy, some are keeping them, some giving them to their moms. There is a small chunk who want to do that.

President: Does anyone not agree with the consensus agenda? Okay we will assume passed.

4 Forum with Interdisciplinary Arts Coordinator Ariel Nereson (30 min)

Nereson: Hi! Some of you I know, some I don't. I work for the college's new grant, the Creative Arts Across Disciplines grant. How many of you have heard of this grant? Delightful. This is informational, so you know about the project grant, and the resources available through those initiatives. We are working on curricular development, working with faculty to develop courses that are specifically interdisciplinary, expecting that they include creative arts disciplines. So next year there will be 6 Or 7 new courses offered, one will have physics architecture and music all together, so we are really trying to provide opportunities for students interested in interdisciplinary work. There are four arms to this grant. The first arm is that we want to invite guest artists. The format is that this has to be proposed through faculty, so I encourage you if you have an idea of who to bring to campus that would be valuable to have an extended residency, to contact faculty or your advisor to grease the wheels for you to contribute to the application. The other two, pedagogy workshops, for new research methodology that will come from arts disciplines together. There will be a pilot program this summer, so I would love ideas and feedback, you can email me, I will give my email at the end. Are you familiar with the URSI programs ? This grant wants a similar program based on the arts with a focus, an interdisciplinary focus, because there seems to be a little bit of gap in research programming, and we want to support students in arts based in research. The shaping of that will be happening this year. Those are the four arms of the grant. One thing, if you've seen the trailer, we collaborated to invest in a mobile maker space. It will move throughout campus locations throughout the year, and it has a space heater, so it will be in use throughout the winter, proposals are due December first. Thank you to whoever sent out the email to all of the orgs. If you have an interest in showing or creating work in that space, it is a space for any kind of work. You don't have to self identify as an artist to be a creative person. All students are creative people, and the more we invite students outside of the arts to express themselves as creative beings, the more holistic campus experience it can be for everyone. I welcome any input as to the direction you would like to see the grant go in. There are some things we have to make sure we include, but we have the freedom to shape something very student driven. You can find my email on the website, and my office is 208a-209 OLB. We have an amazing blog created by fellow peers, check that out, follow us on twitter at VassarCreative, Facebook at Vassar Creative Arts. I heard someone say effecting change through art. Our grant can help publicize and have a call for submissions. The grant is only successful to the extent that it can be involved and integrated into programming. My door is always open to hear how we can support those things. We have financial and time and energy

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resources, which are just as scarce, and we welcome requests for help. Please let me know if you want to get involved and have support on your own projects.

Cushing: Can you tell us the email address?

Nereson: arnereson@vassar.edu and creativearts@vassar.edu.

Main: In terms of guest artists residency, I'm wondering is this possible in a student involvement kind of way, students can request or propose?

Nereson: It would be wonderful. Lots of factors led to the decision of faculty. Guest artists residencies are extended periods of time, someone who will make work with students and stay for a while, those that tend to be the most successful are supported curricularly, part of existing courses, so faculty can escort them through campus, and students will be at events. The calendar is over-saturated already, so the kind of residencies that are most effective have a curricular engagement piece. The majority of faculty are open to hearing what you're interested in. As an org or group of majors you can co-propose alongside a faculty member, lovely, if you have idea email me and I can find faculty wanting to jump in. For infrastructure purposes, making the visit go as successfully as possible.

5 Forum with Sustainability Committee..... (15 min)

Sustainability: Hi all, I'm back. I'm here as rep of sustainability. This year, we want to build on years past, spearhead a couple of different movements. The new website is really slick and nice, we are hoping for more publicity this year, a lot of people know, there is a new website link on the main Vassar page, which is a big kind of, a big up this year. In terms of master planning, we are trying to get in those negotiations. We are making a list of what we want to see in the plans for next 10 years, working on that list. We will have a preliminary list, and will be opening up to comments as well. And um, actually before I go further, Sustainability is basically comprised of student interns, plus me, and a bunch of administration, faculty and Allister Hall who is the coordinator. The best thing that happened so far, everyone shows up, like b&g, people who never made it last year, so a big ups to the administration section of sustainability, there has been increased participation., We have the RCF fund for any sort of short term or long term projects anyone in the community can propose. We are working on one with a drama professor, in the powerhouse theater, in order to conduct classrooms need floodlights, which consumes a ridiculous amount of energy, so he requested that we buy a new set of LED pseudo-floodlights, so we are working on that right now. The payback will be less than a year and saves 300 kilowatts. We want to push the RCF fund, anyone can submit to it, it is an easily accessible app, so if you put forth a good argument, given we have money to play with this year, it could be a good thing. Also we are making 2 new bike racks, a bike fixing rack or repair rack, that is going through us. One of the interns has a wrench and some other stuff. One will be right in front of the college center, and one in the TH areas, because obviously seniors ride bikes often. Also approved, within CIRC, a vegan proposal, so any events that Sustainability puts on will be vegan, with the exception of the

