

VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

VSA Council Minutes for Feb. 20, 2011

1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03.

2 AttendanceOperations

-All here except Activities, Operations. Academics and Town Students were late.

3 Announcements

a. All College Day

-Wednesday, any help appreciated. Set 1:30 to 5. Theme is sesquicentennial perspectives. Mural project—people can add input. Faculty Commons- there will be free soup and open discussion about our hopes for Vassar. There will be tabling outside of the Villard room. Faculty panel discussion in Villard room 7-9 with topics having to do with the changes Vassar has undergone over the years; where is it now? There will also be a jam in the retreat after this.

4 Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes from 2/13

b. Allocation of \$300 to Daisy Chain from Council Discretionary

c. Allocation of \$150 to Wholistic from Council Discretionary

-All adopted

5 CIE Report

-The cultural audit covers issues such as inclusion, governance, success. They're working on health care, curriculum, JYA-financial aid, equality, etc. They have created lots of sub-committees. They recently wrote a letter to the dean about reinstating sign language to the curriculum. March 3rd at 5 p.m. in Rocky 200 there will be a discussion/presentation about equality/rights. They are also sponsoring a Vassar prison initiative something. Academics inquired about the regularity of the cultural audit and what they're doing to see if it happens again because she thinks it was very productive. They aren't sure as of yet. They are continuing the transitions program prior to orientation week. They are leaving the cultural audit out there to let people interpret it how they will.

6 Executive Board Reports

a. Finance

-Be conscious of what is left in the funds. He will be sending an email out about capital budgeting and people should be reminded that they have to come in and clear this with Finance.

7 Allocation of \$1,700 to ASU from Conference Fund Finance

-2014 expressed concern he was hearing from his constituents about how VSA money is used and perhaps that there are too many parties.

-The ASU representative explained the conference as a place for their members to meet more African Students, Africans that have been successful in different fields, and as an enriching and inspiring experience from which they can bring back useful things to pass on to the campus. Also, attendance of this conference helps the students decide if they want to join the national African Union in the future. They have decided to bring just 4 people so that it won't cost as much. They are bringing just sophomores and juniors and no one that went last year. They said they think they could make it with this amount of money.

-Allocation passed.

8 Allocation of \$5000 to Poder Latino from Speakers and Lecturers Finance

-They want to participate in an event that will be campus wide that also involves the community that is celebratory and that addresses the arts and the public school system. They want to bring an artist and vendors from off campus w/ food. They lost money (\$3000) with mismanagement last year. They want to provide an alternative fun event to the few campus wide ones that take place through ViCE or Hip Hop 101.

-The finance committee wasn't sure that it is an event that really distinguishes itself from those events sponsored by other orgs. There was a misunderstanding Between ASA and Poder Latino about \$2000 being given to them for that event that they now don't have to give. They responded to the proposal of tabling saying that in order for the event to be successful they need to start planning with the amount they're given in mind now.

Regarding the ASA conflict, there's no way that they can hold them accountable, so this fact should be taken into account for budgeting. The rep requested at least \$8000. They want to give ongoing support to an artist, hopefully local.

-Joss wanted to know what makes this event different. The answer was that this event takes into account the community much more than the ViCE and hip hop groups. They also want to bring speakers from the community. They've been working on this event since last semester and have decided that the campus community needs this. The hope is music being played, artwork, games, food, and a very fun and open environment.

-Student Life requested details on how they will be expressing the issue of/working with the Poughkeepsie public schools and in this way differentiating themselves. They are having a community dinner with kids from the schools. They also plan on reaching out to the community through their connections in the school system. In response to Student Life's suggestion about collaborating with the SASA event they said that they want this focus to be different, they want to include children more, and include the Latino spirit more. They want to celebrate the community and have various local org performances, so that was the backup plan if they're not given this big chunk of money for the big attraction; which would be in addition to these smaller performances.

