

# THE BYLAWS OF THE VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

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# ARTICLE I – POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VSA EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

## SECTION 1: THE PRESIDENT

The President shall:

- A. Call and conduct meetings of the VSA Senate and Executive Board.
- B. Represent the VSA to administrators, faculty, staff, trustees, other student governments, and others as needed by their duties.
- C. Serve ex officio as a member of all student committees of the VSA.
- D. Serve as the student observer to the Board of Trustees and attend trustee meetings by invitation.
- E. Organize meetings with the Executive Board with administrators, as well as with others as needed.
- F. Sit as a student representative on the Priorities and Planning Committee.
- G. Shall sit as a student representative on the Engaged Pluralism Initiative's Steering Committee.

## SECTION 2: THE VICE PRESIDENT

The Vice President shall:

- A. Chair the VSA Board of Strategic Planning.
- B. Chair Operations Committee and maintain the VSA Governing Documents.
- C. Hire, train, and oversee the VSA Head Intern and VSA Interns.
- D. Advise the Board of Elections and Appointments and serve as chair in their absence or incapacity.
- E. Sit as student representative on the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid, the Priorities and Planning Committee, and on the Alumnae/i Association of Vassar College.
- F. Maintain the Operating Budget of the VSA.

## SECTION 3: THE CHAIR OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Chair of Equity and Inclusion shall:

- A. Serve as the primary liaisons to the Campus Life and Diversity division, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office, Title IX Office, and Office of Accessibility and Educational Opportunity.
- B. Sit as student representatives on the Committee on Inclusion and Excellence, Campus Life Resource Group, Bias Incident Response Team, and Sexual Assault Violence Prevention Student Committee.
- C. Sit on the Executive Board, the Committee on Inclusion and Excellence, and the Bias Incident Response Team.
- D. Sit as a student representative on the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid and Safety and Security Advisory Council.
- E. Sit as a student representative within the Engaged Pluralism Initiative's Capacity Building Working Group and the Climate Assessment Working Group.

## SECTION 4: THE CHAIR OF RESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS

The Chair of Residential Affairs shall:

- A. Serve as the primary liaisons to Residential Life, Dining, Safety and Security, Buildings and Grounds, and Computing and Information Services, and Student Conduct.
- B. Oversee the Board of Residential Affairs and provide guidance and support to House Teams.
- C. Sit as a student representative on the Committee on College Life.
- D. Sit as a student representative on the Safety and Security Advisory Council.
- E. Sit as a student representative within the Engaged Pluralism Initiative's Working and Living at Vassar Working Group.

## SECTION 5: THE CHAIR OF ACADEMICS

The Chair of Academics shall:

- A. Serve as the primary liaison to the Dean of the Faculty division, Dean of Studies division, and the Library.
- B. Provide support and guidance to majors committees.
- C. Sit as a student representative to the Committee on Academic Technologies, the Committee on Curricular Policy, and the Library Committee and within the Engaged Pluralism Initiative's Inclusive Pedagogies Working Group and Beyond Vassar's Gates Group.

## SECTION 6: THE CHAIR OF ORGANIZATIONS

The Chair of Organizations shall:

- A. Oversee organization and preliminary organization certification and decertification.
- B. Maintain records and documents of organizations and preliminary organizations, including organization constitutions and bylaws.
- C. Provide support and guidance to organizations and preliminary organizations.
- D. Organize and execute the Fall Leadership Conference in conjunction with the Training Director.
- E. Approve all student-sponsored events in conjunction with Campus Activities Office.

## SECTION 7: THE CO-CHAIRS OF FINANCE

The Co-Chairs of Finance shall:

- A. Oversee the disbursement of the student activities fee to all organizations, preliminary organizations, Special Purpose Funds, and other uses deemed necessary through the appropriate channels.
- B. Make recommendations to the VSA Senate on funding allocations of the student activities fee.
- C. Call mandatory meetings of organization treasurers as needed.
- D. Serve as the primary liaison to Accounting Services, Accounts Payable, Purchasing, and other relevant offices within the Vice President of Finance and Administration division.

## SECTION 8: THE CHAIR OF PLANNING

The Chair of Planning shall:

- A. Manage long-term planning initiatives of the VSA.
- B. Oversee the annual budgeting process in conjunction with the Co-Chairs of Finance.
- C. Work with the College Planning Senators to ensure the long-term plans of the VSA align with those of the College.
- D. Sit as a student representative on the Master Planning Committee.

## SECTION 9: THE CHAIR OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The Chair of Health and Wellness shall:

- A. Serve as the primary liaison to Health Services, the Counseling Service, the Office of Health Education, the Sexual Assault and Violence Prevention Office, and Athletics.
- B. Oversee initiatives to improve the health and wellness of the student body.

## SECTION 10: THE CHAIR OF PROGRAMMING

The Chair of Programming shall:

- A. Work with ViCE, Traditions Committee, and the Campus Activities Office to ensure a variety of regularly-scheduled programming during the academic year.
- B. Oversee and coordinate the planning of events on weekends when others are not scheduled.
- C. Sit as a student representative on the Engaged Pluralism Initiative's Summer Programs Working Group.

#### SECTION 11: THE CHAIR OF FIRST-YEAR PROGRAMS

The Chair of First-Year Programs shall:

- A. Serve as the primary liaison to offices and events associated with first-year programming such as Orientation and Transitions.
- B. Oversee the planning of events for first-year students in conjunction with the First-Year Senators.
- C. Sit as a student representative on the Orientation Committee and the First Year Committee.

### ARTICLE II – POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VSA SENATE

#### SECTION 1: FUNCTIONS OF THE VSA SENATE

The functions of the VSA Senate shall be to:

- A. Act as a forum for communication between students and the rest of the campus community.
- 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 Boards, VSA Committees, student representatives to Joint Committees, and VSA organizations.
- E. Approve appointments of students to vacant positions.
- F. 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.
- G. Review, amend, and approve the budget of the VSA.
- 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. Censure, certify, decertify, and perform disciplinary action against student organizations.
- J. At the discretion of the VSA Executive Board, the VSA Senate shall hold townhall meetings to address significant campus issues.
- K. The VSA Senate shall hold town hall meetings at least once per semester.

#### SECTION 2: VSA SENATE MEMBERS

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

- A. Represent the opinions of their constituency as obtained through polling, discussion, and any other means deemed appropriate.
- B. Serve as a subject matter expert in the boards or committees they serve within and represent that expertise to the VSA Senate and their constituencies.
- C. Communicate the discussions and decisions of the VSA Senate, as well as any other relevant information, to their constituencies.
- D. Ensure that the VSA acts in a manner consistent with these governing documents and subsequent legislation.
- E. Hold at least one office hour session per week.

