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The Bylaws of the Vassar Student Association

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE VASSAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

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

ARTICLE I – NAME

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

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

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

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

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

ARTICLE IV – EXPECTATIONS OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED MEMBERS

SECTION 1: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

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

SECTION 2: TERMS OF OFFICE

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

B. Those positions elected or appointed after Spring Convocation shall also terminate at the next Spring Convocation, unless stated otherwise.

C. At the conclusion of a term of office, the officer shall remain as an advisor to the newly elected officer until the close of the academic year.
ARTICLE V – THE VSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

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

SECTION 2: POWER AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 3: ELECTION

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

SECTION 4: SUCCESSION OF POWERS

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

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

ARTICLE VI – THE VSA COUNCIL

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

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

B. The VSA Council shall be chaired by the VSA President, who shall only vote in the event of a tie.
SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES OF VSA COUNCIL MEMBERS

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

A. Represent and promote the best interests of their constituencies.
B. Present to the VSA Council the opinions of their constituency as obtained through polling, discussion, and any other means deemed appropriate.
C. Participate in all VSA Council meetings.
D. Communicate the discussions and decisions of the VSA Council, as well as any other relevant information to their constituencies.
E. Ensure that the VSA acts in a manner consistent with these governing documents and subsequent legislation.
F. Populate standing Committees of the VSA Council as laid out in Article III of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 3: FUNCTIONS OF THE VSA COUNCIL

The functions of the VSA Council shall be to:

A. Act as a forum for communication between VSA officers and members.
B. Initiate, pass, amend, and implement rules of order, standing orders, policies, rules, legislative decisions, and regulations, which are deemed necessary and proper for the functioning of the VSA.
C. Issue official endorsements and position statements of the VSA.
D. Hear reports from VSA Committees, student representatives to College committees, and all VSA organizations.
E. Create and populate ad-hoc committees and task forces of the VSA, and populate those created by the Faculty, Administration, and/or Trustees with student representation.
F. Appoint VSA members to open positions.
G. Review, amend, and approve the budget of the VSA, as laid out in Article VI of the VSA Bylaws.
H. Present to the College President for final approval legislation involving a substantial change in the character of the residential or academic community or in the financial commitments of the College.
I. The VSA Council shall have the power to certify student organizations in accordance with Article VIII of the VSA Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII – CLASS COUNCILS

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

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

1. The President of the previous Freshman Class shall serve as the acting Freshman Class President until a new one is elected, or shall appoint a member of the previous Freshman Class Council to do so.

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

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

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

E. The Freshman Class Council shall additionally consist of one representative from each House, elected at large from their constituencies in the Fall Elections.
F. Officers of the Senior Class shall hold their positions for a period of six years.

SECTION 2: CLASS COUNCIL POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

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

E. Freshman, Sophomore, and Junior Representatives shall communicate concerns and/or ideas from their respective classes within the houses they present to their Class Councils and vice versa.

F. The Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Class Councils shall have the power to appoint additional representatives of their class to their Class Council.

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

SECTION 3: FUNCTIONS OF THE CLASS COUNCILS

The Functions of the Class Councils shall be to:

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

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

C. Plan class events and activities.

ARTICLE VIII – HOUSE TEAMS AND RESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATION

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

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

B. Town Students and the respective residents of the Town Houses, Terrace Apartments, and South Commons shall each elect a President, Programming Director and Treasurer.

1. Town Students officers shall hold their positions for the duration of the academic year.

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

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

SECTION 2: DUTIES OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

A. Presidents shall call and chair House Team meetings and meetings of residents, if deemed necessary; serve as a voting member of the VSA Council and relay information and opinions between the VSA Council and their House Team; and represent their House in applicable meetings.
B. Vice Presidents and Programming Directors shall coordinate residential social activities and programming, and shall assume the duties of the President in the case of the President’s absence, incapacitation, or departure from office.

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

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

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

SECTION 3: FUNCTIONS

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

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

C. Plan residential events and activities.

ARTICLE IX – THE JUDICIAL BOARD

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The Judicial Board shall be composed of:

A. One chair, elected at large by the VSA

B. 16 members, 4 elected from each class.

SECTION 2: JURISDICTION AND POWERS

A. The jurisdiction of the Judicial Board shall extend to all cases arising under the VSA Constitution, the VSA Bylaws, and under any social regulations or other rules established by the VSA Council, including:

1. Cases concerning the compliance of VSA policy and legislation with the VSA Constitution and VSA Bylaws.

2. Impeachment hearings after indictment by the VSA Council.

3. Cases involving a breach of agreement reached through mediation as stipulated in Article XI of the VSA Bylaws.

B. Judicial Board members shall sit on the Academic Panel, College Regulations Panel, and the Audit Committee, as set forth by the college regulations. The Judicial Board Chair shall be responsible for organizing participation on these bodies.

C. The Judicial Board shall have access to every VSA resource, file, or any other material deemed necessary to the effective execution of the case.

