

# VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## Council Minutes for October 7, 2012

“It seems to me that more and more, we’ve come to expect less and less from each other, and that needs to change.”  
—Aaron Sorkin

### 1 Call to Order

-The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

### 2 Attendance.....Operations

-All here except Socos.

### 3 Consent Agenda

- a. \$125 from the New Organization Fund to Access
- b. \$594 from the Discretionary Fund to Equestrian
- c. \$4,000 from the Speakers, Lectures, and Panel Fund to BSU
- d. \$1,870 from the Collaboration Fund to Jewett
- e. ViCE Music Event Approval

-All adopted.

### 4 Forum with Chris Roelke, Dean of the College.....(45 min)

-He introduced himself as Dean of the College and Professor of Education.

-He thanked all of Council for their service to the college; it’s a volunteer positions and he’s grateful to them.

-He introduced the new staff in his office; SAVP coordinator and others.

-They are starting a “Life after Vassar” study group. On Nov 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> two experts will come to work with students in this group and lead workshops.

-They’ve just engaged in a new program with Doctor Ericson; they aim to improve our integrative health program and ensure that it is on par with peer institutes. They are trying not to be solely reactive as well as more inclusive. Part of this is making the mission statement and other documents more visible.

-Next week is the fall Board of Trustees meeting. He already read Jason’s report and commended it. They’ll talk about yay or nay on the new science project, getting the Board’s feedback. The Board is also interested in knowing how JYA works and why we don’t have a quota system. He thinks the college can do a better job on making sure the JYA experiences are vibrant and enriching.

-They are also working on the Student Space. He’s getting cold feet vibes from the board. Part is the expense and part is that the future of bookstores is unsure for the future. We’ll know more after next week’s board meeting.

-2014 asked about the factors contributing to fluctuation in the number of students who go abroad. After 911 and the recession fewer students travelled; this created a “bumper crop”. Also, thirty three students with under a 3.2 GPA were permitted to go. That’s why he thinks more students went away this year. He doesn’t think you can overly regiment this pattern.

-President asked about the “Life after Vassar” Program and responses they’ve received. It’s been an area of interest for a while. There’s a large committee who works on this with

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faculty, administrators, members of the Board and students. Several of them attended a conference at Wake Forest about becoming intentional about preparing students for careers if not through their academics. They want students to get ample experience in a work setting. They also feel understaffed in the Career Development Office. They have a very successful Transitions program and are thinking about potentially modeling that idea of coming back a week early for intensive workshops. The idea would be to have students that wanted to come back a week early during the winter term to talk to alums and think about career planning, in order to get this experience away from class time learning. 61% of last year’s class reported being a full time employee so this is clearly an important initiative.

-Town Students asked about how the health improvements will affect off campus students. They had a meeting with a few off campus students and talked about how to access services off campus. The meeting and a guidebook that Rich put together are positive steps. How do you get you connected to local services if you’ve exhausted the resources here on campus?

-Activities thanked him for coming in. He asked about students going abroad first semester being more common. Many programs happen to be in the fall. The board may ask them to create a better balance. He’s unsure why students do this, but it is a historic phenomenon. There exist “heads and beds” concerns.

-Raymond asked about the student space concerns. The \$5 million investment is part of it and the future of college bookstores is another. They don’t want the brown paper sheets on the windows of Juliet’s for very much longer. It may not be the best thing on the table anymore.

-Jewett asked about conversations in his office due to the recent events on campus, what will happen after the Wednesday forum? Every year he’s been Dean he’s seen unfortunate events like this. They try to hold people accountable, do their best and have conversations. He commended the “not in my house” types of conversations in Jewett. They need a commitment that is continuous. Women’s studies faculty held a forum in the Rose Parlor to talk about it and he thinks these types of conversations need to be happening all the time. He thinks they’ve improved on the collaboration side. He knows they got some bad press about why they didn’t mention those exact words in the email.

-2013 asked about school pride and asked if Mathew’s Follies would be coming back anytime soon. Yes it will occur this year the Friday before Founders Day. He feels it sets a nice tone and promotes pride. He’s already picked out his song.

-Joss thanked him for promoting shared governance. He mentioned a recent email he sent about EMS calls; what does he think caused so many? Was it lack of programming? They were particularly concerned about the amount of First Year students. They always prepare for big party events with ambulances, etc. They always follow up after people are

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hospitalized and they found there was an “influence of perceived superiors”. They had athletic students providing alcohol to younger students and casting in the drama department that went felt a little too much like hazing. They must have something fun every weekend, so programming was another issue.

-Ferry asked about the future of the science building. He thinks that it’s entirely finance issues, but he’s pretty sure they’ll approve it. There’s a lot of support behind it.

-Activities offered his help with Mathew’s Follies. The Dean has written his song, “taking care of Vassar”.