## ARTICLE III – VSA SENATE MEETINGS

### SECTION 1: MEETINGS

- A. VSA Senate meetings shall be held on every Sunday at 7 p.m. for which classes are in session on the following day.
- B. The President shall chair all meetings. In the event of a conflict of interest, the President may select the Vice President to chair a portion of the meeting.
- C. All VSA Senate meetings shall be open to all students, unless a three-fourths majority of VSA Senate votes to close the meeting, or as required by VSA Senate Policies.
- D. Non-students may attend VSA Senate meetings at the invitation of the President.
- E. The President may call a session of the VSA Senate at any time, and must call a session within three days of a written request signed by one-third of VSA Senate members.
- F. A quorum shall be defined as a two-thirds majority of the voting members and shall be necessary for any session of the VSA Senate.
- G. Any student may make a motion or raise an issue before the VSA Senate, excluding a motion to call to question, vote, table, or other action that requires a vote.
  - a. A student may speak to a motion or issue raised within the same meeting rules as followed by other VSA Senators.
- H. The VSA Senate shall keep policies which outline meeting rules, special meeting rules, and other procedures.
  - a. The Operations Committee shall be responsible for maintaining and making changes to the VSA Senate Policies.
- I. All votes shall be cast publicly and shall be recorded in the minutes.
- J. Minutes of the VSA Senate meetings shall be recorded and become official and published upon approval of the VSA Senate at each following meeting.
- K. Members of the VSA Senate shall abstain from voting on issues in which they have a conflict of interest.

### SECTION 2: AGENDA

- A. The agenda shall be set by the President.
  - a. Any students or organizations may submit agenda items for consideration by the President.
- B. The agenda will be sent out to VSA Senate members no later than Thursday evening prior to the appointed meeting time.
- C. Upon receipt of the agenda, the Class Senators for Strategic Planning shall forward the agenda to their respective constituents at least 24 hours before each Senate meeting and the agenda shall be made public by the Public Relations Intern.
- D. Any student member may request an amendment or addition to the agenda for consideration by the President.

### SECTION 3: PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Vice President shall designate an Administrative Intern to serve as Parliamentarian and take minutes. In the absence or incapacity of an Intern, the the Vice President shall fulfill this duty.

### SECTION 4: SPEAKER'S LIST

The Vice President shall designate an Administrative Intern to maintain the Speaker's List, which shall be enforced by the President. In the absence or incapacity of an Intern, the the Vice President shall fulfill this duty.

## SECTION 5: CONSENSUS AGENDA

All items placed on the Consensus Agenda at the start of a VSA Senate meeting shall be considered adopted unless an objection is raised. Any VSA Senate member or student may object to an item on the consensus agenda. Any consensus item objected to must be placed on the agenda by the President.

## SECTION 6: DISRUPTIVE MEMBERS

- A. Any student who exhibits disruptive behavior may be formally asked to leave by the Chair; if the student does not comply they may be forced to leave through appropriate security measures.
- B. Any disruptive Senate member may be expelled from the proceedings by a two-thirds majority vote.

## SECTION 7: ATTENDANCE

- A. In the case of a Senate 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. If there are additional absences, impeachment proceedings may be undertaken at the discretion of the VSA Senate.
  - a. Absences due to religious observance shall not be included in the aforementioned three proxied absences. These absences, however, still require proxies.
- C. If a Senate member misses two meetings in a semester without sending a proxy, impeachment proceedings may be undertaken at the discretion of the VSA Senate.
- D. If a Senate member is absent for more than 15 minutes of a meeting without a proxy twice in one semester, censure proceedings may be undertaken at the discretion of the VSA Senate.
- E. If a Senate member cannot send a proxy or is late due to exceptional circumstances, the President may excuse that member's absence at their discretion.

## SECTION 8: TOWN HALLS

- A. Town Hall meetings shall be informal spaces for the Vassar community to discuss issues of campus concern.
  - a. The VSA Executive Board may invite other individuals to attend at its discretion.
- B. Town Hall meetings will be organized and their content determined at the discretion of the VSA Executive Board with recommendations from Senate and student members.
- C. The event and its subject matter must be advertised to the community at least 3 days in advance.
- D. The policies of Town Hall meetings will be devised in Operations Committee at the beginning of each academic year.

## SECTION 9: RULES FOR MEETINGS

- A. Meetings of the VSA Senate shall be run according to the Special Rules for Meetings. For situations that warrant more formal parliamentary procedure or are otherwise not covered by the Special Rules, the VSA Senate may follow *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, at the discretion of the Vice President.
- B. At the beginning of each term, the Operations Committee must present the Special Rules for Meetings to the VSA Senate, and shall collect input from VSA Senators on suggested changes.

## ARTICLE IV – POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VSA BOARDS

### SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Boards of the VSA shall:

- A. Set goals by the second week of each semester.
- B. Give written or oral updates to the VSA Senate following each Board meeting.
- C. Meet at regular intervals specified in the following sections.
- D. Foster collaboration across committees and representatives within their division.
- E. Consult the VSA Senate and Executive Board in all matters involving collaboration between Boards.

### SECTION 2: BOARD OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Board of Student Affairs shall:

- A. Be chaired by either or both the Chair of Equity and Inclusion and the Chair of Academics.
- B. Consist of the Chair of Equity and Inclusion, Chair of Academics, Chair of Health and Wellness, Chair of First Year Programs, and Judicial Board Chair.
- C. Convene a meeting at least once per month.
- D. Work together to address issues of student life in an intersectional manner across committees.
- E. Create guiding principles at the beginning of the academic year, as well as present monthly goals to the VSA Senate.

### SECTION 3: BOARD OF ACTIVITIES

The Board of Activities shall:

- A. Be chaired by the Chair of Organizations or elected Co-Chair of Finance.
- B. Consist of the Chair of Organizations, Co-Chairs of Finance, Chair of Programming, Traditions Co-Chairs, at least one representative from the ViCE Executive Board, a member of the Board of Residential Affairs, and at least one administrator from the Campus Activities Office.
- C. Convene a meeting every two weeks.
- D. Create and maintain a calendar of all student-sponsored events occurring during the the semester.
- E. Work together to encourage and sponsor regular, diverse programming throughout the semester.
- F. Create guiding principles at the beginning of the academic year, as well as present monthly goals to the VSA Senate.

