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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

We, the students of Vassar College, recognizing that the student body is a separate entity within the structure of Vassar College, and that each student has the responsibility to conduct one’s life with consideration for others in the College community, and with regard for the promotion of the educational process, hereby establish the Vassar Student Association, to provide means for responsible and effective student participation in the appropriate decision making processes of the College and to further student welfare and interests, while working within the framework of the College, as set forth in the Governance.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Vassar Student Association, hereinafter the VSA.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The VSA shall serve, represent, and promote the interests and welfare of the students of Vassar College. It shall encourage student representation and involvement in college decision making and shall strive to enhance the quality of life and education for the students of Vassar College. The VSA shall represent the opinions of the student body, serving as a communications conduit to the Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Alumnae/i, the local community, and beyond. The VSA shall also sponsor, support, and be responsible for student organizations.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

All matriculated students of Vassar College shall be members of the VSA.

ARTICLE IV – EXPECTATIONS OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED MEMBERS

SECTION 1: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

All VSA elected and appointed members, including members of the VSA Council, House Teams, Class Councils, student committees, ad-hoc committees, task forces, and student delegations to joint committees are expected to uphold and abide by the VSA Constitution and the VSA Bylaws and adhere to all Vassar College Regulations. Each VSA elected and appointed member is expected to serve honestly and openly, to participate fully in all required meetings and events, and to effectively and responsibly represent their constituency by acting on its behalf.

SECTION 2: TERMS OF OFFICE

A. VSA elected and appointed positions shall have a term of office from Spring Convocation to Spring Convocation of the following year, unless stated otherwise.

B. Those positions elected or appointed after Spring Convocation shall also terminate at the next Spring Convocation, unless stated otherwise.
C. At the conclusion of a term of office, the officer shall remain as an advisor to the newly elected officer until the close of the academic year.

ARTICLE V – THE VSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The VSA Executive Board shall be chaired by the VSA President and additionally consist of the VSA Vice President for Student Life, VSA Vice President for Operations, VSA Vice President for Academics, VSA Vice President for Activities, and VSA Vice President for Finance.

SECTION 2: POWER AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The powers and responsibilities of the Executive Board shall be to:

A. Represent the best interests of the VSA to the Faculty, Administration, Trustees, and Alumnae/i in accordance with the Governance of Vassar College, including mandated rules of confidentiality.

B. The President shall be the leader and chief executive of the VSA.

C. The Vice President for Student Life (VP for Student Life) shall work to improve the quality of student life and promote general student welfare at Vassar College.

D. The Vice President for Operations (VP for Operations) shall be the chief operating officer, overseeing all day to day operations of the VSA.

E. The Vice President for Academics (VP for Academics) shall represent the academic interests of the VSA.

F. The Vice President for Activities (VP for Activities) shall oversee VSA organizations and events.

G. The Vice President for Finance (VP for Finance) shall be the chief financial officer of the VSA, overseeing all financial operations.
   1. The VP for Finance shall have a term of office from July 1 to June 30.

H. The VSA Executive Board shall perform their duties as set forth in Article I of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 3: ELECTION

The VSA President, VP for Student Life, VP for Operations, VP for Academics, VP for Activities, and VP For Finance shall each be elected from and by the Vassar student body at-large in the spring election.

SECTION 4: SUCCESSION OF POWERS

A. Should any Officer be absent, incapacitated, or leave office, all duties, responsibilities, and powers of the Officer shall be temporarily assumed by the VSA President.

B. Should the VSA President be absent, incapacitated, or leave office, all duties, responsibilities, and powers of the VSA President shall be temporarily assumed by the VP for Student Life, VP for Operations, VP for Academics, VP for Activities, or VP for Finance, in that order.

SECTION 5: COMPENSATION

A. Each member of the Executive Board shall receive pay up to the amount specified by the Office of Financial Services for a student in their class year, regardless of the member’s work-study eligibility.
ARTICLE VI – THE VSA COUNCIL

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

A. Voting members of the VSA Council shall be: the VP for Student Life, the VP for Operations, the VP for Academics, the VP for Activities, the VP for Finance, the Class Presidents, the House Presidents, the President of the Town Houses, the President of the Terrace Apartments, the President of the South Commons, the President of the Town Students, and a Representative of Ferry House.

B. The VSA Council shall be chaired by the VSA President, who shall only vote in the event of a tie.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES OF VSA COUNCIL MEMBERS

It shall be the responsibility of the members of the VSA Council to:

A. Represent and promote the best interests of their constituencies.

B. Present to the VSA Council the opinions of their constituency as obtained through polling, discussion, and any other means deemed appropriate.

C. Participate in all VSA Council meetings.

D. Communicate the discussions and decisions of the VSA Council, as well as any other relevant information to their constituencies.

E. Ensure that the VSA acts in a manner consistent with these governing documents and subsequent legislation.

F. Populate standing Committees of the VSA Council as laid out in Article III of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 3: FUNCTIONS OF THE VSA COUNCIL

The functions of the VSA Council shall be to:

A. Act as a forum for communication between VSA officers and members.

B. Initiate, pass, amend, and implement rules of order, standing orders, policies, rules, legislative decisions, and regulations, which are deemed necessary and proper for the functioning of the VSA.

C. Issue official endorsements and position statements of the VSA.

D. Hear reports from VSA Committees, student representatives to College committees, and all VSA organizations.

E. Create and populate ad-hoc committees and task forces of the VSA, and populate those created by the Faculty, Administration, and/or Trustees with student representation.

F. Appoint VSA members to open positions.

G. Review, amend, and approve the budget of the VSA, as laid out in Article VI of the VSA Bylaws.

H. Present to the College President for final approval legislation involving a substantial change in the character of the residential or academic community or in the financial commitments of the College.
I. The VSA Council shall have the power to certify student organizations in accordance with Article VIII of the VSA Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII - CLASS COUNCILS

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

A. The Senior, Junior, Sophomore, and Freshman classes shall each elect, at large, from their respective classes: a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. These four officers shall form the Class Council Executive Board of each respective class. Additionally, each class will elect two Class Gift Co-Chairs.

B. The Senior Class Council shall additionally consist of members appointed by their Class Council Executive Board.

C. The Junior, Sophomore, and Freshman Class Councils shall additionally consist of one representative from each House, elected at large from their constituencies in the Spring Elections.

D. Junior Representatives shall serve a term of office on the Class Council in the Fall, Spring Junior, or both. Candidates shall have the option of running on the first semester ballot, second semester ballot, or both during the Spring Elections.

E. Officers of the Senior Class shall hold their positions for a period of six years.

SECTION 2: CLASS COUNCIL POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Presidents shall call and chair regular meetings of their respective councils, serve as voting members of the VSA Council, relay information and opinions between the VSA Council and their Class Councils, and represent their classes in applicable meetings.

B. Vice Presidents shall coordinate class social activities and shall assume the duties of the Class Presidents in the event of absence, incapacitation, or departure from office.

C. Secretaries shall record minutes at all Class Council meetings and shall maintain records and documents of the Class Councils.

D. Treasurers shall be responsible for all financial matters of their classes and shall maintain an inventory of all Class assets, including capital items.

E. House Representatives shall communicate concerns and/or ideas from their respective classes within the houses they represent to their Class Councils and vice versa.

F. Class Gift Co-Chairs shall work with the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development, Office of the Dean of the College, and their Class Council on deciding upon, fundraising for, and organizing the Class Gift.

G. Class Councils shall have the power to appoint additional representatives of their class to their Class Council.

H. Class Councils shall make all decisions by a majority vote.

SECTION 3: FUNCTIONS OF THE CLASS COUNCILS

The Functions of the Class Councils shall be to:

A. Serve as a forum for discussion of class issues.

B. Represent the views of their respective classes to the VSA Council, Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Alumnae/i, and/or the local community and beyond.

C. Plan class events and activities.
ARTICLE VIII – HOUSE TEAMS AND RESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATION

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

A. Each House shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. A Freshman Representative, Sophomore Representative, and Junior Representative(s) shall be elected by the respective classes in each House. These individuals shall be the House Officers of the House Team of each respective House.

B. Town Students and the respective residents of the Town Houses, Terrace Apartments, and South Commons shall each elect a President, Programming Director and Treasurer.
   1. Town Students officers shall hold their positions for the duration of the academic year.

C. The residents of Ferry House shall select a Representative each semester by their own process.

D. In the event that there are no elected or appointed members of the residence to serve on the VSA Council, VSA Council shall have the power to rescind their allocated budget for the year.

SECTION 2: DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

A. Presidents shall call and chair House Team meetings and meetings of residents, if deemed necessary; serve as a voting member of the VSA Council and relay information and opinions between the VSA Council and their House Team; and represent their House in applicable meetings.

B. Vice Presidents and Programming Directors shall coordinate residential social activities and programming, and shall assume the duties of the President in the case of the President’s absence, incapacitation, or departure from office.

C. Secretaries shall be responsible for all respective House communications and record minutes at all House Team meetings.

D. Treasurers shall be responsible for all financial matters and maintain an inventory of all assets, including capital items.

E. Freshman, Sophomore, and Junior Representatives shall communicate concerns and/or ideas from their classes to their House Teams and vice versa.

F. House Officers shall abide by behavioral expectations required by the Office of Residential Life. Any change in these expectations must be approved by a simple-majority vote of the VSA Council.

SECTION 3: FUNCTIONS

A. House Teams and other Residential Leadership shall represent the views of their respective residences to the VSA Council, Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Alumnae/i, and the local community and beyond.

B. House Teams shall work with the Office of Residential Life and the Dean of Students to organize and conduct residential business.