ARTICLE X – NON-DISCRIMINATION

SECTION 1: GENERAL TERMS

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

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

SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

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

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

ARTICLE XI – VSA BYLAWS

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

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

PREAMBLE

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

ARTICLE I – VSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENT

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

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

A. Serve as primary liaison to the Dean of the College Division
B. Provide support and guidance for House Teams and the Board of House Presidents, including coordinating House Officer training.

SECTION 3: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR OPERATIONS

A. Oversee the activities of student committees and student delegations to joint committees.
B. Serve as primary liaison to the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development, Computing and Information Services, and College Relations.
C. Oversee the orientation of new VSA Council members.
D. Oversee VSA Elections and perform the duties of the Board of Elections Chair(s) in their absence or incapacity, or in the event none is appointed.
E. Maintain records and documents of the VSA, the VSA Executive Board, and committees, as well as minutes of the VSA Council.

SECTION 4: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR ACADEMICS

A. Serve as the primary liaison to the Dean of the Faculty Division
B. Provide support and guidance for Majors Committees

SECTION 5: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR ACTIVITIES

A. Receive, investigate, and present to VSA Council all applications for certification and decertification of organizations.
B. Maintain records and documents of VSA organizations.
C. Provide support and guidance for VSA organizations, including designing and coordinating VSA conferences for organizations.

D. Work with the Office of Campus Activities, including the Student Activities Resource Center, on programming and approving all events sponsored by VSA organizations.

E. Serve as the primary liaison between the VSA and the local community.

F. Be responsible for an annual budgeting of organizations, in conjunction with the Vice President for Finance.

SECTION 6: POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VP FOR FINANCE

A. Advise and present to the VSA Council for approval such policies and procedures deemed necessary to oversee the honest, efficient and equitable administration of the Student Activities budget.

B. Prepare and provide an annual budget report and other financial reports as requested by the VSA Council.

C. Call mandatory meetings for treasurers of VSA organizations when deemed necessary.

D. Require all certified VSA organizations to submit a budget, upon request.

ARTICLE II – VSA COUNCIL MEETINGS

SECTION 1: MEETINGS

A. VSA Council meetings shall be held every Sunday at 7 p.m. for which classes are in session on the following Monday.

B. The President may call a session of the VSA Council at any time and shall call a session within three days of a written request of one-third of VSA Council members.

C. A quorum shall be defined as a two-thirds majority of the voting members and shall be necessary for any session of the VSA Council.

D. Any student may make a motion or raise an issue before the VSA Council and it shall be considered if seconded by a VSA Council member.

E. All VSA Council meetings shall be open to all VSA members, unless a three-fourths majority of VSA Council votes to close the meeting.

F. All votes shall be cast publicly and shall be recorded in the minutes.

G. Minutes of the VSA Council meetings shall be recorded at each open VSA Council meeting and become official upon the approval of VSA Council.

H. Members of the VSA Council shall abstain from voting on issues in which they have a conflict of interest.

SECTION 2: AGENDA

A. A tentative agenda shall be created by the VSA President with the rest of the Executive Board.

B. The agenda will be sent out to VSA Council members no later than Thursday evening prior to the appointed meeting time.

C. The agenda shall be posted on the VSA website.

D. Any VSA member may request an amendment or addition to the agenda.

SECTION 3: CHAIR

The President shall chair all VSA Council meetings.

SECTION 4: PARLIAMENTARIAN
The VP for Operations, or a designee, shall be the Parliamentarian during VSA Council meetings.

**SECTION 5: SPEAKER’S LIST**

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

**SECTION 6: CONSENT AGENDA**

All items placed on the Consent Agenda at the start of a VSA Council meeting shall be considered adopted, unless an objection is raised. Any VSA Council member may object to an item on the consent agenda. Additionally, any objections made by a member at large require a second from a member of VSA Council.

**SECTION 7: DISRUPTIVE MEMBERS**

A. Any member at large who exhibits disruptive behavior may be forced to leave, by the Chair, through appropriate security measures.

B. Any disruptive Council member may be expelled from the proceedings by a two-thirds majority vote.

**SECTION 8: ATTENDANCE**

A. In the case of a Council member's inability to attend a meeting, a proxy from that member's constituency shall represent the constituency and vote in that member's absence.

B. Members shall be allowed a maximum of three proxies per semester. Impeachment proceedings must be undertaken if there are additional absences.

C. If a Council member does not attend a meeting and fails to send a proxy, the organization that the Council member represents shall be fined $25 or 5% of the organization’s current budget, whichever is greater, not to exceed $500.

D. If a Council member misses two meetings in a semester without sending a proxy, impeachment proceedings must be undertaken.

E. If a Council member is absent for more than 15 minutes of a meeting without a proxy, the organization which the Council member represents shall be fined $25 or 5% of the organization’s current budget, whichever is less.

