

## **VSA Council Minutes**

*October 4, 2009*

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01

### **2. Attendance**

Late: Lathrop, Strong, Town Houses, Town Students

Proxy: 2010

Absent: Academics

### **3. Consent Agenda**

**a. Approval of the Minutes from 9/27**

**b. \$450 from Collaboration Fund to CSA**

**c. \$427.03 from Capital Contingency to Filmmakers**

There were no objections and the consent agenda passed.

### **4. Special Guests: Bret Ingerman, Vice President for Computing and Information Services**

**Steve Taylor, Director of Academic Computing Services**

Bret Ingerman began by informing council that, thankfully, not a lot had changed since the leadership forum, so he didn't have too many changes to report. First off, as many people noticed, they had given emails to the VSA organizations, currently they were attempting to better manage the emails so as to better manage org leader changes.

In addition, Mr. Ingerman was proud to report that they had upped bandwidth this semester and, as of yet, had not maxed it out. He also announced a plan to remove telephone lines from the rooms of students, replacing them instead with hall phones. This would save the college half a million dollars a year.

In addition, they have been making some changes to the way the media cloisters and CIS are running. They have been able to reduce staff by 3 by making the processes more efficient. He noted that this shouldn't make a noticeable difference in student life.

Mr. Ingerman also revealed some new purchases of art slides Art 105/106 as well as new plasma screens so that students can hook up a computer and work in small groups.

He also revealed a novel idea that the Campus Master Planning Committee had been toying with: a cell phone tower on campus. The smokestack above the powerhouse theater is filled with coal remains as well as arsenic. If they were to remove the first 40 feet of the tower, a company, either AT&T or Verizon, may be interested in a tower. Hopefully this would arrive sometime in the spring.

Steve Taylor announced that the largest change has been moving from Blackboard to Moodle. The school has been looking to see if there was anything they would like better than Blackboard, which they had been using since 2001. Not only is Moodle a better product, but it is Open Source, aka. Free. They are allowing faculty a year to transition, however professors have

jumped on the bandwagon and there are already twice as many classes on Moodle as there are on Blackboard. Mr. Taylor is hoping that Moodle sites can also be made for VSA organizations and Academic Departments.

In addition, they are getting ready to reveal a wordpress blog server. They currently have wordpress installed for official uses, however they are hoping to allow organizations and faculty to use it as well. Finally, they will be rolling out a wiki server for use with collaborative projects. Mr. Taylor noted that these technologies have been around for while, but the school has been waiting to find an academic use for them before adopting them.

Brett Ingerman posed a question to council about peer to peer illegal filesharing. In September alone they have had 16 cases. Last year, in September, they only had 7. Also new, they have had some 2nd offenders. Currently, as punishment, students are assigned 5 hours of sanctioned service with Buildings and Grounds. However, this does not seem like much of a deterrent. He proposed either a) making the punishment 15 hours for the first offense or, b) charging a fine that would be sent home on student accounts. Students would then have to explain to parents what a "Copyright Infringement Fee" means. Mr. Ingerman recognized that there are legal ways to use peer to peer filesharing, however these were in the minority. As a result, peer to peer connections at Vassar are given incredibly small bandwidth.

Main asked if the budget emails sent to presidents could also go to the treasurers. Finance responded that this was a problem they were working on. Noyes raised a concern that when the emails were forwarded, the relevant budget information was lost in code. Mr. Ingerman said he would look into it.

Strong raised a complaint that very frequently V-print is out of paper. Mr. Ingerman responded that CIS does not control the paper, that responsibility lies with the ROC. He encouraged people to contact the ROC when a printer was empty. In addition, Strong suggested adding a second color printer to the college center. Mr. Ingerman thought that the new 24 hour study space may be a good location.

Strong also responded to Mr. Ingerman's earlier question about filesharing. She felt that 15 hours would be a more effective deterrent as it affects the student much more than a fine being sent home. Operations however, felt that a fine would fit the spirit of the point system discussed previously. In the debate over points, council agreed that it would be alright to charge fees for theft. This would expand the traditional definition to include digital theft.

Operations also asked Mr. Ingerman to explain the money source for all these purchases. Mr. Ingerman explained that these arrived from restricted gifts. Restricted gifts are given to the college with the stipulation that it must be used for a specific purpose. In fact, most new things on campus are arriving from restricted gifts. He cited as an example the recent renovations to the art library. If they didn't renovate, the money would be sitting in the bank, waiting to be used on a renovation.

Activities asked how Organizations would go about getting a Moodle or a wiki. Mr. Taylor said that right now he is approaching them as the organizations approach him. He says it is really easy to set up a moodle, it takes about five minutes, however a wiki or wordpress take more time. Personally, he felt that it would be best to have all organizations within one system and, as Moodle is the most versatile system, he felt that system should be Moodle.