C. House Teams shall plan residential events and activities.

ARTICLE IX – THE JUDICIAL BOARD

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The Judicial Board shall be composed of:
ARTICLE X – NON-DISCRIMINATION

SECTION 1: GENERAL TERMS

The VSA shall not discriminate in the administration of its Bylaws, policies and procedures, nor tolerate discrimination or harassment. Discrimination or harassment on the part of any of the VSA’s members is not permissible on the basis of race, color, religion or religious belief, citizenship status, sex, marital status, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ethnicity, military service or affiliation, genetic information, age, and other characteristics protected by law. Additionally, during the period Article X of the VSA Constitution and Bylaws is extant, should state or federal law be enacted to prohibit other forms of discrimination or harassment not listed in the above categories, Article X will be deemed amended to afford protection to such groups.

The VSA’s Non-discrimination Policy shall not limit the rights of any individual to seek remedies available under the College Regulations or state or federal law.

SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

A. Discrimination is defined, for the purpose of the VSA Constitution and Bylaws, as any decision, act, or failure to act which denies access, benefits, or opportunities to a person’s or group’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, privileges, or activities of the VSA, including VSA sponsored or affiliated programs and activities, when such a decision, act, or failure to act is based on race, color, religion or religious belief, citizenship status, sex, marital status, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ethnicity, military service or affiliation, genetic information, or age.

B. Discriminatory Harassment is defined, for the purpose of the VSA Constitution and Bylaws, as unwelcome conduct toward a person or group based on race, color, religion or religious belief, citizenship status, sex, marital status, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ethnicity, military service or affiliation, genetic information, or age, that is sufficiently severe, pervasive and objectionably offensive that it denies, limits, or alters the conditions of, participation in, or benefits derived from the services, privileges, or activities of the VSA, including VSA sponsored or affiliated programs and activities.
ARTICLE XI – VSA BYLAWS

This Constitution maintains the framework for the VSA, yet procedural mechanisms are necessary for the proper operation of the VSA. Thus the VSA Council shall have the power to establish and maintain bylaws that further regulate VSA entities, as it deems necessary and proper. Bylaws require a two-thirds majority vote from the VSA Council to be approved or amended. Amendments recommended to VSA Council may be voted on for adoption one week after they are presented.

ARTICLE XII – VSA POLICIES

The VSA standing committees shall have the power to maintain their own Policies that shall be edited and voted on by each committee at the beginning of the academic year. The Policies shall consist of the committee’s mission, composition, and current practices. Amendments to the Policies during the year may be approved by a majority vote of the standing committee. The Policies shall be subordinate documents to the VSA Constitution and the VSA Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A. Any member of the VSA may propose amendments to the VSA Constitution to the VSA Council. The VSA member proposing an amendment must submit it to the VP for Operations prior to bringing it before the Council.

B. A two-thirds majority vote of the VSA Council is sufficient initially to amend the Constitution or Bylaws. A vote may take place at the meeting following that in which the revision is introduced.

C. Following an amendment, the VP for Operations must notify the entire student body of the change, and the number of signatures necessary for a referendum, via posting, as well as providing one to any student upon request. The amendment stands if a period of two weeks passes, and a written objection is not presented to the VSA Executive Board.

D. If there is an objection(s) signed by at least 5% of the VSA membership, then the VSA Council must call for a referendum vote to be conducted by the Board of Elections and Appointments. A simple majority of those casting ballots, regardless of abstentions, shall be required to either pass or defeat the amendment.

E. Any proposed amendment not supported by the VSA Council may be brought to a referendum with a petition signed by 15% of the VSA.

ARTICLE XIV – RATIFICATION

This shall be the only Constitution governing the students of Vassar College. This Constitution shall become effective at Spring Convocation 2006 upon ratification of a majority of voting members of the student body, and approval of the Faculty and President of Vassar College, as set forth in the Governance.
THE BYLAWS OF THE VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

These Bylaws shall set forth many of the procedures of the Vassar Student Association. The VSA Bylaws shall be a subordinate document to the VSA Constitution.

ARTICLE I – VSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENT

A. Call and conduct meetings of the full VSA Council and VSA Executive Board, when deemed necessary.
B. Serve ex-officio as a member of all committees of the VSA.
C. Represent the VSA at student government conferences.
D. At the request of the Board of Trustees, serve as a student observer at Trustees’ meetings.

SECTION 2: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR STUDENT LIFE

A. Serve as primary liaison to the Dean of the College Division, including the Office of Campus Life and Diversity and its centers.
B. Provide support and guidance for House Teams and the Board of House Presidents.
C. Represent the unique set of issues faced by students associated with the Office of Campus Life and Diversity and its centers.

SECTION 3: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR OPERATIONS

A. Oversee the activities of student committees and student delegations to joint committees.
B. Serve as primary liaison to the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development, Computing and Information Services, and Communications.
C. Oversee the orientation of new VSA Council members.
D. Oversee the VSA Board of Elections and Appointments as an advisor and perform the duties of the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair in their absence or incapacity or in the event that none is elected.
E. Maintain records and documents of the VSA, the VSA Executive Board, and committees, as well as minutes of the VSA Council.
F. Serve as the primary liaison to the Seven Sisters Coalition.

SECTION 4: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR ACADEMICS

A. Serve as the primary liaison to the Dean of the Faculty Division and other offices pertaining to students’ academic lives.
SECTION 5: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR ACTIVITIES

A. Receive, investigate, and present to VSA Council all applications for certification and decertification of organizations.
B. Maintain records and documents of VSA organizations.
C. Provide support and guidance for VSA organizations, including designing and coordinating VSA conferences for organizations.
D. Work with the Office of Campus Activities, including the Student Activities Resource Center, on programming and approving all events sponsored by VSA organizations.
E. Be responsible for the annual budgeting of organizations, in conjunction with the Vice President for Finance.

SECTION 6: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR FINANCE

A. Advise and present to the VSA Council for approval such policies and procedures deemed necessary to oversee the honest, efficient and equitable administration of the Student Activities budget.
B. Prepare and provide an annual budget report and other financial reports as requested by the VSA Council.
C. Call mandatory meetings for treasurers of VSA organizations when deemed necessary.
D. Require all certified VSA organizations to submit a budget, upon request.

ARTICLE II – VSA COUNCIL MEETINGS

SECTION 1: MEETINGS

A. VSA Council meetings shall be held every Sunday at 7 p.m. for which classes are in session on the following Monday.
B. The President may call a session of the VSA Council at any time and shall call a session within three days of a written request of one-third of VSA Council members.
C. A quorum shall be defined as a two-thirds majority of the voting members and shall be necessary for any session of the VSA Council.
D. Any student may make a motion or raise an issue before the VSA Council.
E. All VSA Council meetings shall be open to all VSA members, unless a three-fourths majority of VSA Council votes to close the meeting.
F. All votes shall be cast publicly and shall be recorded in the minutes.
G. Minutes of the VSA Council meetings shall be recorded at each open VSA Council meeting and become official upon the approval of VSA Council.
H. Members of the VSA Council shall abstain from voting on issues in which they have a conflict of interest.

SECTION 2: AGENDA

A. A tentative agenda shall be created by the VSA President with the rest of the Executive Board.
B. The agenda will be sent out to VSA Council members no later than Thursday evening prior to the appointed meeting time.
C. The agenda shall be posted on the VSA website.
D. Any VSA member may request an amendment or addition to the agenda.

SECTION 3: CHAIR

The President shall chair all VSA Council meetings.

SECTION 4: PARLIAMENTARIAN

The VP for Operations, or a designee, shall be the Parliamentarian during VSA Council meetings.

SECTION 5: SPEAKER’S LIST

A speaker’s list shall be taken by the Parliamentarian, and shall be followed by the Chair.

SECTION 6: CONSENSUS AGENDA

All items placed on the Consensus Agenda at the start of a VSA Council meeting shall be considered adopted, unless an objection is raised. Any VSA Council member or member at-large may object to an item on the consensus agenda.

SECTION 7: DISRUPTIVE MEMBERS

A. Any member at large who exhibits disruptive behavior may be forced to leave, by the Chair, through appropriate security measures.
B. Any disruptive Council member may be expelled from the proceedings by a two-thirds majority vote.

SECTION 8: ATTENDANCE

A. In the case of a Council member's inability to attend a meeting, a proxy from that member's constituency shall represent the constituency and vote in that member’s absence.
B. Members shall be allowed a maximum of three proxies per semester. Impeachment proceedings must be undertaken if there are additional absences.
C. If a Council member does not attend a meeting and fails to send a proxy, the organization that the Council member represents shall be fined $25 or 5% of the organization’s current budget, whichever is greater, not to exceed $500.
D. If a Council member misses two meetings in a semester without sending a proxy, impeachment proceedings must be undertaken.
E. If a Council member is absent for more than 15 minutes of a meeting without a proxy, the organization which the Council member represents shall be fined $25 or 5% of the organization’s current budget, whichever is less.
F. If a Council member is absent for more than 15 minutes of a meeting without a proxy twice in one semester, censure proceedings must be undertaken.
G. If a Council member cannot send a proxy or is late because of an extreme situation, the VSA President may excuse that member’s absence.

SECTION 9: RULES FOR MEETINGS
ARTICLE III – VSA COUNCIL COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: COMMITTEES OF THE VSA COUNCIL

A. The VSA Council shall have the following standing committees: Student Life, Operations, Academics, Activities, and Finance.

B. Non-Executive Board VSA Council members shall serve on at least two VSA Council Committees.

C. Committees shall:
   1. Meet on a weekly basis and report weekly to VSA Council, or as needed.
   2. Make decisions by a majority vote.
   3. Consult with relevant student delegations to joint committees.
   4. Write and recommend legislation, policies and positions for consideration by VSA Council.

D. If the VSA Council has concerns with a VSA Council Committee’s recommendation, the concerns shall be brought back to the committee for further consideration and debate.