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farmers market, because only 2 vendors sell meat cheese, and dairy, and it is a big one of our events, so there is an exception for that and collaborations, but otherwise we will be officially vegan. We are in the process of starting a green office certification plan, Purchasing will be our guinea pig. We set up criteria in administrative departments, for example do you turn off lights when people gone, who puts their computer to sleep, the list is long, who commutes, and if you reach certain total, the department is able to put a certification of sustainability on their website. We hope it will provide competition between administration and departments, Geology may be trying, sorry Geography. That is existing too. Without too much detail, basically we are working towards increasing publicity and push forward with real changes on campus to the best of our abilities.

Student Life: Are you still struggling with butter packets? We have heard that the Deece compost is being contaminated with packets?

Sustainability: That is something we haven't discussed broadly, so that is probably a question for the interns, they are specifically targeting composting, they did the whole display. But I can address it at the next committee, we will have another meeting when we come back from break.

President: Who are the interns?

Sustainability: There are 9 of them. It is a mix of sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and they do the legwork for most things.

6 Executive Board Reports

a. President.....(7 min)

President: So, things are running smoothly, we have had a number of monthly administrator meetings, so we are meeting with Cappy and Dean Chenette tomorrow. There is not much to really report from my area, most work is in the committees and other stuff you'll hear from. Does anyone have any questions?

Strong: I have something to question them on. How much do they know about Strong's ongoing structural problems, which jumped out of nowhere and are torturing the people who live there. I am curious how much they know about it. I am more than happy reach out and give them all of the information.

President: What exactly are the structural issues?

Strong: The fire alarms at night, no hot water for a week, leaky roofs in certain rooms, some heating doesn't work.

President: Those are structural issues! I'll bring that up.

b. Academics.....(7 min)

Academics: First off, the peer advising dinner, it happened, thank you all, we made UpC more beautiful than it has ever been, 100s came, people got advice, advice was given and received, that is what I care about. Next, the syllabus archive is still happening, working with the CCP. Faculty received

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the idea very well, they are mostly concerned with logistics and if faculty will be able to opt out of the process because of intellectual rights. We will be housing it in the institutional repository, where when seniors graduate that is where their thesis goes, all theses go there, so it will live in that same space. The next step is getting larger faculty approval, because the library is contingent on the idea that it is endorsed by faculty, so we will talk and see what it will take to get endorsed. The search for the library director is still going, we are in the process of writing a job description, it will go out in mid December, and we hope to be reviewing apps by the 1st of February, and to have a new director of libraries by June or July. The other thing is the newsletter. There were some logistical difficulties in making the fall preview, so we decided to focus our efforts on the larger spring edition, because the smaller wouldn't be as fun, so all efforts are towards the larger spring one, it will be in color and glossy. I don't know if it will be in color or glossy but I hope so.

7 VSA/ResLife Amendment Student Life and Operations (20 min)

Student Life: Hi everybody. We've had many conversations about this. The amendment has been modified slightly based on feedback from last time. Actually I'll let Ramy do this.

Operations: So on the amendment we modified, on the 6th or 7th page of your packet, we modified point F under section 1. The VSA will approve by a simple majority vote. We want to maintain control. In the contract itself, Luis edited 2.3.1 to say that it will depend on the context of the sanction in regards to alcohol and drugs. It was initially unclear and res life had the power to remove someone after a first offense, so that was changed. He also took out gendered language.

President: Would anyone like to speak to the amendment?

Main: The only thing I have to say, we should be thinking about the precedents this sets about what they can do, and how it threatens student government.

President: No one else wants to say anything? We will vote. Options are, abstain, you can vote in favor, or against.

Joss: Can I ask question? How many votes do we need for it to pass?

Operations: A 2/3 majority, so 16.

Davison: And people aren't allowed to change votes right?

