

**Vassar Student Association Council**  
**Agenda for November 1, 2009**

*Time: 7:00pm*

*Location: College Center 223*

"An education isn't how much you have committed to memory, or even how much you know. It's being able to differentiate between what you do know and what you don't." Anatole France

Call to Order

Attendance \_\_\_\_\_ Operations

Consent Agenda

Approval of the Minutes from 10/25

Announcements

Fines

Special Guests:

Mike Faba, EMT

Sam Black, EMT

Report

Act Out

Committee Report

Committee on College Life (CCL)

Exec Reports

Exec Report \_\_\_\_\_ Finance

Exec Report \_\_\_\_\_ Activities

Censure and Fining of Frisbee \_\_\_\_\_ Finance

Majors' Committees Memorandum \_\_\_\_\_ Academics

Allocation of \$900 from Council Discretionary to Main \_\_\_\_\_ Finance

Allocation of \$1850 from Speakers, Lecturers to FPT \_\_\_\_\_ Finance

Open Discussion \_\_\_\_\_ Anyone

Adjourn

## MEMORANDUM

To: VSA Council

CC: All department chairs and program directors, Dean of the Faculty Jon Chenette, and Dean of Academic Affairs and Planning Rachel Kitzinger

From: Stephanie Damon-Moore, VSA VP for Academics, and the Academics Committee

Subject: Recommendations for Majors Committees

The VSA Academics Committee has reached out to department chairs, program directors, and department interns, and has found that many departments and programs do not have a majors committee, or that the existing committee rarely meets and serves little purpose for the department or for the students who have declared or are considering declaring the major.

The Academics Committee noted that one challenge that majors committees face is a large degree of turnover from year to year. With most of their membership composed of third- or fourth-year students, graduation and JYA frequently leave little consistency in a majors committee from one year to the next.

In an effort to address that concern and make majors committees a more effective and sustainable asset for students at Vassar, the Academics Committee has compiled the following recommendations for majors committee structure and responsibilities. These recommendations were composed after consulting existing majors committees, and reflect work that many students have done or are engaged with currently. They are by no means exhaustive, and are not intended to take the place of valuable transitioning dialogues between chairs as majors committee leadership changes from year to year.

One of these recommendations is that majors committees be a voice for students with the department chair or program director, with the faculty members who teach in the department, and with the relevant administrators. Student concerns, questions, and ideas will be more effective and more representative if they are united and presented strategically, both in regular evaluation of the department and in response to unusual occurrences or circumstances. The student voice is vital to the health and improvement of academic life at Vassar, and should be solicited, united, and promoted by the majors committee.

Majors committees should also be a channel of communication from department chairs and program directors to students who are engaged with the department. At any time, but particularly in the current economic climate, it is imperative that students are well informed and provided with as much information as possible regarding their department. Majors committees can fulfill this responsibility by meeting regularly with their department chair or program director and disseminating information via email or in meetings, being available to majors and prospective majors for individual correspondence and meetings, and soliciting a response from students for faculty, department chairs, and administrators.

Furthermore, it is the belief of the Academics Committee that social life and academic communities need not be mutually exclusive at Vassar. With that view in mind, it is the recommendation of the Academics Committee that majors committees be a resource for integrating social components into academic relationships formed between majors, by organizing field trips, on-campus events, etc.

Finally, the Academics Committee recommends that majors committees preserve the excellence of their area of the curriculum and facilitate growth and enthusiasm through reaching out to prospective majors in an advisory capacity, displaying their pride on department merchandise (T-shirts, tote bags, water bottles, etc.), and hosting open houses or information sessions for students.

The Academics Committee recommends that majors committees are led by the department or program intern if an otherwise appointed chair does not exist. It is also our hope that information about the work and responsibilities of the committee will be passed from chair to chair each year. Other members of the majors committee can be voluntary or appointed as desired by the students in the department. The Academics Committee also encourages

majors committees to involve students from multiple classes to promote inclusion and ease the transition for committees from year to year.