E. At VSA Council, the VSA Executive Board shall explain any changes made to the VSA Council Committee’s recommendation.

F. Meetings of VSA Council Committees may be closed at the discretion of the appropriate Vice President.

SECTION 2: STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE

The Student Life Committee shall:

A. Be chaired by the VP for Student Life, and membership shall be open to all members of the VSA.

B. Consider issues pertaining to the quality of student life and relevant administrative offices.

C. Consider issues of campus climate, including those brought forth by students, organizations, or the Office of Campus Life and Diversity.

SECTION 3: OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Operations Committee shall:

A. Be chaired by the VP for Operations, and membership shall be open to all members of the VSA.

B. Review the governing documents of the VSA to ensure that these documents reflect current and best practices, and make recommendations for changes to VSA Council.

C. Make recommendations for the Appointment of a candidate to a position in the case that the Board of Elections and Appointments has a conflict preventing fair proceedings.

D. In the event that a Board of Elections and Appointments is not formed, the responsibility for running elections will fall to the Operation Committee.
ARTICLE IV – STUDENT COMMITTEES

SECTION 4: ACADEMICS COMMITTEE

The Academics Committee shall:
A. Be chaired by the VP for Academics, and membership shall be open to all members of the VSA.
B. Consider issues pertaining to academics and the academic life of students.

SECTION 5: ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

The Activities Committee shall:
A. Be chaired by the VP for Activities, and membership shall be open to all members of the VSA.
B. Oversee all VSA organizations and organization partnerships.
C. Consider all applications for certification.
D. Recommend policy changes pertaining to organizations to the VSA Council.
E. Consider and recommend to VSA Council all disciplinary action relating to organizations.

SECTION 6: FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall:
A. Be chaired by the VP for Finance.
B. Be open to all members of the VSA Council and additional members at-large determined by the VP for Finance.
C. Consist of at least seven members, not including the VP for Finance.
D. Review all fund applications and make final recommendations to the VSA Council.
E. Designate and publicize a consistent time at which Finance Committee will meet on every Wednesday afternoon that classes are in session on the following Monday.
F. Create, maintain, and publicize the VSA Finance Policies.

ARTICLE IV – STUDENT COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: COMMITTEE RULES FOR STUDENT COMMITTEES

A. Unless otherwise stated or decided by the committee, all meetings shall be open to members of the VSA.
B. Each committee shall have an internal Chair unless otherwise specified.
C. A simple majority of the voting members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.
D. Decisions shall be reached by a majority vote of the members present.
E. A committee representative or contact shall maintain a file in the VSA office of all records of committee meetings, recommendations, and actions. The VP for Operations shall be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and organization of these files.
F. Members of the VSA have a right to request permission to appear at a committee's meetings and to present their views upon the subjects before the committee except when a committee finds it necessary to close meetings for the proper execution of committee business.

G. Committees may set further rules for themselves if they so desire.

**SECTION 2: BOARD OF HOUSE PRESIDENTS (BHP)**

The Board of House Presidents shall:

A. Consist of the presidents of the residence halls.
B. Convene at least once a week during the regular academic year.
C. Select a chair or co-chairs from among its members on its first meeting.
D. Consider issues pertaining to the quality of life of residents.
E. Bring these issues to the attention of the appropriate college committees or administrators.

**SECTION 3: BOARD OF CLASS PRESIDENTS (BCP)**

The Board of Class Presidents shall:

A. Consist of the Class Presidents.
B. Convene at least once a month during the regular academic year.
C. Serve as a space for the Class Presidents to discuss issues, ideas and projects relating to their respective classes.
D. Plan and conduct training for the Freshman Class Council after the Fall Elections.

**SECTION 4: FOOD COMMITTEE**

The Food Committee shall:

A. Be chaired by a student elected at-large and additionally consist of one representative from each House, appointed by the Chair, and a member of the VSA Student Life Committee.
B. Consider issues relating to the quality of food and food services at Vassar College.
C. Work with the Director of Campus Dining to improve the quality and service of food on campus.

**SECTION 5: TRADITIONS COMMITTEE**

The Traditions Committee shall consist of:

A. Two co-chairs appointed by the Board of Elections and Appointments and outgoing Traditions co-chairs. Anyone who has served on Traditions Committee for at least one year is eligible to become a co-chair.
B. A treasurer appointed by the Board of Elections and Appointments and co-chairs.
C. Additional members appointed by the co-chairs.
D. A freshmen representative appointed at the beginning of the Fall Semester by the co-chairs.
E. The Traditions Committee shall be responsible for planning Serenading, Meet Me in Poughkeepsie, Halloweekend, Founder’s Day, and other events as determined by the committee.
F. The co-chairs shall report to the VP for Activities and VP for Finance as needed.

**SECTION 6: BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

The Board of Elections and Appointments shall:
A. Consist of one chair elected at large, two elected representatives from each class, and two members of the VSA Council.
B. Disqualify its members from candidacy in any elections occurring during their term of office.
C. Conduct and oversee all elections, appointments, and referendums through reasonable interpretation of the VSA governing documents as outlined in Article X, Section 2.
D. Report all results to the VSA Council at the conclusion of the election, appointment, or referendum.

SECTION 7: SEVEN SISTERS REPRESENTATIVES

The Seven Sisters Representatives shall:

A. Consist of the President, VP for Operations, and two additional members of the current or past VSA Council appointed for the duration of their time at Vassar by the VSA Executive Board.
B. Represent the VSA at the Seven Sisters Conference and meetings of the Seven Sisters Coordinating Board.
C. Select additional members of the VSA to attend the Seven Sisters Conference.

ARTICLE V – JOINT COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT COMMITTEES

A. All representatives shall attend all committee meetings, except under extenuating circumstances.
B. Student Delegations to joint committee shall follow the rules of their respective committees.
C. Each delegation shall report to the VSA Council at the Council’s discretion.
D. All delegates must submit a Committee Report to the VP for Operations once a semester, unless otherwise noted. The VP for Operations may request additional reports if desired.
E. Each delegation shall report to the VP for Operations on any important action or deliberation, and it shall report periodically on general policies and actions within its jurisdiction.
F. A committee representative or contact shall maintain a file in the VSA office of all records of committee meetings, recommendations, and actions. The VP for Operations shall be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and organization of these files.

SECTION 2: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS INVESTOR RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE

Shall consist of the VP for Finance and three students elected at large.

SECTION 3: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS LIFE RESOURCE GROUP

Shall consist of at least one member of the Student Life Committee and will be open to all students.

SECTION 4: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS MASTER PLANNING COMMITTEE

Shall consist of three students elected at-large. These students will report to the Operations Committee at the discretion of the VP for Operations.
SECTION 5: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

Shall consist of one representative from each class elected at-large and the VP for Operations. The class representatives will also sit on their respective Class Council at the discretion of the Class President.

SECTION 6: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE LIFE

Shall consist of six students: the VP for Student Life, a BHP Co-Chair and one representative elected from each Class. Each of the class representatives will sit on the Student Life Committee. The class representatives will also sit on their respective Class Council at the discretion of the Class President.

SECTION 7: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGIES

Shall consist of one student elected at-large. This student will also sit on the Academics Committee.

SECTION 8: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR POLICIES

Shall be two students from the Academics Committee with majors in a department and a multidisciplinary program, one of whom, shall ordinarily be the VP for Academics.

SECTION 9: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON INCLUSION AND EXCELLENCE

Shall consist of the VP for Student Life and two representatives elected at-large for two-year terms. The students elected at large will also sit on the Student Life Committee.

SECTION 10: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COUNCIL ON ALUMNAE/I STUDENT ADVANCEMENT

Shall consist of the VP for Operations and shall be open to all students.

SECTION 11: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Shall consist of the VP for Academics and one member of the Academics Committee.

SECTION 12: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

Shall consist of the President and VP of the Freshman Class, and at least one member of the VSA Student Life Committee.

SECTION 13: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE PRIORITIES AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Shall consist of two students: the VSA President and an additional member of the VSA Executive Board to be chosen by the VSA President.

SECTION 14: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Shall consist of the Sustainability Interns and one student elected at-large
SECTION 15: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE FIRST YEAR COMMITTEE

Shall consist of the Freshman Class President.

SECTION 16: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE SAFETY AND SECURITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Shall consist of two students elected at-large. These students will report to the Student Life Committee at the discretion of the VP for Student Life.

SECTION 18: OTHER COMMITTEES

In the case that further student representation is requested or a new joint committee is formed, the Board of Elections and Appointments may appoint representatives at its discretion.

ARTICLE VI – BUDGETING

SECTION 1: GENERAL APPLICABILITY

These Bylaws shall apply to all financial expenditures of the VSA and its certified organizations.

SECTION 2: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the VSA shall be the same as the fiscal year of Vassar College.

SECTION 3: VSA OVERALL BUDGETING PROCEDURE

The VSA Overall Budget shall be set based on a six-semester average of the previous three years of actual Full Time Enrollment, minus any debt incurred to the Student Account Fees budget.

SECTION 4: BUDGETING OF VSA ORGANIZATIONS

A. The VP for Finance must inform all treasurers of VSA organizations of the annual budgeting process at least a week before the allocation process begins. The VP for Finance must explain the budgeting process, any applicable section of the VSA Bylaws, the dates of any mandatory meetings, and/or deadlines for budget requests.

B. All VSA Organizations must submit their budget requests by the deadline specified by the VP for Finance. If an organization does not turn in a budget request before the deadline, the organization must not be included in Spring Budgeting allocations, except in extreme circumstances at the discretion of the VSA Executive Board.

C. Finance Committee shall meet to review all budgeting requests. These meetings shall be convened as often as deemed necessary by the VP for Finance in order to complete the budgeting process. The committee may meet with any persons or organization and/or review any financial documents in the course of these meetings. The committee shall vote on a final recommendation.

D. For the Annual Budgeting process, the VP for Activities shall act as a non-voting member of Finance Committee.

E. Finance Committee’s recommendation shall be forwarded to the current and incoming Executive Board. A joint meeting of the Executive Boards shall be held to recommend a budget to the VSA Council. In the spring semester, any member concurrently holding a member-elect position shall have only one vote.