### SECTION 4: BOARD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Board of Strategic Planning shall:

- A. Be chaired by the Vice President.
- B. Two College Planning Senators shall be elected at-large for one-year terms by the VSA. The College Planning Senators shall be student representatives on the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid, Sustainability Committee, Campus Investor Responsibility Committee, and Master Planning Committee, and one senator shall be a student representative on the Committee of Climate Action and Sustainability
- C. Consist of the Vice President, Chair of Planning, College Planning Senators, and Research Director.
- D. Convene a meeting at least once per month.
- E. Work together to manage the internal affairs of the VSA in relation to the plans of the College.

## SECTION 5: BOARD OF RESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS

The Board of Residential Affairs shall:

- A. Be chaired by a member elected at-large and a internally selected chair appointed from the additional members.
- B. Consist of the Chair of Residential Affairs, the Presidents of Cushing, Davison, Jewett, Josselyn, Lathrop, Main, Noyes, Raymond, Strong, South Commons, Terrace Apartments, Town Houses, Town Students, and Cooperative Housing.
  - a. Each member shall represent the interests of their constituency.
  - b. Members must attend each meeting or send a proxy.
- C. Convene a meeting once per week.
- D. Discuss issues associated with living at Vassar including, but not limited to, residential life, dining, security, college regulations, etc.

## ARTICLE V – POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VSA COMMITTEES

### SECTION 1: COMMITTEES OF THE VSA SENATE

- A. Each standing committee shall have a chair or co-chairs, responsible for leading committee meetings, setting agendas, and liaising with other boards and committees, and other tasks as required by the governing documents.
- B. Class Senators shall serve on at least two committees within their Board division.
  - a. First-Year Senators will additionally sit on the First Year Programs Committee.
- C. House Presidents shall serve on one committee each.
- D. Membership for the committees shall be open to all students unless otherwise stated.
- E. The committees that shall meet weekly are Equity and Inclusion, Health and Wellness, Organizations, Finance, Programming, and Operations.
- F. The committees that shall meet every two weeks are Academics, First Year Programs, and Planning.
- G. Committees shall:
  - a. Report to the VSA Senate and Board of Residential Affairs on a regular basis as determined by the President.
  - b. Establish policies and guiding principles and present these to the VSA Senate by the Senate's fourth meeting of the academic year.
  - c. Write and recommend legislation, and positions for consideration by VSA Senate, via Operations Committee.
- H. If the VSA Senate has concerns with a committee's recommendations, the committee shall further consider these concerns and issue a new recommendation.
- I. Meetings of committees may be closed at the discretion of the relative Chair(s).

### SECTION 2: EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

The Equity and Inclusion Committee shall:

- A. Consist of the Chair, and one internally elected Treasurer; at minimum, the following student representatives: four from organizations associated with the ALANA Center, one from an organization associated with the LGBTQ Center, one from an organization associated with the Women's Center, one from an organization associated with the Office of International Services, and two from organizations associated with Religious and Spiritual Life; all other identity-related organizations may send one student representative. *The Traditions Co-Chairs shall meet at least every other week with an administrator from the Campus Activities Office who shall serve as the advisor to the Committee.*



- B. Consider issues pertaining to the physical, emotional, and mental safety and empowerment of students of marginalized identities, including but not limited to: LGBTQ students, women, students of color, students of differing ability, students of religious minorities, non-traditional students, low-income students, international students, and first-generation students.
- C. Consider issues of campus climate related to identity, equity and inclusion, including those brought forth by students, organizations, and/or the Office of Campus Life and Diversity.
- D. Act as liaison to Campus Life and Diversity Offices (ALANA Center, Women’s Center, LGBTQ Center, Office of International Services, Religious and Spiritual Life), Accessibility Office, Title IX/Affirmative Action Office, and identity-related student organizations.
- E. Choose from amongst themselves one student representative for each of the following Joint Committees: Campus Life Resource Group,
- F. Maintain the Social Consciousness Fund in the interests of empowering and celebrating students of marginalized identities.

### SECTION 3: ACADEMICS COMMITTEE

The Academics Committee shall:

- A. Consist of one elected Chair; one representative from each of the academic divisions, including but not limited to: natural sciences, social sciences, arts, foreign languages, and multidisciplinary programs; and any additional at-large appointed members.
- B. Act as liaison to Academic Departments, the Library, and offices related to Experiential Learning, such as Fieldwork, and Junior Year Away.
- C. Include a member of the committee as a representative on the Committee on Curricular Policy and Library Committee.
- D. Oversee Peer Advising program, Majors Fair, and Student Seminars.
- E. Consider issues pertaining to academics and the academic life of students.
- F. Work towards fostering and furthering positive relationships between students and faculty, as well as between students, in the interests of enriching academic life at Vassar.
- G. Advocate for the physical, emotional, and mental safety of students in the classroom.

### SECTION 4: HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE

The Health and Wellness Committee shall:

- A. Consist of one elected Chair, one Wellness Peer Educator, and one representative from each of the relevant health and wellness student organizations, including but not limited to: CARES, TLC, CHOICE, EMS, ProHealth, Body Positive, QHI, and SupportedED.
- B. Act as liaison to Baldwin, Metcalf, the Athletics Department, Office of Health Education, and SAVP.
- C. Consider issues related to the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of students, and undertake projects aimed at improving these.

### SECTION 5: FIRST-YEAR PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

The First-Year Programs Committee shall:

- A. Consist of one elected chair and the three elected First-Year Senators.
- B. Act as liaison to all departments, programs, and committees related to the first year at Vassar, including but not limited to: Orientation Committee, Unpacking Vassar, Transitions, and Posse.
- C. Coordinate programming for the first-year class.
- D. Include a member who shall sit as a representative on the Orientation Committee.
- E. Consider issues related to the success and well-being of first-year students.

## SECTION 6: ORGANIZATIONS COMMITTEE

The Organizations Committee shall:

- A. Consist of one elected chair, two Class Senators and any additional at-large appointed members.
- B. Oversee all VSA organizations and pre-organizations.
- C. Consider all applications for certification and upgraded organization status.
- D. Recommend policy changes pertaining to organizations to the VSA Senate.
- E. Consider and recommend to the VSA Senate all disciplinary action relating to organizations.
- F. All recommendations of the Organizations Committee regarding certification, decertification, and disciplinary action shall be placed on the Consensus Agenda of the VSA Senate.