Fund Being Applied For: Council Discretionary Fund

VSA Organization: Main House

Name of Applicant: Nate Silver and Amanda Messenger

Applicant E-mail Address: HYPERLINK "mailto:nasilver@vassar.edu"[nasilver@vassar.edu](mailto:nasilver@vassar.edu)

Event Name: Clue

Location of Event: Main Building - Rose, Jade, Faculty, and Gold Parlors, President's Conference Room, Villard Room

Date of Event: November 5-7, 2009

Description of Event:

Based on the classic 80s film version of the board game, this production brings Clue to Vassar and turns Main Building into the Hill House mansion. Beginning on the steps outside of Main the audience will become a part of an interactive murder mystery throughout the hallowed parlors of our oldest building. As the action and audience move from room-to-room in this unique adventure, this production is sure to be an exciting, original and fun theatrical experience.

Benefit to Students:

By performing two shows each night of the run - the later one starting around 11pm - we are hoping that this production will both reach new audiences and provide a late night alternative for community members who want a different type of late night program. Most of the theater at Vassar happens between 8-10pm and it is viewed as an early-evening activity before finding something else to do later on. Our goal is, for this one weekend, to make theater a destination - to have it become the main event of one's evening. In alignment with the VSA's goal of providing late night alternatives to events rooted in music and dancing, this production was conceived to fill that void. Because of the popularity of the movie and the centrality of the performance space, we believe that a new population that wouldn't usually go see a play will turn out to see Clue because of the unique nature of the event. As someone heavily involved in theater at Vassar I think it's important to continue finding new venues in which to perform and new ways to deliver compelling theater to the Vassar student body, and I think this production will accomplish both goals.

Costs of the Event (Itemize and Be Specific):

Costumes - \$400

Props - \$200

Set - \$150

Lights - \$100

Publicity - \$150

Total Cost of Event: \$1000

Current Funding Plan (How will you help PAY for this event):

Main House can contribute \$100 to this event, but because it was not part of our annual budget, we really cannot commit more at this point.

We are seeking the rest of the funds (\$900) from the VSA Council with the hopes that you will see the value in this event and help make it happen.

List of Attendees (First name, Last name, Class year - when relevant):

Right now we have a cast of 14 and a production team of about 10. We are hoping to perform 6 shows in 3 days (in addition to an open dress rehearsal) for a total audience of about 300-400 people.

Collaborating Organizations and HOW they are contributing:

Amount Requested: \$900

Finance Recommendation: \$ 900

Exec Recommendation: \$900

Amount left in fund: \$28,241.02

Fund Being Applied For: Speakers, Lecturers, and Panels Fund

VSA Organization: The Forum for Political Thought

Name of Applicant: Quynh Pham

Applicant E-mail Address: HYPERLINK "mailto:qupham@vassar.edu"[qupham@vassar.edu](mailto:qupham@vassar.edu)

Event Name: Lecture by professor Siba Grovogui

Location of Event: RH200

Date of Event: November 23, 2009

Description of Event:

Professor Siba Grovogui is currently a professor of International Relations and Political Theory at Johns Hopkins University.

Below is his professional bio:

**\*Educational Background**

University of Wisconsin-Madison. Ph.D. in Political Science, December 1988.

University of Wisconsin-Madison. Master's Degree in Political Science, 1984.

Institut Polytechnique Gamal Abdel Nasser, Conakry, Guinea. Law Degree, 1979

**\*Published books:**

1. Beyond Eurocentrism and Anarchy: Memories of International Order and Institutions.' (Palgrave, 2006).  
Some Reviews of Beyond Eurocentrism and Anarchy
2. Sovereigns, Quasi-Sovereigns, and Africans: Race and Self-Determination in International Law (University of Minnesota Press, 1996)