F. The recommendation of the Executive Board shall be posted and publicized for a petition period of 48 hours. Any VSA member may petition any aspect of the budget. Such a petition shall be submitted to the VP for Finance.
G. A joint committee consisting of Finance Committee, the incoming Executive Board, and the outgoing Executive Board shall review all petitions. All petitioning organizations shall have the opportunity to meet with the committee and discuss any concerns they have with their allocations. The committee shall adjust any allocations it sees fit and make a final recommendation to the VSA Council.

H. The final approved allocation shall be the starting balance for each organization for the next fiscal year. The VP for Finance shall transfer the necessary amount to make the remaining balance in the organization's account equal to the approved starting balance.

I. Organizations may be exempt from the above provision and retain some or all of their previous balance at the recommendation of the joint committee. Any exemptions made shall last either one or five years.

J. Any remaining monies shall be allocated to the Council Discretionary Fund.

SECTION 5: THE VSA BUDGETING MEETING

The VSA Budgeting Meeting shall be executed in the following manner:

A. The VSA Council, after reviewing the recommendations of the incoming and outgoing Executive Boards, shall apportion money to eligible organizations under the guidelines stipulated in this section.

B. This meeting shall occur no later than Spring Convocation and no earlier than the spring elections.

C. The VSA Council-elect shall be required to attend as observers.

D. At the beginning of the VSA Council Budgeting meeting, the VSA President shall review any petitions submitted to the joint Activities/Finance/Executive Boards committee and the outcomes of the petitions.

E. The first motion of the meeting must be a motion to pass the recommendation of the joint committee in full. Discussion of this motion shall be limited to twelve minutes with 90-second individual time restrictions.

F. Should the motion outlined in part E above fail, a speakers’ list must be generated with each speaker expressing the part of the budget they would like to address.

G. This phase of budgeting shall be a section devoted to listening to the opinions of the audience present. While Council may question any guest and respond if necessary, it is recommended that they keep their comments to a minimum. No member of the VSA shall make a motion following the motion made in part E above of these Bylaws and until the requirements of part H below have been completed.

H. After exhausting the speaker’s list, the Council shall enter a closed portion of the meeting for no less than thirty minutes, where they can discuss the issues raised by the audience and ensure that any alteration of the budget shall result in a balanced budget. No motions or votes of any kind may be made during this period. Official minutes of this period shall be taken and the VSA Council elect is urged to be present, although they remain as observers.

I. Following this closed portion, the VSA Council shall resume the twelve-minute discussion periods following any motion with ninety-second individual time restrictions.

J. A ten-minute recess must be taken every sixty minutes should the meeting exceed two hours, not including the closed portion addressed in part H of this section.

K. The final budget allocations of the VSA shall be posted within 24 hours of the adjournment of the VSA Council budgeting meeting.

SECTION 6: STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE ACCOUNT

A. Surpluses from the Student Activity Fee (SAF) account after the VP for Finance has computed by the final enrollment figures, in accordance with the Offices of the Controller and Registrar, shall be devoted to the Council Discretionary Fund.
B. In the event of a deficit in the SAF account after the final semester enrollments have been computed, monies shall be transferred from the Council Discretionary Fund in order to balance the SAF budget.

ARTICLE VII – FUNDS AND ACCOUNTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS

The VSA Council may establish Funds for specific purposes. The amount allocated to each Fund shall be determined during the spring budgeting process, unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws.

SECTION 2: FINANCE POLICIES

The VSA Finance Policies shall govern all fiscal business of the VSA and its organizations, including (but not limited to) restrictions on use of the Special Purpose Funds and limitations on organization expenditures. These policies shall be created, maintained, and publicized by the VP for Finance and the Finance Committee.

SECTION 3: FISCAL EMERGENCIES

In the event that a severe debt or liability threatens the structural integrity and continued operation of the VSA as a whole, the VP for Finance may allocate monies from any section of the VSA Overall Budget with a positive balance in order to cover the obligation.

SECTION 4: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS

A. During budgeting for each year, the VSA Council shall set aside funds for allotment to the following VSA Special Purpose Funds: Conference Fund; Speakers, Lecturers and Panels Fund; Collaboration Fund; Community Fund; Pre-Organizations Fund; Social Consciousness Fund; and Capital Expenditure Fund.

B. Preliminary organizations may apply to funds other than the Pre-Organizations Fund only with approval from the VP for Activities and VP for Finance.

C. The VP for Finance shall never budget a fund into debt.

D. If the demand for any special purpose fund exceeds supply, Finance Committee may recommend that Council reallocate money from one Special Purpose Fund to another.

E. All Special Purpose Fund applications shall be submitted to the VP for Finance electronically and reviewed by the Finance Committee.

F. Guidelines regarding applications to and the distribution of these funds shall be set by Finance Committee and outlined in the VSA Policies. The original value of a Special Purpose Fund shall be the balance of the Fund at the beginning of the academic year.

G. The VSA Council has full discretion to adjust any request.

SECTION 5: THE COLLABORATION FUND

This fund shall be used to sponsor any event for which 2 or more organizations jointly apply.

SECTION 6: THE CONFERENCE FUND
This Fund shall be used to sponsor the participation of members of the VSA in off-campus conferences that are relevant and compatible with an organization’s goals and objectives as stated in its Constitution. The fund cannot be applied to by the same organization to pay for participation in the same conference in two consecutive years.

SECTION 7: THE COMMUNITY FUND

This fund shall be used to hold non-annual on-campus or off-campus events which actively include the Poughkeepsie and greater Vassar community.

SECTION 8: THE SPEAKERS, LECTURES AND PANELS FUND

This fund shall be used to sponsor on-campus events for which a speaker or group of speakers has been invited or selected.

SECTION 9: THE PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATIONS FUND

A. This fund shall be used to sponsor events held by pre-organizations.

SECTION 10: THE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUND

A. This fund may cover up to 100% of extraordinary and/or one-time costs incurred by a certified organization purchasing a capital item.

B. The fund may be used to purchase items for the VSA Capital Loan Inventory, to be purchased, maintained, and loaned at the discretion of the VPs for Finance and Activities.

C. Capital items are defined as tangible items anticipated to last at least three (3) years.

D. Money from this fund shall be allocated for a particular item rather than a specific amount. No organization shall use any portion of its allocation to purchase additional items that were not approved.

E. The VSA Council may not amend a Capital Expenditure allocation recommendation.

F. Organizations are responsible for conducting an annual inventory of all capital items, to be submitted to the VP for Finance before the Annual Budgeting Process.

G. No organization shall be allowed to use its previously allocated capital budgeting monies to purchase items for which those monies were not approved.

H. The VP for Finance shall be responsible for keeping an inventory of all capital items purchased under this fund and owned by the VSA.

SECTION 11: THE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS FUND

This fund shall be used to sponsor on-campus events relating to gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, spirituality, and other issues pertaining to social consciousness.

SECTION 12: THE VSA COUNCIL DISCRETIONARY FUND

This fund shall be used at the discretion of the VSA Council.

SECTION 13: THE VSA OPERATING FUNDS

The VSA Council may establish operating budgets to be administered by the VSA Executive Board. These shall cover the general expenses of the VSA, including (but not limited to) its committees and programs. The exact accounts and amounts
allocated for these budgets shall be determined during the spring budgeting process and shall be used solely for the expenses incurred in the completion of duties mandated in the VSA Constitution and Bylaws. The VSA Executive Board shall independently administer these funds and shall not be obliged to fundraise.

ARTICLE VIII – VSA ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1: APPLICABILITY

All student interest groups, clubs, sports teams, performance groups, publications, residences, and Classes certified by the VSA Council shall be defined as VSA Organizations, and be subject to the stipulations of the VSA governing documents.

SECTION 2: MEMBERSHIP

All VSA Organizations must designate one member as the organization’s contact person and another member as the organization’s treasurer, and register these names with the VP for Activities.

SECTION 3: PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATIONS

Preliminary Organization is a semester-long status granted to groups formally recognized by the Activities Committee. A group recognized as a Preliminary Organization must renew this status within the first two weeks of each semester for a minimum of three consecutive semesters before being eligible for consideration as a VSA Certified Organization.

SECTION 4: PRIVILEGES, REGULATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS OF PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATIONS

A. A Preliminary Organization can:
1. Reserve rooms and spaces for meetings directly after consultation with and approval from the VP for Activities.
2. Apply to the New and Preliminary Organization Fund for up to $200 per semester.
3. Have a liaison on the Activities Committee.
4. Use “Vassar” in its official name.
5. Reserve spaces through the SARC with approval from the VP for Activities.
6. Use VCard Machines from the Campus Activities Office.

B. A Preliminary Organization cannot have a VSA Budget number or P-Card. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the VP for Activities and the VP for Finance.

C. A Preliminary Organization must:
1. Hold meetings, auditions, or other forms of general body gatherings as approved by the VP for Activities open to the entire VSA at least twice a semester.
2. Provide information about meetings and events to the VP for Activities.
3. Follow the stipulations for organizations set forth in this Bylaw.
4. Hold at least one event per semester, as approved by the VP for Activities that includes members of the greater Vassar community who are not members of their general body.

SECTION 5: PROCEDURES FOR BECOMING A PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATION

Groups seeking recognition as a Preliminary Organization must:

A. Meet with the VP for Activities to discuss the process.
B. Have a Statement of Purpose outlining the functions and objectives of the organization and must be significantly different than other VSA Certified Organizations, recognized Preliminary Organizations, or Academic Departments.
C. Have an Executive Board with, at the minimum, a contact person and Treasurer.
D. Provide a potential budget for approval by the VP for Finance.
E. The request for recognition shall be brought to the Activities Committee and if approved shall be brought to the VSA Council to recognize the group as a Preliminary Organization.