-Student Life commended his office for self-criticism and engagement. He asked about the audit. The report was a sneaky way to get Safety and Security feedback. They’d heard they need to improve structure and mindset of Safety and Security because of the new science building. They had a consultant come in and talk to Safety and Security about ways they can improve and protect campus. They need better equipment. They think the Committee on Inclusion and Excellence sub-committee had a meeting with Safety and Security about sensitivity. They are overstaffed in Safety and Security in comparison with other institutions. They also have a “walk around” every spring and he feels they can improve low cost items.

-Jewett asked about B&G. People wondered about how to know the status of their different fixes. The software is on campus so they’re working on it. They are a little short staffed in B&G so they are about to hire a new scheduler which will increase speed of improvements.

-Cushing asked about New England being repurposed. He doesn’t know where it stands at the moment, but he knows that the interdisciplinary departments have a local architect working with them to create a new space. They’re sure they want the interdisciplinary departments to be together and be central on campus.

-Operations asked if you could speak about the agenda for CCL this year. It is a large committee, 7 voting administrators and 9 voting students. The Government Review Committee has been looking at ways to make CCL smaller. They think it might be administrative top-heavy. They wonder how to be as effective as possible with size. They are getting pressure from Dutchess County Health to look at smoking. He thinks Vassar will be told to ban smoking at some time in the future. He wants our campus to be proactive about this. He also wants to follow up on the Alcohol Task Force. He’s interested in looking at the linkage between the use of alcohol and romantic relationships. They will also be working on looking at the Student Handbook itself. It used to be 75 pages and is now 198. There are two sections: one is basic information and the rest regulations. He thinks they can cut a lot of basic information. They don’t like to jam pack the agenda because inevitably something happens. They have to send everything to Cappy.

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-2013 asked about the potential for a student space in terms of the bookstore potentially not moving. He feels there’s no reason they can’t keep looking at student space broadly. He thinks that getting feedback on spaces on campus will always be a positive thing. That space needs handicap capability. They need more light in the back of the house. They want 24/7 capacity, and diverse possibilities.

-Joss asked about the TA bridge. “This one isn’t our fault”. It’s 70% deteriorated, they hoped to have it in before they got back this summer. It’s in the Flood Plane so the state is making it difficult for the structural engineers. It also makes it more of a trek for staff who want to work during their lunch hours so they’re doing their best to make a speedy fix.

### 5 Executive Board Reports

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

-He’s been looking through College Regulations with his assistant to see which ones need to be re-construed, etc.

-Their 2 big things are security and hooking up.

-The security report is 40 pages about technology on campus. He’s prepared a 3 page brief. One issue is a sever lack of surveillance, lack of video surveillance around blue lights and parts of campus. Student Life got his hands on Randy Cornelius’s data on comfort levels on campus, student interactions with security. They want to talk about how to push security to live up to their standards, how to work with administrators, etc.

-Hook up culture: They’ve been reaching out to different groups to talk about this like CARES, Fem alliance, etc. It’s a very complex issue, but it needs to be explored more publicly. The book *Hooking Up* has been circulated to the different committee leaders. Currently the committee will be made up of Student Life Committee members, the director of the LGBTQ and Women’s Center programs, another administrator, and a few others. There’s a lot of faculty to go through and talk to. The first meeting will be this week.

-ATF follow up will have a presentation made to the Board next week. There’s interest from faculty on getting access to security reports and look at statistical patterns in those. He hopes this doesn’t take up Student Life resources

-Activities asked about the little booth things around campus and what they’re for. He noted that the guard at the main entrance doesn’t look at people passing by. The other pods, around campus were installed 2-3 years ago mostly for student patrol members so that they could warm up during their rounds. They’re not used anymore and need to be taken out.

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-Joss noted that they need to notice who’s writing the security audit because there is bias. Student Life thinks that the company that was asked was for profit, so this is why. His committee doesn’t think surveillance in the residential halls is appropriate, but other places yes. They’ll be exploring this this year.

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

-They have a new committee meeting time: 5:30-6:30 on Fridays in the Alana Center Conference room.

-Their first newsletter has almost solidified the topic: A multidisciplinary view of coffee. It will hopefully come out later this semester, in January and hopefully 3 times a year after that.

-They are also looking at a social consciousness requirement. There’s been resistance because people don’t like requirements, so they are looking into various aspects of the proposal.

-CEQs are being evaluated and they’d like professors to talk about issues of social consciousness.

-They are talking about trigger warnings for events posters for the catalogue.

-They have 223 respondents from the freshman survey. Many don’t know how to access resources or didn’t get the freshman writing seminar they wanted.

-He will be sending an email with Dean Chennette next week.

-CCP: Economics is combining macro and micro into one semester.

-JYA has a lot of fluctuation and asks how to balance the loss of students. They are looking for more exchange students, encouraging students to only go for the semester, not the year, and looking for higher standards for accepting proposals.

-A questionnaire will go to the majors committees and any courses that are impossible to take will be eliminated.

-*Their Little Kingdoms* by Kevin Barry is the book of the month.

-Town Students asked about the social consciousness requirement. They are looking for alternatives to offering another class/ how to incorporate it somehow.

