

# VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## Council Agenda for September 29, 2013

*Time: 7:00pm*

*Location: College Center 223*

“Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, you’re right”

-Henry Ford

- 1 Call to Order
- 2 Attendance .....Operations
- 3 Consent Agenda
  - a. Bikes - Discretionary; Capital (\$300/\$1,000)
  - b. NSO – Discretionary (\$951.97/\$951.97)
  - c. HYPE – Conference (\$1,600/\$1,908)
  - d. VISA – Conference (\$1,500/\$2,151.14)
  - e. Devils – Conference (\$0/\$395)
  - f. Fly People – Capital (\$165/\$165)
  - g. Contrast – Speakers (\$300/\$300)
  - h. ViCE student music – Capital (\$799/799)
  - i. Minutes from 9/22/2013

Benedict thanks for class action workshop yesterday. Follow up dinner aula Wednesday Aula 5 pm catered continuation of discussion about class and class issues on campus. It is the first of monthly discussion dinners. Finance thanks the group.

- 4 Forum with Community Works .....Jeff Kosmacher and Tom Ellman (20 min)
 

Ellman chair of this year’s community works committee, annual campaigns to raise money for local non-profit organizations. Comm. CW has supported hunger relief, domestic violence community, youth support LGBT support, and etc. 100% of money goes straight to thee agencies. Vassar covers al the admin costs. Today, it is more than a way to contribute to community. It also educates students about the local community. I would like to invite students in Vassar to participate in the campaign. Most happens during the fall. I would like to invite each of the houses to consider running their own fundraising events. We with support from college relations can provide some support on how to do that. I’d also be interested to know if anybody here has any ideas. Another thing I’m hoping I could do tonight maybe try to recruit students to participate and maybe be a liaison. {Such committee} would sort of a kind of light weight coordination.

President Q: how do you decide where the money goes each year? A: we receive nominations and hold meetings to decide which ones will be funded. Some included Judge’s outreach, glisten, gray Smith house, empowerment organization, rural and migrant industries, etc. In the past we have raised almost 75-100 thousand dollars.

Finance Q: Thanks for coming in. questions structure of community service campus wide thing. A: there is the fieldwork office, but there is no official requirement, but that has been discussed. Oddly enough, that has still been controversial.

Joss Q: thanks for coming in. In terms of getting houses to do things, how exactly would that work in the aspect of giving the money? A; all the money that we raise goes into the fund.

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Before you would put on the events, you would know. By midway through the semester, we would be publicizing who we are funding. We try to fund agencies that reflect us.

TS Q: What kinds of resources are there for the community to give their input? Were the nominations advertised? A: Each nomination, we ask people to provide paragraphs to support their decision. Agencies sometimes don’t know that they’re nominated until they are funded.

The people who nominate are faculty, admin staff, students etc.

Main Q: do the houses need a rep? A: Not every single one, but it would help to have representatives.

Jewett Q: What’s the time line for [this]? A: the best thing would be to have one event this fall. Or if it were an ongoing project that raises money in time, that would be good also. It’s been our experience that in general if we could build some momentum towards our goal for the holiday season, that’s good.

2014 Q: Promotes the idea of an auction for fundraising. Problem: unsure how to get funds distributed. Is there a process we go through? A: I promise you it’ll work out. There are people in the admin that are in charge of that.

Finance: Says, have treasurers to come talk. Bear in mind that you cannot donate any part of your allocation to any charities.

2015 Q: Last year we accepted cash, but there is also a CW works forum online. We could potentially work it into our dash works system.

Jewett Q: Is there any way we could get vcash part of the money to be used?

President: Thank you for coming in.

Ellman: would love to be able to keep this up by communicating with one or two of you. VP

Op. offers her email.

### 5 Executive Board Reports

#### a. Student Life.....(7 min)

Genesis: started working on providing more gender-neutral bathrooms in more buildings. Can’t completely move forward unless members of council are as supportive. I hope everyone gets back to me, and thank you for those who did get back to me.