SECTION 6: PROCEDURES FOR BECOMING A VSA CERTIFIED ORGANIZATION

A. A Preliminary Organization must have existed for a minimum of 3 consecutive semesters to become an eligible to become a VSA Certified Organization.
B. The Preliminary Organization must submit its mission statement, a detailed description of its history, a list of its executive board members, and a formal Constitution to the VP for Activities.
C. Upon approval of the VP for Activities, the request for certification shall be brought to the VSA Council as an item on the Consensus Agenda to make the group a Certified Organization. The members of the group shall be advised as to the date the decision shall take place, and shall be asked to appear before the Council in order to answer any questions Council members may have. The VP for Activities will provide information about each organization before the VSA Council decides on the Consensus Agenda.
D. Certified Organizations shall receive a VSA Budget number, into which they may complete financial transactions, in cooperation with the VP for Finance. Funding is not guaranteed for any VSA Organization.
E. If a certified organization incurs a debt, it must repay that debt within two academic semesters or its recognition may be revoked. Organizations who status has been revoked may not re-apply for recognition or authorization for at least one calendar year.
F. A certified organization may reserve tables in the college center and reserve rooms and spaces throughout campus through Campus Activities.
G. The organization will be provided a SARC intern.
H. If a group is not certified by the VSA Council at the meeting when it is presented for approval, the group will remain a Preliminary Organization and may subsequently request again to be certified in one semester's time.

SECTION 7: MEETINGS

A. Meetings shall generally be open to all members of the Vassar community, unless stipulated otherwise in the organization’s Constitution, and be publicized. The Vassar community shall be defined as active, matriculating students, faculty, staff, and alumnae/i of Vassar College.
B. VSA Organizations may occasionally hold closed meetings as stipulated in their Constitutions. Organizations may be asked to justify any closed meeting to the VP for Activities.

SECTION 8: CONSTITUTIONS

A. Each VSA Organization is required to draft its own Constitution stipulating the functions and objectives of the organization, the positions and responsibilities of the officers, how amendments to the Constitution may be proposed and ratified, the process for election, impeachment and removal of the organization’s officers, the organization’s membership guidelines, meeting format, and the definition of quorum. Residences and classes are exempted from this requirement.
B. After an organization has passed an amendment it must be submitted to the VP for Activities, who shall then act with all due expediency in reviewing the amendment. The VP for Activities has the power to veto amendments.
which are deemed to be non-structural and do not affect the nature of the organization; all other amendments are subject to the veto of the VSA Council.

C. The executive board of each VSA Organization must submit a signed and dated copy of their organization’s Constitution at the beginning of each academic year to the VP for Activities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

D. No VSA Organization’s Constitution may conflict with the VSA Constitution. In the event that an organization’s Constitution does conflict, those conflicting portions shall be null and void, with stipulations in the VSA Constitution taking precedence.

SECTION 9: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

A. Any organization’s officers may be removed from office by the procedures set forth in the organization’s Constitution or may be removed under indictment procedures stipulated by Article XII of the VSA Bylaws.

B. Resignations shall be considered upon receipt of a letter to the president of the organization in question. If the president is resigning, the resignation letter shall be considered upon receipt to the vice-president of the organization. If both the president and the vice-president are resigning, or the organization does not have a vice-president, the resignation letter shall be forwarded to the VP for Activities, or to the remaining governmental structure of the organization.

C. Any change in the organization’s officers must be registered with the VP for Activities.

SECTION 10: DEFICITS

A. Any deficit incurred by an organization in a semester shall carry over in full and continue to be the responsibility of that organization in subsequent semesters.

B. The VSA shall not budget organizations to cover past debts.

C. All debts must be recouped through organization fundraising. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action as outlined in these Bylaws.

SECTION 11: MONETARY RESPONSIBILITY

A. Organizations are expected to spend money responsibly.

B. At any time, the VP for Finance and/or the VSA Executive Board may inquire into purchases they deem questionable or excessive. If abuses are found, the organization and/or individuals in question may be subject to disciplinary action.

C. Organizations that plan on spending more than $5,000 on a single expenditure or event must submit an application to do so to the VP for Finance for the consideration of the Finance Committee.

   1. Applications submitted under this section shall be treated procedurally as if a fund application, as detailed in Article III, Section 2 of these Bylaws.

   2. Applications submitted pursuant to this section must be submitted prior to the spending of any money and, in the case of events, at least 14 days prior to the event.

SECTION 12: BUDGETING ELIGIBILITY

No organization shall be eligible for budgeting without formal VSA Certification, without having its Constitution on file with the VP for Activities, or failing to comply with budgeting procedures.
SECTION 13: BANK ACCOUNTS

A. No organization funded by the VSA shall hold funds in any bank account.
B. All organizations’ funds shall be deposited in, held in, and requisitioned from an account controlled by Vassar College. Any organization that refuses to deposit all funds in its VSA account shall forfeit its entire budget to the Organizational Contingency Fund.

SECTION 14: FUNDRAISING

A. Fundraising shall be defined as money raised over and above the amount spent to hold the fundraising event.
B. All organizations must fundraise in order to supplement their semester or annual budget in a manner the organization deems appropriate and in a responsible manner.
C. The amount of money that a VSA organization has fundraised, through outside financial assistance or otherwise, must be reported to the VSA.

SECTION 15: OUTSIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

VSA Organizations may obtain outside financial assistance as part of their fundraising efforts under the following conditions:

A. Before attempting to obtain outside financial assistance, all VSA organizations must consult with the VP for Finance. Advertising contracts made between media organizations and corporate advertisers are subject to review/approval of the VP for Finance and the Director of Campus Activities.
B. Outside financial assistance shall be defined as any contributions or donations of money, services, or equipment by any company/organization outside of the VSA or Vassar College. Business transactions between VSA organizations and outside companies/organizations that result in a profit for VSA organizations are also defined as “outside financial assistance.”
C. If the VP for Finance determines that the VSA organization may not be able to uphold its end of the agreement, the contract shall be subject to review by the VSA Council.
D. All financial assistance shall be a factor in the budgeting process for the semester or year.
E. Any VSA organization attempting to obtain outside financial assistance must inform its corporate sponsor in writing that a contribution to a VSA organization may or may not be tax deductible.
F. All solicitations of alumnae/i must be conducted in conjunction with the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development.

SECTION 16: ANTICIPATED REVENUE FOR PROGRAMMED EVENTS

Treasurers must stipulate on their budget request form and in their organization reports all anticipated revenue and expected attendance for all programming planned.

SECTION 17: FUNDING AND ACADEMIC CREDIT

The VSA does not fund organizations from which student members may receive academic credit.

SECTION 18: PAYMENT OF STUDENTS IN A VSA ORGANIZATION

No VSA organization, with the exception of the Classes, Residence Halls, and the VSA Executive Board, may pay a member of its own constituency for services rendered to that organization.
SECTION 19: POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS AND FUNDING

VSA Organizations must reimburse or pay the College for any services or facilities provided to the organizations for use in connection with political campaigns or campaigns to influence specific legislation.

SECTION 20: DONATIONS TO OFF CAMPUS GROUPS OR ORGANIZATIONS

VSA Organizations cannot donate VSA budgeted funds or items derived from these funds to off-campus organizations; such donations may only occur out of monies which have been fundraised.

SECTION 21: PUBLICATIONS

A. Student publications—defined as published written documents with editors, not including flyers—must submit Bylaws stipulating the mission and purpose of the publication, the roles of the editor, the process for the inclusion of submissions including, but not limited to, letters to the editor and other responses to published material.

B. Publications shall enjoy the full right to publish without prior review or editorial control by the VSA Council.

C. Libel and other forms of defamation will not be tolerated by the VSA.

D. Publications shall be considered open source, allowing for the copy and redistribution of printed content with proper citation.

E. Editors in chief shall assume responsibility for articles published in their respective publication.

SECTION 22: ORGANIZATION REVIEW PROCESS

All VSA certified organizations shall be reviewed on an annual basis according to the following procedure.

A. All VSA certified organizations are under obligation to submit a copy of their organization’s Constitution and any Bylaws on an annual basis, such that:
   1. The updated copy of the organization’s Constitution must include the names and signatures of all executive members of the organization and any editor(s)-in-chief for any publication associated with that organization.

B. 50% of organizations shall be reviewed each semester. Each organization shall be designated to either A or B semester. Houses and Classes are exempt from this process.

C. A leader of the organization shall meet with the VP for Activities to discuss the activities of the organization. The VP for Activities may request to meet with any member of the organization’s executive board or editor(s) in chief.

D. If an organization fails to resubmit a Constitution or meet with the VP for Activities for the process by the date set, the VP for Activities shall discuss the matter with the Executive Board and disciplinary action may be recommended to the VSA Council.

SECTION 23: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A. At any time, the VSA Council may at the recommendation of the VP for Activities:
   1. Revoke Certification of any VSA Organization.
   2. Freeze or revoke the funds of any VSA Organization.
   3. Issue an official reprimand of any VSA Organization.
   4. Remove an officer through the proceedings stipulated in Article XII.
   5. Refer to the Judicial Board for organizational financial improprieties.
   6. Refer to the College Regulations Panel for personal financial improprieties.
7. Suspend the activity of an organization, including access to funds, approval of programming, tabling, and reservation of rooms.

B. Grounds for disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:
   1. Failure to comply with the Organization Review Process.
   2. Non-compliance with the VP for Activities’ or VP for Finance’s requests, including attending meetings.
   3. Non-compliance with the VSA Bylaws.