## SECTION 7: FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall:

- A. Be chaired by the appointed Co-Chair of Finance, who shall set the agenda and lead the meetings.
- B. Be open to all members of the VSA Senate and additional members at-large appointed by the Board of Elections and Appointments.
- C. Consist of at least seven members, excluding the Co-Chairs.
- D. Review all fund applications and make final recommendations to the VSA Senate.
- 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.

## SECTION 8: PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

The Programming Committee shall:

- A. Consist of one elected chair and at least two Class Senators, one SARC intern, and one administrator from the Campus Activities Office; at-large members may join via application through BOEA.
- B. Coordinate the all-campus programs Tasty Tuesday and the Saturday Shuttle, and may also coordinate other all-campus programs and events.
- C. Coordinate class-based programming for sophomores and juniors.

## SECTION 9: VASSAR COLLEGE ENTERTAINMENT

Vassar College Entertainment (ViCE) shall:

- A. Have a Constitution and carry out duties specified therein.
- B. Report to the VSA Senate once per month.

## SECTION 10: OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Operations Committee shall:

- A. Consist of the chair, Public Relations Director, Public Relations Intern, and shall be open to all students.
- B. Maintain the governing documents of the VSA, including all written policies, rules, and other documents.
- C. Establish, clarify, and enforce the rules of VSA Senate meetings.
- D. Conduct appointment proceedings for positions on the Board of Elections and Appointments.
- E. In the event a Board of Elections and Appointments is not formed, run elections.

- a. Committee members with a significant conflict of interest in the election shall recuse themselves, including the Vice President. If the chair is recused, the committee shall select a new chair to run elections.

#### SECTION 11: PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee shall:

- A. Consist of the chair, Research Director, College Planning Senators, and shall be open to all students.
- B. Consider long-term issues facing the VSA Executive Board and Senate.
- C. Review the VSA structure, policies, and procedures and recommend changes to the VSA Senate.
- D. Review policies and procedures regarding student organizations and recommend changes to the VSA Senate.

#### SECTION 12: TRADITIONS COMMITTEE

The Traditions Committee shall:

- A. Consist of two Co-Chairs appointed for staggered two-year terms, a treasurer, a first-year representative, and additional members as determined by the Co-Chairs; the Board of Elections and Appointments and the outgoing chair shall appoint the Co-Chairs, who shall appoint all other members.
- B. Be responsible for planning Serenading, Meet Me in Poughkeepsie, Halloweekend, Founder's Day, Light the Night and other events as determined by the committee.
- C. The Traditions Co-Chairs shall meet at least every other week with an administrator from the Campus Activities Office who shall serve as the advisor to the Committee.

### ARTICLE VI: OTHER COMMITTEES AND DELEGATIONS

#### SECTION 1: VSA CABINET

- A. The Cabinet shall consist of the Public Relations Director, Research Director, and Training Director.
- B. The Cabinet shall report to VSA Executive Board at times determined by the President.
- C. The Public Relations Director shall:
  - a. Supervise the Public Relations Intern and Webmaster.
  - b. Determine and enforce all rules and policies regarding communications of the VSA and Senate members.
  - c. Manage the social media and physical communications of the VSA.
- D. The Research Director shall:
  - a. Create, administer, and interpret surveys of the student body.
  - b. Perform research on peer institutions and other projects assigned by the Executive Board.
- E. The Training Director shall:
  - a. Coordinate and implement fall training of VSA Senate members in conjunction with the Executive Board.
  - b. Provide training for all students elected or appointed to vacant positions.
  - c. Coordinate and implement training of First-Year class positions after fall elections.
  - d. Implement at least two trainings per semester for VSA Senate beyond fall training.

#### SECTION 2: BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

The Board of Elections and Appointments shall:

- A. Consist of one chair, one representative appointed from each class, and the Training Director.

- B. Conduct and oversee all elections, appointments, and referendums through reasonable interpretation of the VSA governing documents.
- C. Report all results to the VSA Senate at the conclusion of the election, appointment, or referendum.

### SECTION 3: SEVEN SISTERS REPRESENTATIVES

The Seven Sisters Representatives shall:

- A. Consist of two members of the current or a past VSA Senate 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 Council
- C. Select additional members of the VSA to attend the Seven Sisters Conference.

### SECTION 4: HOUSE TEAMS

- A. Presidents shall chair House Team meetings and meetings of residents, if deemed necessary; serve as a voting member of the Board of Residential Affairs; serve as a member of one VSA Senate Committee; and represent their house in applicable meetings.
- B. Programming Directors shall coordinate residential social activities and programming, assume the duties President in the case of absence or incapacitation, and succeed the President in the case of departure from office.
- C. Secretaries shall be responsible for House communications, recording minutes at House Team meetings, and reporting house damage to the Offices of Residential Life and Buildings and grounds.
- D. Treasurers shall be responsible for all financial matters and maintain an inventory of all assets, including capital items.
- E. The First-Year Representative shall represent the interests of their first-year class in their House to their House Team, shall sit on at least one VSA committee, and shall sit on the First Year Programs Committee.
- F. House Officers excluding the First-Year Representative shall abide by behavioral expectations required by the Office of Residential Life. Any changes to these expectations must be approved by majority vote of the Board of Residential Affairs.

### SECTION 5: STUDENT DELEGATIONS TO JOINT COMMITTEES

- A. In addition to the VSA representatives on Joint Committees, the following committees shall also have at-large representation:
  - a. Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid; one first-year representative.
  - b. Committee on College Life; one representative from each class.
  - c. Committee on Inclusion and Excellence; two students appointed for staggered two-year terms.
  - d. Committee on Climate Action and Sustainability; two students appointed for one-year terms.
- B. All representatives shall attend all respective joint committee and Senate committee meetings, except under extenuating circumstances.
- C. Student Delegations to joint committees shall follow the rules of their respective committees.
- D. Each delegation shall report regularly to the VSA Senate, at intervals determined by the Executive Board at the beginning of the year.
- E. All delegates must report to the Chair of their respective VSA boards at least once in a month, unless otherwise noted. The Vice President may request additional reports if desired.
- F. Each delegation shall report to the Vice President on any important action or deliberation, and it shall report periodically on general policies and actions within its jurisdiction.
- G. A committee representative or contact shall maintain all records of committee meetings, recommendations, and actions. The Vice President, in conjunction with the VSA Interns, shall be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and organization of these files.