#### b. Academics .....(7 min)

Peer advising is going well. We have close to 80 peer advisors. I think they’re good people and they know what they’re talking about. Next step: targeting specific kinds of peer advisers- ex. Having athletes be willing to be advisers to answer more athlete related questions. We’re going to target specific departments. Working with major committees that are new/haven’t been super active ex. Women studies, cog science, Asian studies departments. Newsletter- the original topic last semester was coffee; we

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expanded that to being food. Some professors are super excited. Some of you offered to mail professors. Main: you’re doing a great job.

### 6 Discussion on How to Fill Davison House President Position ..... Operations (20 min)

Pres. – introduces the idea of a speaker’s list. If you’re an at large participant, you will be moved to the top of the list. –Introduce yourself when you start speaking. I request that you only speak twice and that you limit your time to two minutes

VP Op: Our bylaws docs allow for either appointing someone to this position special election/special appointment. Open to all candidates but freshman, anyone who is interested can run. We, in council, vote for which option we prefer.

TAS; if we were to move to special election, how would we go about the voting for the freshmen. A: wouldn’t be allowed to run, but they would be allowed to vote.

Other: Alex, student fellow in Davison. House, speaking on behalf of house team – we would prefer to go with we would ask the VSA to suspend the bylaw and to let our VP assume the position as president. Casey has done a phenomenal job; he has gone through much training. That is our position.

Op: talking about this option, bylaw being suspended Article 10 section 12 Subsection B. Vote would require 2/3rds vote. As operations, I cannot recommend that we do that. Primary: two democratic processes that we can use to replace someone. If we’re just going to throw those out because the house team thinks they’re the best, we are going around this. I understand the time constraint, but in order to just bypass the democratic process are guidelines are there for a reason and we should not suspend this one.

2015: There’s kind of a burden for the VSA to balance the rep for group of people as well as how house teams happen. Right now the VP of Davison is actually active pres. According to our bylaws. Most qualified position is for someone who is already on house team. Out come of this would probably not change this. It’s the best that we let this week happen- recognizing that the same thing would have happened but we still used our democratic principles.

2016: appreciates Davison support. Special appointment- best route to take. If we appoint the VP, we set the precedent that they will always become the pres. I think Casey should apply and op committee will look over it and experience would make him the most qualified. This just keeps things open for those people/

Katie: secretary of Davison house: second preference special appointment. Pushing for Casey was because of time concerns, in terms of house team functioning and house events.

Doug: I know that ops often will be doing appointments, you invite the house team to the convo, at the same time those people yes they have a say, but I still think at the end of the day that option takes the power away from Davison. Yes VSA or house presidents are supposed to

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be more house team reps, but that’s not what really happens. I see the fairness, but it also seems weird to have VSA choose.

Katie: is it true that he would have to resign from position in order to apply. A: no.

Casey: thanks everyone who shares sentiments that I am the qualified person. Predominantly, we especially HSA, we are aware of decision and are comfortable with decision. 1. Should have decision house in best interest. We have been through a significant change in house team. We want to make sure that we have the position filled. We still have the issue of appointing a new VP. The general consensus is that we have a process that’s fair for the house team and VSA.

Raymond; has talked to house team about it, their opinion is that we should do whatever Davison wants to do. It would make the VSA appear more flexible, efficient, and affective.

2014: speaking as board elections co chair on the matter: unethical is a harsh term but that’s how I feel about it (referring to suspension). Doesn’t believe this constitutes as emergency. Sorry that there were many mixed signals. Recognizes different signal being sent now. This is ultimately a VSA decision and res life doesn’t always understand why the VSA does certain things. I think that while Raymond has a very excellent point, I would counter in it that the symbolic act of upholding democracy. Values are just as important, if not more so. And is the recommendation that we do a special app.

Jewett: One thing you guys kept saying that it would be a democracy. Appointment, but the fact that they have spoken about it, they have already spoken. Kind of iffy that we (VSA council) vote. Other reason to suspend- then can just move on to find a VP. We can use that time to open up a position for the VP.