C. When a motion is made to censure, decertify, fine an organization more than either 5% of its budget or $100 whichever is less, freeze or revoke funds of an organization, or censure an officer of an organization, the motion shall be referred to the VSA Activities Committee. A referral may be overridden by a 3/4 majority of Council.
   1. The Activities Committee shall gather information from the offended party, the organization in question, and any other relevant third-party sources. The Activities Committee shall consult with the VP for Operations and the Chair of the Judicial Board. If any member of the Activities Committee has a direct conflict of interest, an alternate from the VSA Council shall be chosen randomly.
   2. The Activities Committee shall consider the VSA governing documents and the organization’s governing documents. Any alleged infraction of College Regulations shall be referred to the Dean of Students and the College Regulations Panel. This does not preclude action by the VSA Council.
   3. In one week’s time, the Activities Committee shall make a final report to VSA Council outlining the results of the inquiry and any recommended disciplinary action. After the Activities Committee makes their report, Council shall deliberate on the issue and vote on any motion recommended by the Activities Committee. Any motion made while deliberating on this issue shall not trigger another referral to the Activities Committee. The Activities Committee may request additional time from the VSA Executive Board before making a report.
   4. Appeals may be made to the VSA Judicial Board within one week’s time if evidence of procedural errors, lack of due process, or imposition of excessive penalty is presented. The decision of the first appeal is final.

SECTION 24: LACK OF ACTIVITY

A. If there is no organizational activity for two consecutive semesters, an organization may be decertified at the discretion of the VSA Executive Board.

B. If there is no organizational activity for three consecutive semesters, there shall be a mandatory decertification.

SECTION 25: OFF-CAMPUS REPRESENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Any organization that chooses to travel off-campus overnight, thereby representing the VSA and Vassar College by extension, must abide by the articles herein:

A. In accordance with the policy of the Dean of Students, an Emergency Contact form must be completed and submitted to the VP for Activities a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of the planned trip. Changes to this document may be submitted up to 1 hour before the proposed departure.

B. The attendees of the trip agree, to the best of their ability, to appropriately represent their organization, the VSA and Vassar College. Infringements of this agreement include, but are not limited to, violations of College regulations, local, state and/or federal laws, lewd or inappropriate behavior, and slanderous or defamatory remarks that jeopardize the integrity of the VSA and/or the College.

C. Failure to adhere to these regulations for off-campus travel will be considered a breach of conduct, punishable by censure, and/or a fine equaling up to 10% of the organization’s budget. Repeat offenses will be considered a severe
breach of conduct, punishable by a fine equaling up to 30% of the organization’s budget, censure, and/or decertification. The VSA Council will vote on the appropriate punishment.

SECTION 26: VICE

Due to the unique role of Vassar College Entertainment (ViCE), the director or assistant director shall be required to report to the VSA Council once a month. They shall update the Council on upcoming events, as well as hear any suggestions or issues relating to campus entertainment. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

ARTICLE IX - LIMITATIONS AND CONDITIONS ON ORGANIZATION EXPENDITURES

SECTION 1: GENERAL RULES

A. The VP for Finance reserves the right to refuse a reimbursement if the VP for Finance determines that it violates the VSA Bylaws.

B. Requests for reimbursements must be submitted within twenty-five academic days of the date of the expenditure, not including academic breaks.

C. VSA monies cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages except through the proper channels and with prior knowledge and approval of the Director of Campus Activities.

D. VSA monies cannot be used to purchase bottled water. Tap water shall be used at all events where water is needed. In the case where outside speakers or performers request bottled water in a contract, a request shall be sent offering a more sustainable alternative. If such request is denied, exceptions will be approved by the Finance Committee.

SECTION 2: ADVERTISING

For events with an anticipated audience of 400 or more and/or with a cost of more than $2,500, the sponsoring organization must submit an advertising plan to their SARC intern and the VP for Activities with their event registration form. The advertising plan will be reviewed and any comments given to the organization. The organization must then follow the plan or may be subject to disciplinary action.

SECTION 3: MEALS FOR SPEAKERS AND PERFORMERS

When bringing a speaker or performer to a meal the VSA shall reimburse up to $50 per speaker or performer and up to $20 for each member of the organization attending the meal.

SECTION 4: TRAVEL EXPENSES

Travel Expenses shall be defined as all expenses incurred while traveling, including but not limited to transportation, accommodations, and food costs. VSA organizations may use their budgets to cover travel expenses under the following conditions:

A. They are in good standing with the VP for Finance and have submitted the appropriate reports to the VP for Activities.

B. The travel promotes the organization and is part of an organization’s function.

C. Travel accommodations must be as inexpensive as possible. If an organization must spend more on accommodations than necessary, the organization must consult the VP for Finance in advance.
D. The VSA shall not reimburse individuals for parking citations, traffic citations, or any fines for violations of the law.
E. The VSA shall reimburse up to $10 per day for meal expenses, but it reserves the right not to reimburse that entire amount.

ARTICLE X - ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL TERMS

A. The VSA shall conduct a Fall Election and a Spring Election.
B. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall conduct elections and appointment in accordance with procedures set forth in this Article of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 2: THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

A. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall conduct and oversee all elections and referendums through reasonable interpretations of the VSA governing documents.
B. After consulting with the VP for Operations, the Board of Elections and Appointments shall present to the VSA Council for approval: a list of all positions included in the election, dates and times of filing, meetings, campaigning, debates, elections, appointments, posting of results, and any other appropriate information to the election process. All other decisions of the Board of Elections and Appointments shall be made independently, subject to the appeals process.
C. The Board of Elections and Appointments must publicize all elections and vacant positions, including dates and times of filing, meetings, campaigning, debates, elections, posting of results, and any other appropriate information to the election or appointment process.
D. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair shall, at the conclusion of the election or appointment process, report to the VSA Council all results of the election or appointment and any changes to the applicable sections of the VSA Bylaws that are appropriate.

SECTION 3: SCHEDULING AND ANNOUNCEMENT

A. Voting shall take place during one 48-hour voting period. The method or methods employed for voting shall be determined and announced by the Board of Elections and Appointments.
B. The Fall Election and Spring Elections shall abide by two separate time lines:
   1. The Fall Elections process shall consist of a filing period beginning two weeks before the start of voting and ending seven days before the start of voting. The open campaigning period shall begin at the end of this filing period, following the conclusion of the candidates’ meeting described in Section 5.D and 5.E of this article. Campaigning shall conclude when the voting period begins.
   2. The Spring Elections process shall consist of a filing period beginning two weeks before the start of voting and ending seven days before the start of voting. The open campaigning period shall begin at the end of this filing period, following the conclusion of the candidates’ meeting described in Sections 5.D and 5.E of this article. Campaigning shall conclude when the voting period begins.
C. In the event that no one files for a position, no election for that position shall be held, and it shall instead be declared vacant by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair for future elections or appointments.
D. Special elections shall be conducted by the Board of Elections and Appointments pending the receipt of a valid Constitutional referendum or recall petition and shall occur prior to the next all-campus election with a twenty-four hour notice of the new election.

SECTION 4: PUBLICITY

A. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall meet with The Miscellany News editorial staff well in advance of elections to discuss publicizing elections through articles or advertising.

B. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall coordinate with the SARC and the House Teams to arrange for publicity regarding the election timeline and the posting of results in the College Center and residence halls.

C. House Teams are required to organize and host candidate meet and greets of candidates running for positions in that residence during the campaigning period of each election. The recommended format is as follows:
   1. Begin with candidate introductions and allow 1 minute for personal statements.
   2. Follow statements with informal discussions and snacks.

SECTION 5: FILING

A. During the period designated for filing, any eligible VSA member may file for candidacy under the guidelines announced by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair. To be considered a ‘candidate’ for the official ballot, a VSA member must file for a position by completing the Standard Filing Form.
   1. The Standard Filing Form shall include the potential candidate’s:
      a. Name as it will appear on the ballot
      b. Class year and residence
      c. Position being sought
      d. Description of the issues facing that position, and the candidate’s opinion of them. This will serve as the candidate statement.
      e. Verification that the candidate has read Article X of the VSA Bylaws.
      f. Potential candidates for House Office positions must verify their agreement to abide by additional expectations set forth in the VSA Constitution.
   2. The Standard Filing Form must be submitted to Board of Elections and Appointments Chair before the end of the filing period to be considered a ‘candidate’ for the official ballot. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair must review these forms within 24 hours of submission.
   3. Should a Standard Filing Form be rejected, a notification must be sent to the potential candidate within 24 hours of the form’s submission. An explanation must be presented with the reasons for rejection, and rejected forms may be resubmitted with revisions until the end of the filing period.

B. Candidates that have submitted their Standard Filing Form may only begin campaigning, as defined in Section 5(a) of this article, after both of the following two conditions have been met:
   1. The candidate has verified that they have read this Article through physical or electronic means.
   2. The candidate has attended the mandatory candidates’ meeting described in Section 5.D and 5.E of this article.

C. For any given VSA Office, no two or more students may run jointly.

D. A candidate’s meeting shall be scheduled and publicized by the Board of Elections and Appointments for after the filing period has ended, but before the campaigning period has begun. At this meeting, the Board of Elections and
Appointments Chair and at least two other members of the Board shall review the applicable sections of the VSA Bylaws and VSA Constitution, answer any questions, and discuss campaigning spending limits. Candidates are responsible for knowing all relevant campaigning and elections information discussed at this meeting.

1. All candidates must attend this candidate’s meeting; if they are unable to attend, they must send a proxy and alert the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair of who their proxy will be before the meeting. Candidates who do not attend the meeting or send a proxy shall be disqualified, except in the case of emergency.

2. Attendance shall be defined as the continued presence of a candidate or proxy from the point in the meeting when the candidate’s name is called to the point in the meeting when the Chair officially adjourns.

E. An invitation to file for candidacy for an elected position must be distributed to all VSA members twice in the Fall Elections filing period, and at least three times in the Spring Elections. The Standard Filing Form, directions for submitting it, and information on the prerequisites to campaigning must be included in or attached to the invitation.