**\*Other publications: (incomplete)**

- o 'Your Blues Ain't My Blues: How 'International Security' Breeds Conflicts in Africa,' in Re-Imagining Africa, Peyi Soyinka-Airewele and Rita Kiki Edozie eds., CQ Press (Forthcoming)
- o 'No More No Less: What Slaves Thought of their Humanity,' in G. K. Bhabra and R. Shilliam, eds, Silencing Human Rights: Critical Engagements with a Contested Project (Palgrave, 2009).
- o 'Uncivil Society: Interrogations at the Margins of Neo-Gramscian Theory,' in Alison Ayers ed., Gramsci, Political Economy, and International Relations Theory (Palgrave, 2008)
- o 'Mind, Body, and Gut!: Elements of a Postcolonial Human Rights Discourse' in Brawen Gruffyd Jones, Decolonizing International Relations, Rowman & Littlefield, March 2006.
- o 'The Trouble With the Evolués: French Republicanism, Colonial Subjectivity, and Identity,' in Patricia M. Goff and Kevin C. Dunn eds., Identity and Global Politics: Theoretical and Empirical Elaborations (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 103-121.
- o 'Postcoloniality in Global South Foreign Policy' in Jacqueline Anne Braveboy-Wagner, ed., The Foreign Policies of the Global South: Rethinking Conceptual Frameworks (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, April 2003), 31-48.
- o 'Postcolonial Criticism: International Reality and Modes of Inquiry,' in Sheila Nair and Geeta Chowdhry eds., Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class (New York: Routledge, March 2002), 33-55.
- o 'Sovereignty in Africa: Quasi-statehood and Other Myths' in Kevin Dunn and Timothy Shaw eds., Africa's Challenge To International Relations Theory (London: Palgrave, 2001), 29-45
- o 'Persistence and Change in Senegalese Political Processes' (Fred M. Hayward co-author) in Elections in Independent Africa, edited by Fred M. Hayward ( Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), pp. 239-270.

**\*Professional Activities**

Eastern Michigan University, Assistant Professor (August 1993 – May 1995)

University of Michigan, DuBois-Mandela-Rodney Postdoctoral fellow (August 1989 – August 1990)

- o Visiting Professor, IEP (Sciences Po), Paris (May 207)
- o Senior Fulbright Lecturer, University of N'Djamena, Chad (January 2006)
- o Visiting Associate Professor, IEP, University of Lille, France (May 2004)
- o Visiting Senior Lecturer, University of Birmingham, UK. (January-April 2004)

\*\*\* We are honored to have Professor Grovogui come and give a lecture on the concerns and limits of the human rights struggle. He will be discussing how we can stimulate dialogue and reflection on the ways that culture, power, and history affect the experiences of globalization beyond today's ideological, disciplinary, and institutional barriers.

**Benefit to Students:**

Given Professor Grovogui's substantial and critical works on race and self-determination in Africa, rethinking international law and morality, and different concepts of human rights and human existence, his talk will benefit students of various majors such as Political Science, Economics, Philosophy, Africana studies, International Studies, Pre-law, Sociology, etc. His lecture is pertinent to the ever-growing human rights movement all over the world on legal, political, social as well as material grounds.

Serving on the admissions committee to the graduate Political Science Program at Johns Hopkins, prof. Grovogui would be very helpful in giving insights and advice to Vassar students who are applying (or planning to apply soon) to grad schools, particularly those who are interested in higher degrees in Political Science.

His lecture is especially beneficial to Vassar students and faculty members who share the same research/writing interests with his in the fields of Africa politics, international law, race, and human rights.

The Forum strongly believe that his visit to Vassar will bring great intellectual as well as social benefits to Vassar student body and learning environment.

**Costs of the Event (Itemize and Be Specific):**

Transportation (2-way AMTRAK and taxis): \$350

Lecture fee: \$1,000

Accommodation for 1 night (preferably at Alumni House): \$150

Dinner with faculty and students (after lectura, for 12-13 people): \$750

Other meal reimbursement for the professor: \$100

Total Cost of Event: \$2,350

Current Funding Plan (How will you help PAY for this event):

The Forum's fund for the year is very limited. We spend \$70 for food and drinks for every forum meeting (normally, we organize five meetings per semester), leaving only \$80 left for emergency use. So we really rely on VSA funding for this event. We are very thankful for your understanding and support!

List of Attendees (First name, Last name, Class year - when relevant):

Guillermo Farias '2010

Maria Jose Mendez '2010

Quynh Pham '2010

Beverly Fok '2011

Mie Omori '2011

Professors Andrew Davison, Luke Harris, Katherine Hite, Zach Mampilly, Ladan Affi, Himadeep Muppidi, Sarita Gregory (of Political Science), Vinay Swamy (of French and Francophone Studies), Andrew Bush (of Jewish Studies), Kiese Laymon (of English), Khadija Fritsch-El Alaoui (of American Studies), Peggy Piesche (of German Studies) and potentially more...

Collaborating Organizations and HOW they are contributing:  
We are organizing this event by ourselves.

Amount Requested: \$2,350

Finance Recommendation: \$1850

Exec Recommendation: \$1850

Amount left in fund: \$48,575

PAGE

PAGE 1