President: Right. You are locked in. Once you make a decision there is no backing out, we are on a rollercoaster that has left platform.

Student Life: To clarify the implications of everyone abstaining, that means not passing. There have been a series of conversations about what the future looks like given the different options based on the amendment, and have reached a consensus that if not passed, the implications will be that house teams will be split into 2 categories, Student Fellows and House Officers, so even if you have a lot of mixed feelings, if more people abstain, and there are not enough votes to pass, abstentions have same effect as a no.

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2017: Point of order, aren't abstentions not accounted for at all?

Operations: They have the same effect as no, according to the Robert's Rules website.

2017: Last time it came up I looked it up, and I thought that abstentions don't count in the majority of those voting.

Operations: We need a 2/3 majority of council, not of those voting. I will look it up. 2/3 majority vote of VSA council, so I take that to mean the members.

Finance: That is what it means.

Operations: Yes. We need 16.

President: Alright. You shouldn't be abstaining unless you've been paid off to vote one way. Operations, do you want to go over what yes and no means.

Operations: Yes would mean that given talking to your constituencies the consensus is in favor of this change, no means the consensus is opposition to this, and you and your constituencies don't want this to pass.

President: Yes but what effectively is going to happen if you vote yes or no?

Student Life: Effectively if you vote yes, the amendment goes to us and the House Officer behavioral agreement will be signed by House Officers for next year, this will give them some sort of room privilege or maintain room privilege and put these expectations on them. No means separating house teams, I don't know, there have been lots of conversations, you know how HSAs feel, how Freshman Class Council feels, and House Presidents have all talked to their respective houses and know how the houses feel.

Operations: Technically we then have to have second vote to approve the agreement, technically.

Joss: One thing I feel the need to ask is to consider what you know on this in your reasoning.

2017: I was planning on abstaining, but it is evidently counting as a no, so I'll respond. Every person on house team is very in favor of this and the practical ramifications. As someone who has never been on house team and never will be on house team, I completely respect that so I am not going to vote against it, but I feel uncomfortable with the precedent this sets in terms of theoretical issues. I wasn't going to let that overrule the practical decisions of everyone else, so I was going to abstain because I did not feel comfortable with voting in favor.

Joss: Can you elaborate more?

2017: It is basically, if there's an issue that students have motivated administration to notice, the way it happened, the rough version of it, we said look we want a year to work this out, and reslife said no we will do it on our schedule. Because of that, this will lay a lot of ground rules, that reslife will presumably get very much of what they want, and it seems to indicate that when administration wants something from students, they can just lay a harsh timeline, and issue what has been named an ultimatum, and get what they want. Also I don't like, I don't like holding officers up to Student Fellow requirements

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because personally I feel some of the requirements are counterproductive, but I recognize I am in the minority.

Main: 2017 brought up most of my points, the idea that if something in the future happens, this sets a precedent of this is how we get what we want.

Cushing: I understand what 2017 is saying, and I wanted to, we know that this was not fair, I was so angry about this for weeks, all of us were. But we really need to think about house teams, this is about house teams, it will set a precedent, but that precedent already exists, it is already a thing we are all struggling with. I don't think it is worth dividing up house teams that work together so well, look at Dormal Formal, that was a collective effort and all of the Student Fellows worked so hard, and all of the houses are putting on events that are so wonderful. It is a Vassar tradition to have house teams put on things for the whole campus, so this will not only effect house teams, it will affect everyone else and the tradition of being a freshman at Vassar. I agree and understand most of it, but I ask that we think about how this will effect house teams, and that is why I want everyone to vote yes. But it is also okay if you don't.

Strong: I just think something we need to not forget in this situation is that reslife, this issue was not brought by reslife, but by students on house teams now and in the past. This is not an agenda they're pushing, yes they want it, but they want it because students are asking for it.

Student Life: Maybe I'm preaching to the choir, but it is important that we as a student government, if we are not doing things that don't help students, we are not doing anything important. I understand and respect the strong arguments made about the implications of our governance power with certain administrative bodies, but at the end of the day we are just a club with a lot of money to help students on this campus. If we are not doing that I don't know what it is we are doing.

Joss: Motion to vote.

President: Once we start, we are not changing our vote, if you abstain in the end that is your decision. We will take five seconds then we're going to start.