SECTION 6: ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSIVITY

A. To be eligible for any office in the VSA, a candidate must be a VSA member.
B. No student may run for or hold any VSA Office of which the student is not an eligible constituent.
   1. Offices with a class prerequisite may only be sought by students expecting to become a member of that class in the following academic year.
   2. Offices with a residence prerequisite may only be sought by students with certification from the Office of Residential Life that they shall be assigned to that residence in the corresponding term.
C. No candidate is eligible if the candidate has been granted a leave of absence by the College for any part of the term of office.
D. Unless required by the position, no student shall be allowed to run for or hold any position on the VSA Council or Chair of any committee until that student has completed one academic semester at Vassar.
E. No student may run for or hold more than one VSA elected position among a Class Council, a House Team or the VSA Executive Board. Students running for or holding a position on the Class Council or House Team may also run for positions on a committee.
   1. An exception shall be provided for the outgoing VP for Finance, whose extended term, as defined in Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution, shall be disregarded for this purpose.
F. Any student holding a VSA House Officer position may not simultaneously hold any other Residential Life selected position.
G. The members of the Judicial Board may not run for or hold any other VSA elected office.
   1. An exception shall be provided for the outgoing VP for Finance, whose extended term, as defined in Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution, shall be disregarded for this purpose.

SECTION 7: CAMPAIGNING

A. Campaigning shall consist of solicitation of votes by a candidate or the candidate’s representative, and the display of posters and other campaign materials promoting the candidacy of a VSA member. All campaigning shall occur within the period announced by the Board of Elections and Appointments. All acceptable forms of campaigning initiatives are herein defined and must conform to College Regulations.
B. All members of the VSA shall refrain from actions that might dishonestly or unfairly affect the election.
C. VSA members may not use the rights and privileges of an elected or appointed position to promote themselves or any other candidate.

D. Each candidate’s campaign expenses for each position sought shall not exceed: $45 for Executive Board positions; $35 for campus-wide positions; and $25 for House positions.

   1. It is the responsibility of the candidate to account for all campaign expenses. If a candidate is unable to afford materials, they may request funds or reimbursement from the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair.

E. The following methods of communication are at the disposal of candidates:

   1. Internet
      a. The Board of Elections and Appointments will provide a space for an online candidate statement. This statement, which will appear on voting ballots, shall be the candidates’ primary method for communicating their goals and ideas for the position sought.
      b. Candidates may use the Internet to campaign, so long as such solicitations adhere to all other regulations herein defined.
      c. General messages to remind people to vote, without reference to a specific candidate, may continue to be communicated electronically throughout the voting period.

   2. Posters
      a. A poster is a fixed installation not to exceed 11” x 17” x 1” inches. No other hanging attachments may be distributed from posters. House Officer candidates may display two posters inside that residence, two posters in ACDC and two posters in the College Center for a total of six. All other candidates may display two posters in ACDC, two posters in the College Center, and two posters in each residence area.

F. Except door-to-door campaigning, no form of mass unsolicited communication shall be allowed including, but not limited to, mass flyering and impersonal or recipient-suppressed electronic messages.

G. No campaign shall make use of any stamped or unstamped mail, radio, television, public address systems, or advertisements in publications.

H. No unsubstantiated or misrepresentative claims, slander, libel, bribery, blackmail or profanity shall be allowed.

I. After the campaigning period is over, no campaigning is allowed by any candidate or representative of a candidate. All posters, internet posts, and any other campaigning materials or tools must be removed by the start of voting or the candidate may be disqualified at the discretion of the Board of Elections and Appointments.

J. Any candidate found to be in violation of Article X of the VSA Bylaws may be reprimanded or disqualified by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair and/or the Operations Committee. A disqualified candidate shall not be considered a valid write-in candidate.

   1. A candidate who has been disqualified must remove all campaign materials within 24 hours of disqualification unless the candidate appeals the decision to the Judicial Board.
      a. If the Judicial Board affirms disqualification, the candidate must remove all campaigning materials within 24 hours of the Judicial Board ruling.
   2. The disqualification of a candidate may only be made public at the discretion of the candidate.

SECTION 8: VOTING FORMS

A. All elections ballots shall allow voters to vote in the order of their preferences for up to and including the number of candidates running for any given position. These ballots shall include the names of each candidate in random
order and a space or instructions for abstention. An unopposed race shall include the name of the candidate, a space for "no," and a space or instruction for abstention.

B. Any student who will not have access to a voting form on the day of voting must contact the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair at least 72 hours prior to the start of voting. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair shall provide an absentee voting form to these students no less than 24 hours prior to the start of voting. To be considered valid, each absentee form must contain the voting student’s Vassar ID number and full name, and must be submitted to the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair prior to the end of voting.

SECTION 9: VOTING

A. Only VSA members who pay the Student Activities Fee may vote. Exceptions shall be made for previously enrolled students on leave at the time of the election process who intend to be enrolled during the following semester. Exceptions shall also be made for students not paying the Student Activities Fee due to disability status.

B. Students may only vote in elections for which they are a constituent on the particular Election Day, except during Spring Residence Elections in which students may only vote for the residences of which they shall be a constituent the following academic year.

C. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall provide simple, concise publications informing students about the manner in which votes are cast and counted in Ranked Choice Voting.
   1. This publication shall be available on the VSA website.
   2. In addition to this detailed publication, a simplified single-page explanation of Ranked Choice Voting shall be presented to the voter by the voting software before they cast their ballot.

D. Voting periods shall be publicized at least 72 hours in advance.

E. No Board of Elections official may influence any voter or engage in any other activity that may unfairly affect the election.

F. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair must verify eligibility of voters and monitor voting to assure that no person votes more than once or engages in any other elections impropriety.

G. Once the voting period has begun, the ballot may not be altered in any way.

SECTION 10: DESIGNATION OF WINNERS

A. To be declared the winner of any election for which there will be only one declared winner, the winning candidate must receive more than 50% of the votes cast by the relevant constituency, not including abstentions. In the event that no candidate in an election between more than two candidates receives more than 50% of the votes cast by the relevant constituency, a Ranked Choice Election shall be held among the candidates.

B. In any election where there is more than one winner, the winners shall be chosen from the candidates receiving the highest number of votes until the number of winners corresponds to the number of positions being elected.

C. In the event that aforementioned circumstances necessitate Ranked Choice Voting, the following procedures shall be carried out:
   1. For a single winner election, the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated from the race and the second preference votes cast on all ballots for which this candidate was a first preference shall be distributed among the remaining candidates. If at this time the candidate with the most votes has received over 50%, this candidate shall be declared the winner. Otherwise, this process shall be repeated until a candidate garners over 50% of the vote. In the event of a tie between two candidates, in which each candidate has received 50% of the total vote, excluding abstentions, the candidates shall be required to
come to a Board of Elections and Appointments tie-breaking interview. The Board of Elections and Appointments will then determine a winner to present to the VSA Council.

2. For a multiple winner election, the same system shall be followed as above, with the slight modifications necessary due to the extra candidates. This system shall follow the traditional Ranked Choice Voting method for these types of elections until there is the correct number of candidates desired holding enough votes.

D. In the event that any winning candidate is disqualified for violation of these Bylaws, a Run-Off shall take place using the same voting data collected from the election in which the candidate in question was a member. The disqualified candidate may not be considered in this Run-Off election, however, those ballots listing said candidate as a preference will be counted toward their next listed preference. If there is only one candidate remaining in the race, then the remaining candidate will be declared the winner.

E. In a referendum vote, the article shall be deemed to have passed if a simple majority of those voting has voted in favor of the article, not including abstentions.

F. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chairs shall post and publicize all results within 24 hours of the end of the voting period. Individuals, including candidates, shall not be notified of results until such results are publicly available.

G. Write in votes shall not be counted if they do not refer to an eligible member of the VSA.

H. In the event that any House Officer position has not been filled in a House during the Spring Elections, the Board of Elections and Appointments will meet to review applications and appoint individuals to those positions. The Board will inform eligible candidates of the open position and explain the application procedure. The Board will then meet several days later, to allow interested applicants time to fill out the application form. If there are no applicants, or if the Board cannot select an appropriate individual, the position will remain open until the following school year, when the process will repeat.

SECTION 11: APPEALS

A. A VSA member may protest any questionable action by another VSA member related to the election process to the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair. A VSA member may appeal any official decision or posting of results by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair within 24 hours back to the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair, unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise as decided by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair.

1. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair must render a decision on any request within 24 hours of the receipt of the defendant's petition. Such notice shall be given by phone, e-mail, and written notice to be placed in the student's campus mailbox. Alternatively, a tangible, documented affirmation by the defendant of the receipt of any form of the notice shall suffice.

B. Any candidate may appeal an official act or decision of the Board of Elections and Appointments directly relevant to one's candidacy within 24 hours to the Judicial Board Chair(s) on the grounds that the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair violated or failed to reasonably enforce the VSA governing documents, or that there existed an appearance of irregularity or impropriety related to the official result of the election.

1. The Judicial Board must hear and render a decision within 24 hours of the appeal unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise. Such notice shall be given by phone, e-mail, and/or written notice to be placed in the student's campus mailbox. Alternatively, a tangible, documented affirmation by the defendant of the receipt of any form of the notice shall suffice. All proceedings shall take place in accordance with Article XI of the VSA Bylaws. The decision of the appeal shall be final and binding on all elections.
SECTION 12: VACANT POSITIONS

A. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair shall declare a position vacant. Under the following circumstances:
   1. An election has produced no winning candidate for that position
   2. An incumbent position-holder delivers a letter of resignation to the VP for Operations or the President if the VP for Operations is resigning
   3. A position-holder is removed from office
B. The vacancy must be declared and publicized by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair to the relevant constituency.
C. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall internally decide whether appointment or election shall fill a vacancy for an elected position.
D. If the election or appointment process fails to select a candidate for the position, the VSA Council has the power to either close the position until the next regularly scheduled election, or advise the Board of Elections and Appointments to re-initiate the appointment or election process.