- H. In addition to the above, the two appointed representatives to the committee of climate action and sustainability would be responsible for actively participating in the research, analysis, and decision making needed to further the College’s goal of carbon neutrality by 2030. Appointees must be active participants in environmental activism groups at Vassar. Student appointees will act as a liaison between the administrative committee and student activist groups, and help ensure transparency and accountability of the administrative committee by way of this open communication. Student representatives will be tasked with taking minutes, identifying action points during committee meetings, communicating research and proposals from SEED or other working groups, and advocating for the environmental priorities of the greater Vassar Community

#### SECTION 6: INTERNS

- A. The VSA shall have four Administrative Interns, one of whom shall be the Head Intern, a Public Relations Intern, a Finance Intern, and a Webmaster.
- B. The Interns shall be hired by the Vice President in conjunction with the Campus Activities Office.
- C. The Head Intern shall report directly to the Vice President and coordinate the activities of the other interns. The Head Intern shall be the office manager.
- D. The Administrative Interns shall take minutes at committee and board meetings, and perform tasks designated by the VSA Executive Board and Head Intern.
- E. The Public Relations Intern shall report to the Public Relations Director and shall work with them to manage the VSA social media pages and other initiatives
- F. The Finance Intern shall report to the Co-Chairs of Finance and take minutes at Finance Committee meetings and keep track of expenditures as determined by the Co-Chairs.
- G. The Webmaster shall report to the Executive Board and manage the VSA website.
- H. Interns may not concurrently hold a position on the VSA Senate.

### ARTICLE VII – VSA ORGANIZATIONS

#### SECTION 1: APPLICABILITY

VSA organizations shall be defined as all student interest groups, clubs, sports teams, performance groups, publications, residencies, and classes certified by the VSA Senate. VSA organizations shall 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 Chair of Organizations. Organization membership must be open to all students, following specific policies set forth in each organization’s constitution.

#### SECTION 3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS

- A. Organizations shall have a designated Student Activities Resource Intern and may reserve spaces through the Student Activities Resource Center.
- B. Organizations shall have the ability to reserve tables and VCash Machines through the Campus Activities Office.
- C. Organizations may not go into debt without prior approval given by elected Chair of Finance.

#### SECTION 4: CERTIFIED ORGANIZATIONS

- A. Certified organizations are required to draft a constitution, subject to review by the Organizations Committee, 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. Any amendments or changes to a certified organization's constitution must be submitted to the Organizations Committee for review, which shall have the right to veto any amendment.
- C. The contact person of each organization must submit a copy of their constitution to the Chair of Organizations at the beginning of each academic year.
- D. The constitution of each organization may not conflict with the VSA Governing Documents. The VSA Governing Documents shall supercede all organizations' constitutions.
- E. Any procedures or matters for any reason not outlined in an organization's constitution, such as the removal of officers, shall fall under the discretion of the Organizations Committee.
- F. All certified organizations shall have a budget number. No organization is guaranteed funding from the VSA Finance Committee or annual budgeting process.
- G. The Organizations Committee must recommend decertification to the VSA Senate for organizations that have been inactive for three semesters or longer. This shall be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.

#### SECTION 5: PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATIONS

- A. At the beginning of each semester, the Chair of Organizations shall send out the application to become a Preliminary Organization, hereinafter pre-org.
- B. The Organizations Committee shall review all pre-org applications and make recommendations to the VSA Senate which organizations should be officially recognized. Pre-orgs that are recognized by the VSA Senate shall become level 1 pre-orgs. There shall be three total pre-org levels.
- C. At the beginning of each semester, each existing pre-org shall submit a progress report to the Organizations Committee for review. The Organizations Committee shall then recommend to the VSA Senate whether an existing pre-org should be promoted to the next pre-org level, remain at its current pre-org level, be demoted, or decertified. This shall be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.
- D. After at least one semester at level 3 pre-org status, pre-orgs shall be considered candidates for certification. The Organizations Committees shall review the progress of a pre-org and make a recommendation to the VSA Senate regarding certification. This shall be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.
- E. Each pre-org shall have received a liaison from the Organizations Committee and from the Finance Committee to receive support and information on proper organization activities.
- F. A pre-org cannot have an individual VSA budget number or P-Card. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Chair of Organizations and the Co-Chairs of Finance.
- G. All pre-orgs may have a budget up to \$150 per semester. This budget shall be disbursed from the Preliminary Organizations Fund. All pre-orgs must apply for a budget to the Finance Committee at the beginning of each semester, explaining the events and activities they plan to hold with the funds raised.
- H. Level 3 pre-orgs shall be permitted to apply to the Special Purpose Funds. Level 1 and 2 pre-orgs shall be permitted to apply to the Special Purpose Funds at the discretion of the Co-Chairs of Finance.

#### SECTION 6: MEETINGS

- A. VSA organization 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. Organizations may occasionally hold closed meetings as stipulated in their constitutions. Organizations may be asked to justify any closed meeting to the Chair of Organizations.

#### SECTION 7: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

- A. Organizations may remove officers by the procedures set forth in the organization's constitution, excluding any position selected from a VSA election or appointment.
- B. Officers of organizations may be removed at the recommendation of the Organizations Committee, excluding any position selected from a VSA election or appointment. The recommendation must be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.
- C. All changes in the officers of an organizations must be registered with the Chair of Organizations.

#### SECTION 8: PUBLICATIONS

- A. Student publications shall be defined as published written documents with editors, not including flyers.
- B. Publications shall enjoy the full right to publish without prior review or editorial control by the VSA Senate.
- C. Publications may not publish libel. Violations shall be subject to action by the Organizations Committee, whose recommendation shall be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.

#### SECTION 9: ORGANIZATION REVIEW PROCESS

- A. All certified organizations shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Organizations Committee, excluding residences and classes. 50 percent of all certified organizations shall be reviewed each semester. An organization review shall ensure that the organization is compliant with all VSA and Vassar policies, as well as ensure the organization is continuing to work toward the mission and goals stated in its constitution.
- B. Organizations must submit a copy of their organization's governing documents and the names and positions of all officers.
- C. The Organizations Committee may request a meeting of organization officers with the committee during the review process.
- D. The Organizations Committee may recommend punitive actions, such as censure, fines, demotion to pre-org status, or decertification, following an organization review, whose recommendation shall be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.