Is anyone abstaining: 2017

All in favor: Jewett, Lathrop, Noyes, TAs, Strong, Ferry, Activities, Operations, Academics, 2016, 2015, 2018, THs, SoCos, Ferry, Raymond, Joss, Cushing, Davison.

All opposed: Main

The amendment passes! And now we have to vote for the contract. Would anyone like to speak? Once again the same three options.

Is anyone abstaining: no.

All in favor? All.

All opposed: None.

The contract passes as well.

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8 Constitutiathon AmendmentsOperations (10 min)

Operations: Those start the page after the contract. Since last week we added in the amendments Jewett and Cushing wrote, those are all related to Activities sort of things, basically nothing has really changed since last week. We looked again in Operations committee, so if anyone in Operations wants to add anything? Nothing really changed.

President: Does anyone want to speak to the amendment?

Student Life: In the section regarding the Chronicle's ability to publish something, the editor in chief submitted a statement, saying only "what are you people doing with your time", so I don't know how we should respond to that, but I thought you should know.

2017: I explained to him a little more of the context of it, and he was under the assumption that this was the only thing involved in this particular amendment, so I explained that to him, and he withdrew the statement.

Finance: I didn't realize before, but the adjustments operations made to section 3 article 3 section 6, about Finance committee. there is a problem with the adjustment, it removes our quorum.

Functionally it is not a big deal, because I would never make decisions solely as the vice president, but there should be something about the quorum so that Finance committee can't just have 2 people. I don't know if you can talk about that in Operations committee.

Operations: Is there a number you have in mind for a quorum?

Finance: 7, but that is kind of an arbitrary number.

Operations: Motion to amend 29-9 section 3, and the clause should be to say, to add a phrase somewhere, "at least 7 members" to that sentence.

2017: Can we just revert to original language?

President: That said the "VSA council". We are changing that.

Ferry: Can we have "at least 7 members" and take out "VSA council"?

SoCos: Or we can just take out VSA.

Ferry: But it doesn't clarify that they are appointed.

President: we will put the language in.

Student Life: Can we vote on this with the assumption that maybe another amendment is coming in the future?

At-large: Typically if something is grammatically incorrect, back in day, it might be feasible for the VP for Operations to just change that sentence to be fixed.

President: Alright. We're going to vote unless there are pressing issues. You know the 3 options.

Abstentions: None.

All in favor: All.

Opposed: None.

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Great! Our constitution is updated.

9 Open Discussion

Finance: I have a few announcements. One, there are some exciting new changes to the VSA dashboard courtesy to Casey Hancock. He saves the entire student body hours, because before he created the dashboard, everything had to be done with paper. This allows us to upload pictures of receipts as part of transaction tagging. So you must take a picture of the receipt, so when we see requests, we know you aren't lying. By you I mean the general student body, because before there was no way to verify, so on a practical level this just helps in keeping track of receipts. They have completed the review of WVKR, and they are wrapping up with the Misc, so I will have official reports written by reviewers to send to all of you. I might ask them to present to council what they did in the process. Also, the vast majority of houses have not given me their receipts for Halloween. If you can do that before Thanksgiving that would be great.

Cushing: I forgot to mention, the event is December 5th, from 6-10pm in the Villard room.

At-large: I just wanted to let all of you know that I will no longer be the editor of the Misc, exec board elections happened in our last meeting and there will be a new editor in chief.

Operations: Some quick updates. For the review, council will be split into 2 groups, House Presidents and everyone else, so you will be emailing me a time that works on either Wednesday December 3 or December 4th. Exec members will each have half hour interviews. As I said last time, the forum will be at 6:30 pm in the Villard room. Operations has been very helpful in compiling materials, so thank you all.

At-large: I just noticed from some seniors and Yik Yak that at the moment, people think that the VSA discussions have been self-focused, and this reminds me something said last year. A lot of time has been spent talking about yourselves and the VSA, instead of numerous petitions and student concerns. In the future, I would want you to focus less on this space.

Jewett: Thanks to everyone who came to Dormal Formal, we hope you had a good time.

Student Life: Shout outs to Jewett for Dormal Formal, it was fantastic and I enjoyed it very much. I just wanted to let everybody know, I've seen the petition regarding more staff at Metcalf, and I plan to have a series of meetings. I mean, it's an old issue, not that the petition is harmed by the fact that it is an old issue, but this is a continuing struggle. I've seen it, I hear you, and I will try to provide updates as they come.

2015: Motion to adjourn.

End: 7:55