

VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Council Minutes for November 25, 2012

"Do the thing you think you can not do."
-Eleanor Roosevelt

- 1 Call to Order
 - The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.
- 2 Attendance.....Operations
 - All here.
- 3 Consent Agenda
 - a. Minutes from 11/18 meeting
 - All adopted.
- 4 Executive Board Reports
 - a. Student Life.....(7 min)
 - The security resolution will be discussed tonight.
 - A few members have decided to talk about the smoking resolution in front of CCL. They want to talk to more students.
 - He is now part of a committee called the Vassar Solidarity Project. This deals with speech and awareness and how this affects others. They will be talking to people, taking pictures of them and putting up an exhibition in the College Center. He's also hoping to start a group that discusses social consciousness and awareness so that people can talk about these issues. They'll post on bathroom doors. They are also thinking about circulating a book during orientation like an encyclopedia about phrases that help people talk about issues around race, sexuality, gender, etc.
 - SAVP committee has been working on their mission statement.
 - Joss asked where the smoking ban stands. Nowhere. CCL has met once and they have created one draft which they will be revising and voting on probably towards the end of the year. He's thinking of having Council vote on a parallel type of resolution.
 - b. Academics.....(7 min)
 - They've defined what they want from the Social Consciousness plan.
 - They're soliciting content for their first newsletter.
 - They have input from scheduling from the all campus survey and they will be fixing the schedule based on this. They are working with CCP.
 - CEQs are being continuously improved and revised.
- 5 Resolution Concerning Security Priorities on Campus.....Student Life (15 min)
 - In terms of content it's relatively the same, but they changed some language to make it more readable. Issues of surveillance and access control have been combined into one.
 - Jewett asked about how the old resolution included card access, but this one doesn't. There are no concrete plans to change door card access so they don't want to be preemptive in their language. They do want to address this issue.

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- 2015 suggested changing #5 to "and/or".
- Student Life made a motion to adopt Resolution 27-3. This motion passed with all in favor.
- 6 Resolution on Widespread and Coordinated Use of Trigger Warnings....Academics (15 min)
 - They've created an updated version. There are people who don't like the idea of trigger warnings being put on event postings. He warned everyone that there might be some negative backlash.
 - President noted that it's acceptable to table this if people feel they haven't had enough feedback yet.
 - 2016 asked what objections people have. Academics responded that people are concerned students won't attend events because of the trigger warning. Theatre people are concerned it gives away the content of the play.
 - Activities asked about specificities and Academics noted that they have them and can show anyone if they'd like. It does not include SNM, unless it's nonconsensual.
 - 2015 made a motion to table this to next week. This passed with a majority.
 - President encouraged everyone to talk to people and get feedback on this.
- 7 Resolution Concerning the Creation of a Social Consciousness Fund.....Finance (15 min)
 - This only endorses support for the concept, not the fund. They've had largely positive feedback from orgs.
 - Jewett asked about negative feedback they've heard. It could be viewed as potentially marginalizing. He thinks this is a danger, but can be avoid .They want this to be about events, not a certain org.
 - Student Life noted that "graffiti" can be an art form, so he suggested changing it to a "hateful identity based act" or something. President noted that he's thought about this and because they put the adjectives before it, it's clear.
 - Raymond asked if they'll still have a say in how the fund looks. Yes.
 - Operations asked if people feel like they've gotten enough feedback. Joss noted that Finance committee has spent a lot of time reaching out to different orgs.
 - Finance made a motion to adopt the resolution. This motion passed with all in favor.
- 8 Open Discussion
 - 2013: 181 days until commencement.
 - President noted that Safety and Security will be coming for a forum next week.
 - Hot mess Mug Night this weekend Main house!
 - TAs: this upcoming Friday he's helping host a teach in about the continued actions in the Middle East regarding the Arab Spring. It's called Revisiting the Arab Spring and will discuss transitions and continued uprising. Please help get out the word for this; it should be a very meaningful and informative event.

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-Academics: Majors Fair this Wednesday

-Joss is worried that the college may have already made a decision about the smoking ban instead of talking to the students. He is proposing a resolution concerning student opinion regarding the smoking ban. He would like to discuss it here and vote on it next Sunday.

- President gave a short history that it came up in CCL at the beginning of this year. There was a poll last year that noted that the majority of campus was opposed to this. There were concerns by some of the administration about the wording of the survey. There was a resolution made by CCL at the beginning of the year, but it's not what they'll be voting on at the end. This is going to be a requirement in the next decade for all colleges in the state. President Hill is in favor of this and will probably pass it. We can facilitate student push back, or we can let this through since it is inevitable anyway. Would it be a waste of time? He thinks this is an appropriate way to kick off the conversation.
- Student Life thinks we should consider how this is written and what kind of tone it is. He thinks they should give CCL a chance to discuss this a little more. Since we don't know when CCL will be voting on this, writing a resolution to postpone it might look silly. He thinks an effective student pushback will be in the form of ideas, not outrage. He's all for ideas.
- Operations thinks the idea behind this is great. The thing that concerns her is the purpose of this resolution. If the idea behind it is gathering student opinions, maybe focus on this? He directly responded that the idea is indefinitely postponing this decision while they gather student opinions.
- 2015 noted the intent behind this resolution. The priority is gathering student input. This is a decision that will profoundly influence student life. It's very important that students feel they have a voice in this resolution. This is just a presentation of a resolution, not the formal thing.
- Activities feels weird about sending a resolution to the Dean and the President of the college instead of the students. He thinks it's the representatives' jobs to reach out and he thinks we should tell them this. The intent behind sending it to the administrators is to ask them to work collaboratively, not make it a student versus administration issue. Activities thinks it makes it feel more like an administrator versus students issue.
- 2014 noted that although we are just the student government, we have the power to push back against the government. It's a valid point to respond to the larger government, beyond our higher structures.

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- Joss noted that the reps on CCL don't seem very empowered to contact their constituents. As it is right now people don't know this exists.
 - TAs thinks that as representative of the college we need to talk about honesty, hesitancy, and not being secretive about these types of things.
 - Operations thinks this is a great first step to start this conversation. She thinks this is something to be talking about, but since there isn't a concrete plan yet it's been hard to talk to people/let them know what's going on.
 - 2015 thinks this is more complicated because if the president has already decided she doesn't really need CCL to decide. Operations doesn't think she's decided. It might not happen until everyone here is graduated.
 - Student Life will consider this in their committee. He's in support of the spirit of this resolution, but concerned about how it's said. He's concerned with resources. It's their job to gather opinions, so they would need to make a decision about going fully into this.
 - 2015 doesn't feel that this hinders the passing of further resolutions; it just sets a framework to represent the student voice. She noted that it's the VSA's job to give everyone the correct information and thinks this should be transparent and open.
 - Joss understands that the administration has already made this decision and thinks there's too much behind the scenes work going on.
 - 2016 thinks it's not OK to send out a poll like we did last semester and base information on this. He thinks it would be premature for them to vote on this. He also thinks that it's the government's job to make informed decisions for their constituents.
 - 2015 made a motion to extend time by 10 minutes. This failed with a majority.
 - 2015 made a motion to table this to Student life Committee. This passed with all in favor.
- Ferry made a motion to adjourn. This failed with a majority.
- Academics thanked them for writing a resolution that didn't come from Executive Board.
- Ferry made a motion to adjourn and this passed with all in favor.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.