#### SECTION 10: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- A. Organizations may be subject to disciplinary action for reasons included, but not limited to:
  - a. Violation of the the VSA Bylaws.
  - b. Failure to comply with requests of any member of the VSA Executive Board.
  - c. Failure to comply with the organization review process.
- B. The Organizations Committee may recommend the following disciplinary actions against any organization, to be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate:
  - a. Decertification
  - b. Demotion to pre-org status
  - c. Freeze or revoke funds
  - d. Issue an official reprimand or censure
  - e. Remove an officer
  - f. Refer to the Judicial Board for organizational financial improprieties
  - g. Refer to Student Conduct for personal financial improprieties
  - h. Suspend the activity of an organization, including access to funds, approval of programming, tabling, and/or reservation of rooms and spaces.

- C. The Organizations Committee must conduct an investigation before making a recommendation of disciplinary action to the VSA Senate.

#### SECTION 11: 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 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 percent of the organization's budget. Repeat offenses will be considered a severe breach of conduct, punishable by a fine equaling up to 30 percent of the organization's budget, censure, and/or decertification. The Organizations Committee will recommend the appropriate action to take, which shall be approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.

### ARTICLE VIII - ORGANIZATION FINANCES

#### SECTION 1: GENERAL RULES

- A. Organizations shall have the opportunity to apply for purchasing cards, utilize direct payments, reimbursements, cash advances, journal transfers, and other financial instruments issued by Finance Committee in conjunction with Vassar Accounting Services.
- B. Any organization may have its right to utilize specific financial instruments revoked at the discretion of Finance Committee.
- C. Monies allocated to an organization from annual budgeting, Special Purpose Funds, from other VSA organizations, from Vassar College departments or offices, or from any aspect of the Student Activities Fee shall be referred to hereinafter as VSA funds. Monies earned by an organization from fundraising or any profits earned shall be referred to hereinafter as organization profits.
- D. Organizations shall not collect donations or fundraise from other 501(c) nonprofit organizations or any organization with tax-exemption status.
- E. The Co-Chairs for Finance reserve the right to refuse a payment, reimbursement, or other financial activity requested by an organization if it violates the VSA Bylaws or any VSA policies.
- F. Requests for reimbursements must be submitted within twenty-five business days following the date of the expenditure, not including academic breaks.
- G. All financial business of an organization must be completed by the end of the fiscal year.
- H. Organizations may not use purchasing cards or conduct any financial business during academic breaks without the consent of the Co-Chairs of Finance.
- I. VSA funds and organization profits cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages except through the proper channels and with prior knowledge and approval of the Director of Campus Activities.
- J. VSA funds and organization profits cannot be used to purchase bottled water. 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 a request is denied, exceptions may be approved at the discretion of Finance Committee.
- K. VSA funds and organization profits are additionally subject to the policies set forth by Finance Committee.



- L. Individual students shall also be subject to any financial policies set forth in the VSA Bylaws or other VSA policies if they are planning events or activities on behalf of organizations, utilizing VSA funds, or conducting other activities that represent the VSA, implied or otherwise, and are outside the scope of a student's personal business.

## SECTION 2: MONETARY RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Organizations are expected to spend money responsibly, following the guidance of Finance Committee, rules and regulations defined in the VSA Bylaws, and any additional rules and regulations in policies set forth by Finance Committee or the Co-Chairs of Finance. Organizations are expected to follow all Vassar College policies, and local, state, and federal laws in accordance with the VSA's financial status as a nonprofit organization.
- B. At any time, the Co-Chairs of Finance 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. Any questionable or excessive purchases, or purchases made in violation of VSA Bylaws or policies, may become the personal liability of the organization's treasurer, or executive board, and charged to their student account(s). Such punitive action may be recommended by Finance Committee and approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.
- D. Organizations that plan on spending more than \$5,000 of combined VSA funds or organization profits on a single expenditure, invoices, or event must submit an application to do so to the Co-Chairs of Finance for the consideration by Finance Committee.
  - a. Applications submitted under this section shall be treated procedurally like a fund application.
  - b. Applications submitted pursuant to this section must be submitted prior to the spending of any funds and, in the case of events, at least 14 days prior to the event.

## SECTION 3: 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. At the end of a fiscal year, any remaining deficits shall be carried over as debt and be deducted from the budget of that organization for the following fiscal year.
- B. The VSA shall not budget organizations during annual budgeting proceedings to cover debts or deficits.
- C. Organizations in debt at the beginning of a fiscal year are expected to show fiscal responsibility during that fiscal year, and it is the responsibility of the executive board for that fiscal year to fundraise, reduce spending, or conduct other activities necessary to prevent a deficit at the end of that fiscal year.
- D. Organizations that continue to incur a deficit at the end of two consecutive fiscal years may have punitive action, such as censure, fines, demotion to pre-org status, or decertification, taken at the recommendation of Finance Committee and approved by consensus of the VSA Senate.
- E. Organizations may apply for partial or full debt relief through the Senate Discretionary Fund at the discretion of Finance Committee through a special purpose fund application.

## SECTION 4: BUDGETING ELIGIBILITY

Only certified organizations shall be eligible for budgeting, assuming they are certified, have a current constitution on file with the Chair of Organizations, and are in compliance with Finance Committee at the start of annual budgeting.

## SECTION 5: FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

- A. No organization shall deposit VSA funds or organization profits into a personal bank account, or any financial account other than an organization's own budget account, or a specific VSA account as directed by the Co-Chairs of Finance.

- B. Any organization that refuses to deposit funds into the appropriate VSA account shall have its entire budget rescinded.

#### SECTION 6: FUNDRAISING & ORGANIZATION PROFITS

- A. Organizations can fundraise in order to supplement their budget in accordance with the VSA Bylaws, Vassar College policies, and local, state, and federal laws in accordance with the VSA's financial status as a nonprofit organization.
- B. Monies raised above the cost of holding a fundraiser shall be considered organization profits. An organization may not subsidize fundraising costs with VSA funds. An organization may spend VSA funds or enter a deficit in order to fundraise, but must recoup all costs and only report the profit as fundraised money.
- C. The organization profits that an organization has fundraised, through outside financial assistance or otherwise, must be reported to Finance Committee through the organization's financial ledger, or other financial account management tools, by the end of each semester.

#### SECTION 7: OUTSIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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

- A. 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. This also includes any business transactions between VSA organizations and outside companies or organizations that results in organizational profits.
- B. Before attempting to obtain outside financial assistance, all organizations must first consult with the Chair of Finance.
- C. Advertising contracts made between media organizations and corporate advertisers are subject to review of Finance Committee and approval of the Co-Chairs of Finance and the Director of Campus Activities.
- D. All financial assistance shall be considered by Finance Committee as a factor in the budgeting process for an organization's events or activities.
- E. Any 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 or permission of the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development.