SECTION 13: EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

A. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the Board of Elections and Appointments, in concurrence with the VSA Executive Board, may recommend suspension of any section or subsection of this article of the VSA Bylaws, excluding Sections 2 and 5 of this article.
B. Each section or subsection to be suspended must be explicitly stated.
C. The length of time for the suspension must be stated.
D. The VSA Council may substitute any procedure or rules it deems necessary in place of the suspended sections and/or subsections.
   1. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of paper ballots, shortened voting times, or alternative formats for voting.
E. A two-thirds majority of the VSA Council is necessary to suspend any section and/or subsection of this article.

SECTION 14: APPOINTMENTS

A. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall fill vacant positions at the discretion of the chair and relevant bodies.
B. If a member of the Board of Elections and Appointments is a candidate for appointment, the appointment shall be carried out by the VSA Operations Committee, as stated in Article III, Section 2 of these Bylaws.
C. The Board of Elections and Appointments shall present their recommendations to VSA Council at the subsequent council meeting and provide rationale for their selections.
D. The recommendations of the Board of Elections and Appointments shall be considered adopted unless an objection is raised by a member of the VSA Council or a member at large.

ARTICLE XI – THE JUDICIAL BOARD

SECTION 1: PROCESS

A. The Judicial Board Chair shall choose 4 of the 16 members, on a rotating basis, to hear each case. In the case of an appeal, 4 of the 12 remaining members who have not already heard the case shall hear the appeal.
B. After receipt of a written complaint, the Judicial Board Chair shall notify both parties involved and the members of the Judicial Board of the charges and arrange a date, time, and place for the hearing. Cases shall be disposed of expeditiously, within 72 hours unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise.

C. Only in the event of a tie shall the Judicial Board Chair cast a vote.

D. In the event that the Judicial Board Chair is the respondent or complainant in a matter, the VP for Operations shall select a temporary Chair from among the other Judicial Board members.

E. The VP for Operations shall sit as a non-voting Constitutional advisor, except in the event of the VP for Operations’ own involvement in the case, in which case the VSA President shall fulfill these duties.

F. The Judicial Board shall determine a decision in a closed session and, when applicable, appropriate disciplinary action shall be determined by concurrence of at least 3 of the members hearing the case. The decision shall be posted on the VSA Bulletin Board within 24 hours of the hearing.

G. Members of the Judicial Board must recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

SECTION 2: FORMAT FOR JUDICIAL BOARD HEARINGS

A. Both the respondent(s) and the complainant(s) may be assisted in any aspects of their respective cases, including seeking another student for representation, except current members of the Judicial Board.

B. Hearing procedures:
   1. Call the meeting to order.
   2. Introduce the judicial officers, respondent(s), and complainant(s).
   3. Explain the format for the hearing and the rights of the respondent(s) and complainant(s).
   4. State the charge citing the relevant section(s) of the VSA governing documents or college regulations.
   5. Respondent(s) shall plead either guilty or not guilty.
   6. Complainant(s) shall state their case, presenting all evidence and witnesses. The defense may cross-examine witnesses.
   7. Questions, if any, from the judicial officers.
   8. Respondent(s) shall state their case, presenting all evidence and witnesses. The complainant(s) may cross-examine witnesses.
   9. Questions, if any, from the judicial officers.
   10. Complainant(s) shall make closing statements.
   11. Respondent(s) shall make closing statements.
   12. Additional questions, if any, of either party from the judicial officers.

C. The Chair of the Judicial Board, with majority consent of Judicial Board members, may set time limits upon presentation of evidence, questioning and cross-examination of witnesses, and closing statements as deemed appropriate.

SECTION 3: RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT AND COMPLAINANT

The respondents and complainants shall enjoy the following rights when tried before the Judicial Board, and if retried on appeal:

A. To be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
B. To be given fair notice and a fair hearing.
C. Fair notice shall be given within 24 hours of the receipt of a grievance. Such notice shall be given either by phone, e-mail, or written notice to be placed in the student’s campus mailbox.
D. To be assisted in the preparation of their position by any student or member of the faculty of their choice, except current members of the Judicial Board.
E. To be judged by no person presenting evidence for or against them, or otherwise involved in the case.
F. To be informed by the Chair of the Judicial Board of these rights at the time the respondent is notified of the charges against them and again during the hearing.
G. To receive an open hearing unless the Judicial Board finds compelling cause to close it.
H. To demand that all of the evidence against them be present at the hearing.
I. To receive a copy of all proceedings involving them.
J. To appeal any decision according to Article XI, Section 5 of the Bylaws.
K. To call any member of the Vassar Community as a witness as deemed necessary for the effective execution of their position, subject to the approval of the Judicial Board Chair.

SECTION 4: APPEALS

A. The Judicial Board shall have the authority to retry cases on appeal from the original Judicial Board decision in the case that substantial new evidence exists and/or the procedural rights of the respondent or complainant were violated.
B. The individual may submit a petition for a rehearing to the VSA President. The Judicial Board Chair shall present the record of the case and the respondent shall have the right personally, or through a representative, to submit arguments on one’s behalf.
   1. In the event that the VSA President is involved in the case, this duty shall fall to the VP for Operations.
C. During an appeal the VP for Operations shall act as chair.
   1. In the event that the VP for Operations is involved in the case, this duty shall fall to the VSA President.

SECTION 5: ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

A. Members of the VSA are encouraged to seek resolutions of disputes through means other than traditional Judicial Board hearings.
B. Mediation may be a preferable means of resolving disputes. The goal of mediation shall be for individuals to reach a mutually agreeable solution to a conflict, rather than through an adversarial process. The solution shall create a binding agreement that is signed by all parties, the VP for Operations, and the Chair of the Judicial Board, depending upon the status of the complaint. The terms of this mediated agreement shall be made public and posted on the VSA Bulletin Board.
C. The Judicial Board Chair may suggest mediation. Such a suggestion shall not necessarily preclude judicial action.
D. During mediation, the rules governing time limits stating when the Judicial Board must meet to adjudicate a complaint are suspended. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, a hearing shall be scheduled following the guidelines stated in this Constitution and the VSA Bylaws.
E. In the event that an agreement is reached, the agreement shall be binding. Violations of such an agreement are grounds for a traditional hearing under the rules established in the VSA governing documents.
ARTICLE XII – DISCIPLINARY ACTION

SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS

Any member of the VSA may make a motion before the VSA Council to censure or indict any elected or appointed member of the VSA Council, House or Class Council, student committee, ad-hoc committee, task force, or student delegation to a joint committee. Disciplinary action may not be voted on in the meeting in which the issue is initially raised. This may be overridden by a three-quarters majority of the Council.

SECTION 2: CENSURE OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

A. The VSA Council shall have the power to censure any of its own members, any elected or appointed VSA officer, VSA organization or organization officer. This shall be considered an official reprimand.
B. Censure proceedings may not be closed at any time.
C. Censured individuals or organizations shall be officially notified of the reprimand by the VP for Operations. In the event that the VP for Operations is censured, this duty shall fall to the VP for Student Life.
D. Upon censure of an individual or organization, a written notice must be signed by the VP for Operations and posted on the VSA bulletin board no later than 12 hours after the censure and must remain posted for no less than 72 hours. In the event that the VP for Operations is censured, this duty falls to the VP for Student Life.
E. The censured individual or organization must meet with the VSA Executive Board to be informed of the rationale for censure and to discuss possible courses of action to repair any damage caused by wrongdoing. The Executive Board must approve and monitor the implementation of any course of action. In the case that a member of the VSA Executive Board is censured, the rest of the Executive Board shall carry on without them.

SECTION 3: INDICTMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

A. The VSA Council shall have the power to indict any of its own members and any elected or appointed officer of any class, residence, committee, or organization.
B. Upon indictment, the VSA Judicial Board shall impeach, that is, formally try, the indicted officer on all charges within 72 hours, unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise.
C. The indicted officer shall retain all powers and responsibilities of office while awaiting hearing and the judicial verdict.

SECTION 4: PROCEDURE FOR INDICTMENT PROCEEDINGS

A. The VSA Council shall have the power to conduct indictment procedures with a majority of its members present, exclusive of any Council member charged and/or bringing the charges.
B. The proceedings shall be chaired by the VSA President, or in the case of direct conflict of interest, by the VP for Operations.
C. Indictment proceedings may not be closed at any time.
D. The officer in question in an indictment hearing shall enjoy the following rights: to be present at and for the duration of the proceedings; to hear all charges presented against the officer; and to have the final words, before a vote, in the officer’s own defense.
E. A majority vote in favor, exclusive of any Council member charged and/or bringing the charges, shall be required for indictment.

SECTION 5: IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

A. Impeachment may only occur as a result of a Judicial Board ruling following indictment as laid out in Article XII, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

B. Grounds for impeachment shall consist of one or more of the following: dereliction of duty, incompetence, employment of funds or property of the VSA for private gain, violation of the VSA Constitution or the VSA Bylaws, or repeated censure, or a violation of College Regulations that undermines an individual's ability to serve in an elected or appointed position.

C. An individual sentenced to removal shall be relieved of the powers of office pending the Judicial Board's verdict. The VSA Council shall declare the position vacant and the removed individual shall have the right to run for, or be considered for appointment to, the same office.

D. Decisions of the Judicial Board may be appealed under the procedures outlined in Article XI of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 6: RECALL

1. Any constituency shall have the power to recall any officers elected by that constituency under this Constitution and the VSA Bylaws.

B. If the constituency is campus-wide, the petition to recall must contain the signatures of at least 15% of the VSA.

C. If the constituency is not campus-wide, the petition to recall must contain the signatures of at least 25% of the constituency.

D. If they determine the petition to be in good order, the Board of Elections and Appointments shall conduct an election for the office in question.
   1. The officer in question shall have the right to be a candidate.
   2. The incumbent shall retain all powers and responsibilities of office until the Board of Elections and Appointments officially announces the election returns.