

VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Council Minutes for Dec. 1, 2011

Time: 7:00pm

Location: College Center 223

*"I'm just loving my way through the darkness."
– Professor Cornel West*

1 Call to Order

-The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the stand-in president (Student Life).

2 Attendance Operations

-All here, except Town Students who was late.

-President introduced a new system for members at large; there are blackboards at the back of the room where they can write their name and raise it to be put on the Speaker's List.

3 Consent Agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes from November 13, 2011; November 20, 2011; November 27, 2011.

b. Allocation of \$600 to Slow Foods from the New Organizations Fund.

c. Allocation of \$2,000 to Vassar Prison Initiative from the Community Fund.

d. Allocation of \$791 to No Offense from the Conference Fund.

-The Consent Agenda passed with all in favor.

4 Forum: Don Marsala, Director of Safety & Security and Kim Squillace, Associate Director of Safety & Security (60 mins)

-Kim talked about the burglaries and arson on campus this year. A Vassar Student was arrested for second degree burglary and drug possession. They've found meth, cocaine, and heroine on campus this year. They almost lost a few students this year due to excessive drinking. She feels these are very serious issues.

-Finance asked about diversity issues. She responded that their office receives diversity training several times a year. There were four events this year where people were concerned about diversity and she feels that the officers involved could have acted differently, but she also touched on the fact that once a story becomes second or third hand, the details are lost and things can get blown out of proportion. She has zero tolerance for any "-ism" and she encouraged everyone to let her know if they feel uncomfortable or disrespected in any way.

-Davison asked about the little guard houses and why they aren't manned. She responded that they are currently debating closing them and thanked him for his opinion on keeping them open. Many in Council agreed with Davison.

-Cushing asked about recovering stolen items. They are still hoping to so this along with help from the Poughkeepsie Police force.

-2014 asked who students should talk to about diversity issues and feeling uncomfortable. Melinda Guthrey is a good resource.

-Jewett asked if the student arrested was responsible for multiple thefts. Yes.

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- 2013 suggested having meet-and-greets with security from other dorms. Kim thinks this is a good idea and she bakes so she would be happy to facilitate something like this!
- Alex mentioned a couple instances where freshmen this year called EMS on one of their friends and security came and confiscated their alcohol. He feels this has stopped students from calling EMS even when it may be necessary. She stated that the idea behind this is that it's a safety concern because they don't want the endangered student to keep drinking.
- Student Life asked about the process of room entry. The officers are required to read the entire handbook and College Regulations and the policy is in there under room entry. They must knock, say that they're there because they suspect some violation and if the door isn't opened they must state that they're going to get a master key and open the door.
- KC asked about including a briefing of these policies in freshman orientation. They are working on incorporating this into orientation.
- Joey asked about the reports security turns in. The answer is that they put down many details about conduct and the situation.
- Davison asked about where they're asked to look; closets, under the bed and refrigerators are the places they look. They don't look in desks or dressers.
- Academics asked about security policy regarding fire alarms and if they're allowed to get in the dorm after. They aren't supposed to be in the building, just making sure students are leaving.
- South Commons asked about what Disruptive Student Conduct entails. The idea behind the disruptive conduct regulation is that it catches any form of disrespect. The idea is that no student should have to tolerate disrespect at any time. They added it because this isn't included under the harassment regulations.
- Raymond asked about the use of the word "ordinarily". They mentioned that on occasion there might be a situation where security needs to let themselves in for safety purposes.
- 2015 wants to work with them for first year planning orientation activities.
- Joss asked about the hiring process. All their officers are security officers, then there's the Sergeant, then there are two assistant directors. Don Marsala is the head and he reports to D.B. Browne.
- 2013 asked about how changes to the student conduct system are made. They can be made through the system. The plain clothes officers are just trying to be there for the students.
- Operations asked about the next step if their desk is searched. Students are encouraged to meet with Don or Kim if this happens.

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-Activities asked about the Shuttle and what their job is while driving in terms of security. He also expressed concern about the Shuttle not being on time. She's never gotten a report filed where a student got written up for something they said on the Shuttle. They serve as extra eyes and ears on campus.

-2014 asked if they take directions from Residential Life. They take care of concerns if someone's in trouble, but there's no direct connection with Residential Life. They sit on a few committees together, but otherwise there's no connection.