Finance noted that currently the iTunes networks are divided into sections. He wondered if

expanding campus into one large network would minimize filesharing. Mr. Ingerman responded that, unfortunately he couldn't. The school is broken into a series of small networks for manageability. Apple will not allow iTunes to work across networks. They used to be able to, but unfortunately, they were forced to limit to one network.

Davison asked if House Fellows and House advisors could be added to the reslife email lists.

Noyes noted that when V-print is empty, a message is sent to the ROC. Adding personal paper will cancel that email, thus prolonging the amount of time it takes to get more paper. In addition, she felt that a fine sent home for filesharing carried no weight, as student would never have to see it.

2011 wondered what would happen with multiple offenses and where the fines would go. Mr. Ingerman said that first they would be required to do more work and that they would be cutoff from the network. A third offense would instantly remove them from all networking. If they get more 2nd offenses, they will develop a plan for a third. The fines collected from offenses would go to purchasing new items, such as color V-print.

2011 also asked if seniors get more money for V-print. Mr. Ingerman said that they do not, noting that V-print quota was never intended to cover all printing. Instead it was meant to cover the amount of printing a student might have to do for papers. The quota did not cover e-reserves or texts printed for class. Even if the student spends \$30 extra dollars on printing, it is still a lot less than buying another textbook.

The South Commons suggested a very public form of punishment for filesharing, citing her high school where the punishment was bronzing the bannister. In addition, she wondered why there was no V-print in the SoCos. Mr. Ingerman said that they were looking for a place large enough to put it, and he was open to suggestions.

Cushing noted that several times the internet had gone down in Cushing and wondered why. Mr. Ingerman encouraged people to contact CIS when this happens so that they can look at their logs and spot the problem.

Jewett agreed with Noyes that a fine carries no weight with students. In addition, most parents wouldn't care, as they would have the mentality "they have been out of the house for several years, I cannot control them."

Student life asked for a V-print in ACDC. Mr. Ingerman said he would look into it.

## **5. Announcements**

### **a. Campus Forum**

The President announced that this Tuesday at 8 P.M. in Rocky 300, there will be a forum with Cappy and the senior officers about the economy.

Main raised a concern that Cappy was supposed to be in Main that evening. The President informed her that the Town Hall in Main had been cancelled for this.

## **6. Committee Report**

### **a. Food**

The Food Committee rep was not present.

## **7. Exec Reports**

### **a. Finance Report**

Finance reported that the VSA was still in good Financial health. They were getting 25,000 for capital budgeting from a return on an investment back in the 90's. In addition the new p-card (purchasing card) for organizations was working well, with a few kinks. He reminded organizations that credit card purchases must be done in person and that those wishing to use the credit card need to come see him during his office hours.

### **b. Activities Report**

Activities was proud to announce that 1,144 people will be attending Meet Me In Poughkeepsie. When all was said and done, there were 30 trips planned and all were full or mostly full. Recently the Activities committee has been looking into increasing org partnerships as well as making a list of potential ideas for alternative programming.

## **8. Allocation of \$2680 from Conference Fund to Fly People**

Finance moved to allocate \$2680 to Fly People. Sophie Laird, president of Fly People, explained that her freshman year, they had taken a trip to Disneyland where they attended a workshop with a Disney dancer/choreographer who taught them a routine and gave professional advice. In the end, they are able to give a performance in the Galaxy Theater. She felt that it was one of her favorite moments and it really helps to bring the group together. Unfortunately, her freshmen year, some people couldn't afford the trip. Currently the trip is costing a massive amount and they are looking to raise 17,000 dollars. Any amount given would help.

Finance noted that this was the maximum amount that could be given and that this would cover the cost of the airplane tickets and the workshop.

The motion came to a vote. Strong, Ferry, 2012, 2013 and Town Houses were opposed. The motion passed.

## **9. Open Discussion**

2010 announced that there were 230 days left till graduation.

Operations announced that there was an FAQ about Robert's Rules online to help those attending council. He also chastised the three council members who had not sent in photos.

2012 wondered what was happening with the points proposal. Student Life informed her that CCL had not met yet and that the discussion would be ongoing for the rest of the year.

Cushing asked for clarification on payment for Meet Me In Poughkeepsie. She was told to pay from her budget and that Cushing would be reimbursed.

Noyes congratulated the organizers of Dormal Formal and Harvest Festival. Activities seconded this, noting that attendance was great and that some events were almost too well attended.

Joss encouraged people to clarify that they new point system was not in place, as there has

been confusion.

## **10. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:04