-Main asked if he’s thought about asking the bookstore if they could order the Book of the Month. Academics said first they want to have a space where students can discuss the book. THs encouraged making it accessible to people. He’s thought about having them rented and in the library.

-Jewett talked about putting in a crediting audit system through Ask Banner that could tell you how many courses you need to take and if your major/correlate is possible. This was discussed with pre-major advisors. It’s not in the immediate future because it’s expensive and complicated.

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- 6 Meet me in Poughkeepsie Debrief.....Activities (5 min)
  - 350-400 people participated which is way over last year’s numbers. They had a lot of people emailing after the deadline and they snuck them in. They also had people giving their spots out. They got 50 extra wristbands for Meet me at Mahoney’s. The bus company was great. All organizations had/were amazing leaders. There were so many people who did so much work, especially 2015 who did an event. Cara C. drew a map, emailed all the people about all of the things and is just great. He wants to put together a mini Meet me in Poughkeepsie manual for next year’s Activities Representative. Apparently 29 orgs participated the first year of Meet me in Poughkeepsie; this year there were only 15 and he wants to improve this. He wonders how many EMS calls there were and if there were less as a result.
  - THs made a shout out to Activities for all of his work.
- 7 Programming Board Update.....Activities (5 min)
  - He advises the Board. Their first thing was advising Raymond with Flashback Friday and they held events for Meet me in Poughkeepsie. They will have an event Halloween night. Then they will have a film screening. They also want a study break fun thing during study week. They want to do a sock hop next semester, drive in movie theater, snowball fight, ice skating, etc. If anyone has more event ideas, send them this way. Activities Committee helps out. They meet Mondays at 8 or 9.
  - Lathrop asked if the Programming Board will fill more events that houses don’t do. For example, the Haunted House? He thinks the programming board is there for collaboration, not necessarily to fill spaces. Their purpose isn’t to take on events that are put on by other people. Jewett is also doing a new event yay!
- 8 Appointment of Founder’s Day Co-Chairs.....Operations (15 min)
  - Michael Kaluzny, Jesse Stuart, Stephanie Goldberg. Operations met to discuss the four applications. They appointed two or three in advance. One was a freshman and they think that the person should have been at Founder’s Day so they will reach out to him in other ways. The first is Stephanie Goldberg; she’s worked for the Relay for Life, has a clear vision for Founder’s Day and is really interested in diversifying programming on that day.
  - The motion to appoint Stefanie Goldberg was approved with all in favor, Jewett abstained.
  - Jesse Stewart has done projects as an eagle scout. He brings a lot of charisma. The motion to appoint him passed with all in favor.
  - Michael Kaluzny has lots of experience and lots of ideas and a beautiful application. The motion to appoint him passed with all in favor.
- 9 Introduction of Finance Agenda.....Finance (10 min)
  - Finance usually doesn’t have an agenda. They’ll be launching a lot of different projects some of which are improvements to meeting space (more transparent and accessible),

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publishing clearer guidelines of what to expect from Finance Committee, starting a review form, guidelines for a perfect fund app, etc. They have people researching two Special Purpose Funds: a large event fund (so organizations can plan events ahead of time) and a social consciousness fund (supporting events that don't just focus on how many people went). They'll be talking to the Dean of the College and others about this. The standard deadline will be made more flexible, important and will allow orgs to do more. Finally, they're talking about the issue of orgs signing contracts before they have funding and they want to make sure they have people to help run them through. They also want to look at Annual Budgeting because it's been the same since 2007. They want to look at who is using this information; they will gather data on this process, and they want to change how allocations have worked in the past to be more fair and accessible. The whole Finance Committee is prepared to do it even though it's a massive undertaking.

-President asked how much they expect the two new Special Purpose Funds will be. He's unsure.

-Operations; How can you get involved? Join Finance committee. Once they finish collecting data then they will start sending out emails to the at large campus body. Certain aspects of Finance will remain closed because of the nature of it.

-Activities noted the problem of being able to bring a speaker in the first few weeks of school. One thing they'll be looking at is having the VP for Finance give conditional permission to orgs. For example, the Gloria Steinem lecture had a lot of previous summer conversation.

-Joss noted it would be a long process.

-Academics noted that they are looking for funding for some of these funds, like endowments. This would be ideal.

### 10 Open Discussion

-2013: 229 until commencement. They closed out the commencement speakers survey. He had a meeting about it and the results helped give them a direction. They talked about important parts of being a speaker in Senior Council.

-President: there won't be a meeting this first Sunday of break, but the second one yes!

-Main congratulated Davison and Strong for hosting amazing events!

-Operations noted that there will be no Operations Committee meeting this week because it's at the same time as Chris's forum.

-Harvest Fest went great. She's open to feedback.

-Raymond gave knocks to Ferry for helping out with the event and letting them have a concert in their backyard.

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-Activities noted the importance of always saying great job on your event! If anyone needs help with planning a new event, come talk to them.

-Davison said that having events open to the community is awesome.

-Jewett made a motion to adjourn. This was passed with all in favor except for Activities.