Finance: focus on issue at hand suspension/not. Confused about “either way, we’re going to be down a person on house team. Either way we have two weeks where we’re down a person. We have processes in place.

2015: Decision not meant to be disrespectful; it’s about a balance. In my experience res life has not been very respectful of VSA decisions. It’s important to uphold bylaws, if we suspend them, then that does mean that any other person on house has no input. Special App, other people can be there. This is still significantly more democratic to go through that process.

2016: Getting more into semantically oriented argument. Whether or not we appoint Casey now or not, Casey is going to end up being president. To be perfectly honest, I’ve abstained on every appointment because I think it’s unfair because it doesn’t allow for the input of the house team. Person more affects the house team than the VSA council.

President: I have to take issue with what you just said, if you go into a meeting already knowing who will vote, you should not vote

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Op, the whole point is that we go in as unbiased people and determine who is going to fill this position the best, do the right thing. If you cannot do that on this committee, then you are going to have to abstain from the vote on this committee

President: Stresses reason why it’s controversial is because everyone just wants to do what is going to do the best thing. No one wants to hurt anyone. How can we do that is the best way possible? Purpose to appease everyone, or at least most people.

Katie: just in terms of time efficiency, if we do vote for special app, I’d like to request that we also determine plan for filling second position.

Casey: everybody in this room is trying to find the best decision. What’s affecting Davison is the time. I support entirely the decision that the VSA makes, we would just rally love some motions or actions.

President: we have reached our time limits. Strong: motion to fill Davison house president by special appointment. New speakers list in order to proceed with convo. End of this motion, will be vote, so now the discussion is about special appointment.

Noyes: were there any other members that expressed interest in running? A Casey: no, we put the topic in the floor predominantly. Question was posed to most of the members of the upper classmen. 90% of them didn’t have the time, and all of the others were interested thought that I was a good enough candidate and that none of them would technically want to run.

Academics: it sounds a lot like we’re trying to not do what you want but that’s not the case.

You’re an excellent candidate. We’re just trying to keep due process in mind. You are going to be happy with this. Not an us VSA you situation

Cushing: I am having a bit of discomfort with this convo in general. We’re having a discussion on our opinions and morals on this situation as opposed to what’s best for them at this moment. Second motion for suspension. Op: first have to defeat this motion in order to proceed to said suspension motion

Student life: I was under the impression that there are other people interested in running for house team president and even though the house team is not aware of this, it might be an issue that they haven’t reached out to y’all

Finance: following the constitution VSA not following, president has possibility of sitting on finance committee. Can’t pick and choose when we should uphold it/

2014. Note to members of Davison house team saying no one else interested in applying for it – reminding those on house team that they can’t run for it because signed contracts.

Noyes: agrees with student life (on other being interested in running) they might come forth. It’s important to acknowledge that when elections did take place, were close.

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Voting on motion —position appointed by next week roughly. People in favor: motion passes; fill house president through special appointment.

President, sorry 2016 for snapping, sorry for the drama, sorry Davison. Hop this is something that we can move past. Davison house I understand you have an event coming up please don’t hesitate to ask the rest of us for assistance. Thank you all for coming in.

Op: sorry for any miscommunications. I want to be here for you guys, if you’re interested in coming to op committees, we can discuss things

Katie; ops and res house we were lead to believe that suspending the bylaw was going to be an option. There is a miscommunication. (President recognizes)

Casey (from council) from experience: source of miscommunication could be from assumptions. Can’t be one-sided view of everything

2016 encourages everyone to come to op meetings. Also have other reps (ex. Years, 2015, 2016 etc.) “everyone here is accountable to you”

2014 res lie was not respecting that this is a VSA position. Uphold the principles of shared government, but tat the end of the day this is a student position.

President; since Casey is still active president, if you would like, you can come join us. **He walks to table** Thanks rest of Davison for being here.