-Student Life asked about Security assuming that the perpetrator of the recent incidents was not a Vassar Student. She was surprised by this fact, but she's also sure non-Vassar students were involved as well in this incident.

-Cushing asked about being contacted by security even if no one is written up for a party. They investigate further if they believe there's a problem there. Can a student be found responsible for something retroactively? Yes, if students aren't respectful enough to people around them.

-Lathrop suggested that Security thank/acknowledge the student that reports a suspicious person that turns out to actually have been a problem. They will/do try to do this.

-THs asked if possibly students could be given the report when they're written up for any reason. They do share that information if asked, but the policy is not to give it out freely. CCL would be the best place to bring that up if there's further action that needs to be taken.

5 Executive Board Reports

a. Academics (5 mins)

-She's been meeting with the multidisciplinaries. The faculty representative for the architect will talk to her tomorrow. She is working on getting science classes to mark in the catalogue in some way if they test on animals or not. They've also been talking about classes being taught during prime time, from 10-3 and only until Thursdays, making Thursday nights a party night and reducing enrollment for Thursday night classes.

-Raymond mentioned that there are many events on Thursday nights.

-Noyes mentioned that she chose not to take a Thursday class due to it being late, not a party night.

-Davison talked about timing of classes being weird and having fewer options because he has a 1-3 class.

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-Cushing talked about how science students have class on Friday and get disrupted by the humanities students partying on Thursdays.

-South Commons reminded us that professors also like having 3-day weekends. He thinks that having class on a Friday might help the party problem.

-Davison thinks that there's a problem with students being respectful any night of the week.

-Ferry likes Friday being free as a do-housework day.

b. Student Life (10 mins)

-Jewett discussed the concepts they're going to change in the DC that they can use to make changes next semester. They are thinking of ways with which to incentivize students to go to the DC at more times, not just peak hours. They also want more self-serve options. CCL meets this week. They want to redefine reassignment in the handbook so there's a guideline for its use. CLRG continues to meet every Tuesday at 3 o'clock. They're struggling to figure out the All College Day theme for this year. They are sending out emails to increase feedback about this. The Committee on Inclusion and Excellence has been talking about the Cultural Audit and what they discovered. New Student Orientation Committee keeps meeting and they appreciate any feedback that they can get. THs talked about the Alcohol Task Force; they've moved the alcohol focus groups to next semester. They will carry them out right after Winter Break. They will use Randy Cornelius's psych class to help with this. The question they are tackling is why Vassar is more affected by alcohol than other colleges.

-Davison asked about the cleanliness of the DC? Jewett thinks that employees can clean up more with the new self-serve ideas. They also want to change the staff hours of the DC so that they're there during peak hours.

-Main asked about having legal places on campus to drink such as the Mug and if they're considering this in the changes being made. Once the data of the study had been implemented, that's a discussion that Council could have together.

-Strong asked about the new hours proposed for the DC. They want to encourage/incentivize people to come before six and after seven.

-2015 mentioned that one major reason they weren't allowed to serve alcohol in the Mug was due to the drinking age becoming 21.

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-The review of the Dean of the College Committee is hard at work. They'll be doing an interview with him early this year and they'll discuss it further. They'll be forming a formal committee to work on the new Student Space. They don't know what the structure will look like yet. Main asked about the faculty committee; they don't know that much about it yet, but he's open to suggestions in the future.

6 For Adoption: Amendment to the Constitution, Article XII Operations (15 mins)

-There's a nice Misc article about this. This was adopted with all in favor.

7 First Reading: Amendment to Bylaws, Article IV, Section 9 Finance (10 mins)

-They feel that not enough questions are asked before the budget process. The idea is that they get an extra set of eyes on these issues. He made a motion to table this to Operations Committee.

-2013 asked if orgs have to apply to the fund and then to them. It depends.

8 Open Discussion

-2012: 168 days until graduation

-Main asked Finance what the status of the audio system is. It's mostly in, but they're waiting on a few last things.

-Lathrop thought the Soirée was awesome. Everyone thank Louis!

-2013 talked about how they'll be looking closely at bits of their governing documents and how the class council fits in.

-Main promoted Moulin Rouge.

-President made a motion to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

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