#### SECTION 8: FUNDING AND ACADEMIC CREDIT

The VSA shall not fund organizations from which student members may receive academic credit for the events or activities organized, or the services rendered.

#### SECTION 9: DONATIONS TO OFF-CAMPUS GROUPS OR ORGANIZATIONS

VSA organizations cannot donate VSA funds or items derived from VSA funds to off-campus organizations; such donations may only come from organization profits.

### ARTICLE IX – BUDGETING

#### SECTION 1: GENERAL APPLICABILITY

These Bylaws shall apply to the financial expenditures of the VSA and preliminary and 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

- A. 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.
- B. The VSA Overall Budget shall be responsible for allocating funds to all organizations, Special Purpose Funds, funds outlined in the Bylaws, and other funds deemed necessary by the Annual Budgeting Task Force.

## SECTION 4: BUDGETING OF ORGANIZATIONS

- A. The Chair of Planning shall invite to the Annual Budgeting Task Force members from Planning Committee, Finance Committee, Organizations Committee, and any others deemed appropriate.
- B. The Annual Budgeting Task Force must send treasurers of all VSA organizations the application for annual budgeting at least one week before the allocation process begins. All treasurers must also be informed of all deadlines, dates and times of mandatory meetings, and other information necessary to the annual budgeting process.
- C. Organizations shall be permitted to request that organization profits be rolled over from one fiscal year to the next.
- D. Organizations that fail to meet the deadline of the annual budgeting application shall not be included in the annual budgeting process, and must apply for a budget at the beginning of the following academic year from the Senate Discretionary Fund.
- E. The Annual Budgeting Task Force shall convene as often as deemed necessary by the Chair of Planning in order to review applications and complete the process. The Task Force shall determine allocations to all organizations and Special Purpose Funds by consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, a vote must be conducted.
- F. The President shall send the overall budget to all students. Any organization may object to a portion of the budget by submitting written notice to the Chair of Planning.
- G. The Annual Budget Task Force shall meet with objecting organizations to review their objection. The Task Force has the right to keep or amend the original allocation at its discretion.
- H. The Annual Budget Task Force shall make a final recommendation of the allocation of the overall budget to a joint meeting of the current and incoming VSA Senate. The recommendation may only be changed by a closed-session meeting of Senate at least 15 minutes in duration.
- I. The approved annual budget shall be the starting balance for each organization for the next fiscal year, minus any debt incurred. Organizations may be exempt from this provision and retain some or all of their previous balance at the recommendation of the Task Force. Exemptions may last one or five years.
- J. Any portion of the annual budget remaining unallocated shall be placed in the Senate Discretionary Fund.
- K. Any VSA funds not spent at the end of a fiscal year, or other unallocated, unspecified, or other excess funds shall be placed in the Senate Discretionary Fund.

## ARTICLE X – FUNDS AND ACCOUNTS

### SECTION 1: FINANCE POLICIES

The VSA Finance Committee Policies shall govern all fiscal business of the VSA and 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 Finance Committee.

## SECTION 2: SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS

The VSA Senate may establish Funds for specific purposes. The amount allocated to each Fund shall be determined during the Annual Budgeting Task Force, unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws. The Special Purpose Funds shall be the following: Conference Fund; Speakers, Lecturers and Panels Fund; Collaboration Fund; Community Fund; Pre-Organizations Fund; Social Consciousness Fund; and Capital Expenditure Fund.

## 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 Chair of Finance may allocate any VSA funds from any fund, organization, or other account in order to ensure the continued operation of the VSA.

## SECTION 4: ALLOCATIONS OF SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS

- A. Organizations may apply to Special Purpose Funds in accordance with the VSA Finance Committee Policies. The Finance Committee shall review all requests and recommend allocations to the VSA Senate.
- B. The Co-Chairs of Finance may recommend transferring money between Special Purpose Funds to cover deficits or to balance the percentage of each fund used.
- C. Any student may object a recommendation of the Finance Committee. Objections shall be considered by the Executive Board or VSA Senate, at the discretion of the Co-Chairs of Finance.
- D. Special Purpose Funds may be applied to at least two weeks in advance to the date of the event or activity, excluding The Social Consciousness Fund, which may be applied to at least one week in advance. Exceptions may be considered by the Co-Chairs of Finance.

## SECTION 5: THE COLLABORATION FUND

This fund shall be used to sponsor any event for which two or more organizations apply. This fund shall not be used to sponsor events sponsored solely by multiple residences.

## 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 mission, 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, nor can it fund conferences already funded by an organization's annual budget.

## 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

This fund shall be used by preliminary organizations to apply for a budget each semester to fund events, general body meetings, and other activities. Preliminary organizations may apply for up to \$150 each semester.

#### SECTION 10: THE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUND

- A. This fund may cover up to 100% of extraordinary and/or one-time costs incurred by an organization purchasing a capital item. Capital items are defined as tangible items projected to last at least three years.
- B. Money from this fund shall be allocated for a particular item approved by Finance Committee, rather than a specific amount. No organization shall use any portion of its allocation to purchase additional items that were not approved.

#### SECTION 11: THE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS FUND

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

#### SECTION 12: THE VSA SENATE DISCRETIONARY FUND

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

#### SECTION 13: THE VSA OPERATING FUNDS

The VSA Senate shall 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 annual budgeting process. The Executive Board shall independently administer these funds and shall not be obliged to fundraise.

### ARTICLE XI - 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 Vice President, the Board of Elections and Appointments shall present to the VSA Senate 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.

#### 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. Elections shall consist of a filing period that lasts a minimum of five days and a maximum of seven days, which will be decided on by the Board of Elections and Appointments. The open campaigning period shall begin at the end of this filing period, following the conclusion of the candidates' meeting. Campaigning shall conclude when the voting period begins and must last a minimum of five days and a maximum of seven days.
- 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 referendum or recall petition and shall occur prior to the next all-campus election with at least twenty-four hour notice of the new election.

#### SECTION 4: PUBLICITY

- A. The Board of Elections and Appointments must send campus wide emails to advertise the beginning of elections and filing, the start of campaigning, and the beginning of voting.
- B. 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:
  - a. Begin with candidate introductions and allow one minute for personal statements.
  - b. Follow statements with informal discussions and snacks.