### 7 Certification of Britomartis.....

Activities and I met and reviewed brito application: was very well written. A pre org that has brought devised theater, well organized leadership and have been active since 2011, have done 5 shows. Based on app, a lot of student interested. 100+ students interested in auditioning for it.

Based on those points, move to certify Britomartis to become certified student org.

Finance: stress that should this motion pass, they still require to apply for any funds.

2015: in terms of special purpose funds. Speaks of a line in the constitution regarding this.

Motion: to approve Britomartis as a certified VSA org. All in favor – motion passes.

Finance if submit app to discretionary, can have response fairly promptly.

Desertification of Holistic: been inactive for three semesters student org. No current leadership.

Main: can you explain a little bit about Holistic and their mission? A: worked with RSL, no response to have someone speak for them. 2015: do they have a budget left? A: no by finance.

Jewett: were there any students in it? A: no.

Motion to decertify holistic: All in favor – motion passes.

### 8 Activities (10 min)

### 9 Open Discussion

2014 putting on Halloween dance. Express concerns similar to serenading concerns.

Problematic behaviors on Halloween take place in dorm. Invites house presidents to talk about

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Halloween and to express concerns to me if there are any. Highly recommend that you guys do some kind of thing on the night of Halloween dance. Come see me if you have any questions. Activities: Tuesday at noon closes registration for day in Poughkeepsie. Late night at the dc is tonight.

2015: about supplemental budgeting, I have an emotional connection to that. Congrats to 2017, you’re here!

Jonathon Nichols freshman class VP introduces himself. President wishes she were here.

Favorite ice cream flavor, not an ice cream.

TA: AAAVC hosting a meeting in greet Saturday from three to five. Twisted soul cupcakes, should reserve. Will forward email about where.

Strong: wants to offer three knocks, Raymond 2016 event in Blodgett was awesome. John, I love the pink pants, way to rock them

Lathrop: Lathrop’s fall event is this Saturday after a lot of drama, we are finally hosting “trash to treasure” everyone is encouraged to make a creative outfit out of unusual or fun things. 10-10:30-fashion show. Dance party at UPC 10:30-2:00

Main: back tracking to Halloween party, encourages even senior houses and house presidents to talk to their constituencies. Last year, seats smashed, windows punched through, fake blood on walls. There’s a conversation that needs to be had.

Raymond, thank you to anyone to came to our event. – this event was supported by finance.

President: first thing, thank you guys for the discussion that we had earlier. I know it wasn’t easy, but I appreciate to reach out to their constituencies, thank you to people who spoke up.

Thank you Casey for sitting through that. Other thing: a little bit concerned about some of our actions. Should be very conscious of the fact that we are reps. Includes how you behave outside of council. If you get in trouble, reflects on you and constituencies. If you’re ever concerned about how your actions are perceived, you’re representative position should generally take precedence. Great way to do that, to take a step back and say difference between you and your position as a rep. we should never be speaking for all of council. Recognize that there will still be voices in your constituency who do not agree. Hoping that you guys take these responsibilities seriously. You can change committees. I would appreciate if you all could support [execs] when they ask. Thank you, I’ve really appreciated all of the work and effort that you’ve put in. Thank you, I look forward to continuing this adventure with all of you

Joss: question to Lathrop, what materials should I bring? Comment, also congratulates class of 2017 president. 2016: thanks Raymond for the event on Friday. Your house team did a phenomenal job. More than 200 people were there. Just one thing that went wrong; group of students and only one of them was dressed up. One of the kids who weren’t dressed up pushed

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another kid that was dressed up and called him a “Queer.” Would encourage everyone here as students and human beings to stand up to that kind of thing. It’s very important that as a student leader, you say what’s inappropriate.

TAs: when we’re all in these discussions, we should all be mind full on everyone’s time. We can expedite the process just by knocking. Motion to have assistants to be removed off the speakers list. Gets to be a lot when everyone is saying the same thing. Jewett: thanks VSA council as member of Hype for financing. Strong: point out that max handled situation (regarding name calling above)

Motion to adjourn, all in favor.