- Joss expressed concern about giving so much money to an idea that doesn't seem fully formulated yet or planned in writing. He wanted more details, but they responded that they need to start planning now and they need the budget finalized. They feel this week is very important to planning.
 - Main suggested starting small with a more modestly budgeted plan. They said they have started small and had smaller events, but they want to have a more collaborative event.
 - Town Students wanted to make sure that they don't take this personally, that it's VSA's job to ask questions and request details of all orgs that request money. The representatives reiterated, in response to Town Student's suggestion that they collaborate with Empower, that they want to create something that is their own. They understand that these things take time and effort, and they want to make something substantial that will continue in the future.
 - There was a lot of discussion about which fund this money is coming from and how much money can be spared in order to not take money away from other orgs. -2011 talked about free ways of involving the education organizations in the area and working with kids and educators in this way. The PL representatives responded that they want a main act to draw people to ensure involvement.
 - Finance made a motion to move this to the Collaboration fund. The motion passed. Finance made another motion to raise the allocation to \$6000 and thinks that the movement to the Collaboration fund changes the nature of this discussion. They think that the extra thousand dollars will make a big difference.
 - Noyes asked about advertising and they plan to. They will advertise through the heads of organizations in the Poughkeepsie area that they know. They will also flier and use their connections in VAST to bring kids.
 - Lathrop suggested having the event on the quad so that it's available easily to everyone. Town Students suggested having it at the THs. All were in favor of the amendment.
 - The allocation was moved back to Speakers and Lecturers due to a discrepancy in the bylaws.
 - This allocation passes with everyone in favor except Town Students who abstained.
- 9 Appointment of South Commons' President.....Operations
- Davison expressed support for the candidate. If Hannah is appointed president then they will have to find a new program director. The appointment passes with all in favor.
- 10 Open Discussion..... Anyone
- 2011: 91 days until graduation. Mr. Vassar is Friday, but she and Roelke won't be there so they need people to offer to get pied at the event.
 - Jewett: The org meeting times are wrong on the website.
 - Main: He wanted more details about the allocation that was just made.
 - Academics expressed frustration about the amount of time Council is spending talking about fund apps.

- Lathrop explained why we take so much time discussing.
- Cushing expressed concern about where the org was standing and the weird energy of the group tonight.
- TAs suggested writing down questions so there's no repetition.
- President reiterated that we have the right to table and oppose an allocation.
- Strong asked about the money coming back to us claim that was made and about not considering past allocations in voting on current ones.
- Finance clarified some budgeting rules and the money coming back thing—it doesn't.
- Town Students brought up the physical set up of this room and its inclusivity.
- Joss still feels uncomfortable with the event and thinks Council shouldn't give money based on trust in the org.
- Main also felt unsettled and voiced his concern that race politics shouldn't be allowed to get in the way of these discussions.
- Davison is concerned with the bylaws. He also thinks VSA should audit an event and this one may be a good place to start. An audit consists of people from Activities committee attending an event and reporting back on how it goes.
- Cushing is concerned that student orgs don't stand at the front of the room. It's up to the discretion of the org.
- Academics: We're here for the students and the money is for students.
- Strong has recently felt uncomfortable in these meetings and thinks it may have to do with atmosphere. She thinks it's very important that this is a comfortable space for everyone.
- Lathrop addressed the fact that voting against something is hard. She suggested sitting in a big circle with everyone welcome to join. She also thinks it's good we discuss fund apps, but we also need to address bigger issues.
- 2014 addressed voting all together and making it a more comfortable atmosphere.
- Town Students expressed her level of discomfort in being a member of PL and asking them questions.
- THs felt that the conversation we just had would have been more productive if we had had it in between talking to PL and voting.
- President said that everyone should feel comfortable in this room and he'll do everything he can to make everyone feel this way. He discussed how in the last two meetings we've talked more about what went wrong than what went correctly which shows a fundamental problem in our system.
- Academics and Joss addressed the shooting that happened this week and want us to remember that we are part of a bigger community.
- Davison expressed a concern made by one of his constituents that the money allocated previously in the council meeting inhibited their org from getting the money for their cause. He also addressed this problem and that the system should be changed.

- Lathrop was concerned that they were sending 25 people instead of the 10 that they're supposed to send.
- Student Life declares the position of SoCos open and accepting applications.
- THs talked about an online event evaluation form that each org needs to fill out and given to Activities at the end of the year.
- Student life suggested that everyone add input to the changing of structure and systems of Council.
- Joss made a motion to adjourn, all in favor except Joss and Main. Meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.