#### SECTION 5: FILING

- A. During the period designated for filing, any eligible student 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 student must submit the application determined by the Board of Elections and Appointments.
  - a. The application 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 12 hours of submission.
  - b. Should an application 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 application may only begin campaigning after both of the following two conditions have been met:
  - a. The candidate has verified that they have read this Article through physical or electronic means.
  - b. The candidate has attended or sent a proxy to the mandatory candidates' meeting.
- 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 or VSA Senate members who are not running in said elections 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.
  - a. 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.

- b. 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 students twice in the all election filing periods. The application, 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 and hold any office in the VSA, a person must be a full-time student at Vassar College.
- B. No student may run for or hold any VSA office of which the student is not an eligible constituent.
  - a. Offices with a class prerequisite may only be sought by students expecting to become a member of that class in the following academic year.
  - b. 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.
  - 1. An exception shall exist for all Junior Class positions, which can be held for one semester.
- D. Unless required by the position, no student shall be allowed to run for or hold any position until that student has completed one academic semester at Vassar, unless required by the position.
- E. No student may run for or hold more than one VSA elected position.
- 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.
- H. An exception shall be provided for the outgoing Chair of Finance, whose extended term shall be disregarded for the purposes of this section.

#### 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 student. 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 students shall refrain from actions that might dishonestly or unfairly affect the election.
- C. Students 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: \$35 for Executive Board positions; \$25 for campus-wide positions; and \$15 for House positions.
  - a. 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:
  - a. Internet
    - i. 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 candidate's primary method for communicating goals and ideas for the position sought.
    - ii. Candidates may use the Internet to campaign, so long as such solicitations adhere to all other regulations herein defined.
    - iii. General messages to remind people to vote, without reference to a specific candidate, may continue to be communicated electronically throughout the voting period.
  - b. Posters

- i. A poster is a fixed installation not to exceed 11-inches x 17-inches x 1-inch. 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, or blackmail 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 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.
  - a. 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.
    - i. If the Judicial Board affirms disqualification, the candidate must remove all campaigning materials within 24 hours of the Judicial Board ruling.
  - b. 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. All races shall include the name of the candidates and a space for, “No, I would rather a candidate by appointed by the Board of Elections and Appointments.”
- 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. All students have the right to vote in VSA elections.
- B. Students may only vote in elections for which they are a constituent on the particular Election Day, except during Spring Elections for House Officers, 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. 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.

#### 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, Board of Elections and Appointments can choose to do a Ranked Choice Election or an appointment with the remaining 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:
  - a. 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 Senate.
  - b. 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 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 student.
- H. In the event that any position has not been filled 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. Any student may protest any questionable action by another student related to the election process to the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair. A student may appeal any official decision or posting of results by the Board of Elections and Appointments Chair within 24 hours to the Vice President.

- a. 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.
  - a. 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: RECALL

- A. 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.
- E. The officer in question shall have the right to be a candidate.
- F. The incumbent shall retain all powers and responsibilities of office until the Board of Elections and Appointments officially announces the election returns.

#### SECTION 13: VACANT POSITIONS

- A. The Board of Elections and Appointments Chair shall declare a position vacant. Under the following circumstances:
  - a. An election has produced no winning candidate for that position
  - b. An incumbent position-holder delivers a letter of resignation to the Vice President and Board of Elections and Appointments Chair or the President if the Vice President is resigning
  - c. 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 Senate 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 14: 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. Each section or subsection to be suspended must be explicitly stated, along with the length of time for the suspension.

- B. The VSA Senate may substitute any procedure or rules it deems necessary in place of the suspended sections and/or subsections.
  - a. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of paper ballots, shortened voting times, or alternative formats for voting.
- C. A two-thirds majority of the VSA Senate is necessary to suspend any section and/or subsection of this article.

#### SECTION 15: 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 Senate at the subsequent Senate 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 Senate or a student.

#### SECTION 16: REFERENDA

- A. A piece of legislation may be brought to referendum with signatures from 10% of the student body. Signatures must be verified by the Board of Elections and Appointments.
- B. The VSA Senate can vote to send a piece of legislation to referendum by two-thirds majority vote.
- C. A referendum shall be adopted if a majority of those voting vote in favor of it.
- D. The VSA Senate may not amend any legislation adopted through referendum until the following academic year.

### ARTICLE XII – 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 Vice President shall select a temporary Chair from among the other Judicial Board members.
- E. The Vice President shall sit as a non-voting Constitutional advisor, except in the event of the Vice President own involvement in the case, in which case the 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:
  - a. Call the meeting to order.
  - b. Introduce the judicial officers, respondent(s), and complainant(s).
  - c. Explain the format for the hearing and the rights of the respondent(s) and complainant(s).
  - d. State the charge citing the relevant section(s) of the VSA governing documents or college regulations.
  - e. Respondent(s) shall plead either guilty or not guilty.
  - f. Complainant(s) shall state their case, presenting all evidence and witnesses. The defense may cross-examine witnesses.
  - g. Questions, if any, from the judicial officers.
  - h. Respondent(s) shall state their case, presenting all evidence and witnesses. The complainant(s) may cross-examine witnesses.
  - i. Questions, if any, from the judicial officers.
  - j. Complainant(s) shall make closing statements.
  - k. Respondent(s) shall make closing statements.
  - l. Additional questions, if any, of either party from the judicial officers.
  - m. Adjournment.
- 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.
- 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 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.
  - a. In the event that the President is involved in the case, this duty shall fall to the Vice President.
- C. During an appeal the Vice President shall act as chair.
  - a. In the event that the Vice President is involved in the case, this duty shall fall to the President.

## ARTICLE XIII – DISCIPLINARY ACTION

### SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS

Any student may make a motion before the VSA Senate to censure or indict any elected or appointed member of the VSA. 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 Senate.

### SECTION 2: CENSURE OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

- A. The VSA Senate shall have the power to censure any of its own members, any elected or appointed VSA member, 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 Vice President. In the event that the Vice President is censured, this duty shall fall to the President.
- D. 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.

### SECTION 3: INDICTMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

- A. The VSA Senate 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 proceedings shall be chaired by the President, or in the case of direct conflict of interest, by the Vice President.
- B. Indictment proceedings may not be closed at any time.
- C. 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.
- D. A majority vote in favor, exclusive of any Senate member charged and/or bringing the charges, shall be required for indictment.

### SECTION 5: IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

- A. 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.
- B. An individual sentenced to removal shall be relieved of the powers of office pending the Judicial Board's verdict. The Board of Elections and Appointments 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.
- C. Decisions of the Judicial Board may be appealed under the procedures outlined in Article XI of the VSA Bylaws.