F. If a Council member is absent for more than 15 minutes of a meeting without a proxy twice in one semester, censure proceedings must be undertaken.

G. If a Council member cannot send a proxy or is late because of an extreme situation, the VSA Council may excuse that member’s absence.

**SECTION 9: RULES FOR MEETINGS**

A. Meetings of the VSA Council shall be run according to the Special Rules for Meetings. For situations that warrant more formal parliamentary procedure not covered by the Special Rules, the VSA Council shall follow Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.

B. At the beginning of each new term of the VSA Council, the incoming Council shall look at the Special Rules for Meetings followed by the previous Council. It shall discuss if these are the rules they wish to follow and vote on keeping the previous rules, or modify them.

**ARTICLE III – VSA COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**SECTION 1: COMMITTEES OF THE VSA COUNCIL**
ARTICLE III – VSA COUNCIL COMMITTEES

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 2: STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE

The Student Life Committee shall:

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

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

SECTION 3: OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Operations Committee shall:

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

B. Make recommendations to VSA Council regarding the appointment of individuals to vacant positions.
   1. The committee shall rank applicants in order of preference, providing rationale for their selections.
   2. All applications will be made available to VSA Council members to review privately upon request.
   3. After reviewing the rationale of the Operations Committee, VSA Council will vote on the final appointment.

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

D. In the event that a Board of Elections is not chosen, the responsibility for running elections will fall to the Operation Committee.
   1. Committee members with a significant conflict of interest in the election, including the VP for Operations, will recuse themselves from all election proceedings.
   2. Should the VP for Operations have a conflict, the remainder of the committee will select a new chair.

SECTION 4: ACADEMICS COMMITTEE

The Academics Committee shall:

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

B. Consider issues pertaining to academics and the academic life of students.

SECTION 5: ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

The Activities Committee shall:

A. Be chaired by the VP for Activities, and membership shall be open to all members of the VSA.
1. Some meetings of the Activities Committee may be closed, at the discretion of the VP for Activities.

B. Oversee all VSA organizations and organization partnerships.

C. Consider all applications for certification.

D. Recommend policy changes pertaining to organizations to the VSA Council.

E. Consider and recommend to VSA Council all disciplinary action relating to organizations.

SECTION 6: FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall:

A. Be comprised of at least seven members of the VSA Council and the VP for Finance, who shall chair the Committee.

A. Membership shall consist exclusively of VSA Council members.

B. Review all fund applications and make final recommendations to the VSA Council.

C. Review supplemental and capital budgeting applications and make recommendations to the VSA Council.

D. Be held at 4 p.m. on every Wednesday that classes are in session on the following Monday.

E. Require attendance from its members.

ARTICLE IV – STUDENT COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: TIMING OF ELECTIONS

Unless required by position or as determined by VSA Council, all VSA committee representatives shall be elected in the spring elections.

SECTION 2: PROCEDURE FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND THE REMOVAL OF REPRESENTATIVES

Disciplinary actions against and removal of committee representatives shall run according to Article XII of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 3: COMMITTEE RULES FOR STUDENT COMMITTEES

A. Unless otherwise stated or decided by the committee, all meetings shall be open to members of the VSA.

B. Each committee shall have an internal Chair unless otherwise specified.

C. A simple majority of the voting members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

D. Decisions shall be reached by a majority vote of the members present.

E. A committee representative or contact shall maintain a file in the VSA office of all records of committee meetings, recommendations, and actions. The VP for Operations shall be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and organization of these files.

F. Members of the VSA have a right to request permission to appear at a committee’s meetings and to present their views upon the subjects before the committee except when a committee finds it necessary to close meetings for the proper execution of committee business.

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

SECTION 4: BOARD OF HOUSE PRESIDENTS (BHP)

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

SECTION 5: BOARD OF HOUSE PRESIDENTS (BCP)

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

SECTION 6: FOOD COMMITTEE

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

SECTION 7: FOUNDER’S DAY COMMITTEE (FDC)

The Founder’s Day Committee shall:
A. Be composed of the Founder’s Day Co-chairs, the VP for Activities, one representative from each dorm (appointed by the house president), and other interested members of the VSA.
   1. The Co-chairs shall be appointed by the VSA Council before October Break.
   2. The Co-chairs shall appoint a treasurer.
   3. The Co-chairs shall appoint chairs of all sub-committees as deemed necessary.
B. Submit a budget to the VSA Executive Board prior to the completion of the fall semester.
C. Convene a meeting with the FDC co-chairs and treasurer at least once during the A-semester and twice during the B-semester with the VSA Executive Board. The Co-chairs shall report to the VSA Council at least once during the B-semester.
D. Coordinate and plan the Founder’s Day event.

SECTION 8: SERENADING COMMITTEE

A. Shall be composed of the Vice President for Activities, the four members of the Senior Class Executive Board, and an administrator from the Campus Activities Office to act as an advisor.
   1. Shall be chaired by the President of the Senior Class.
   2. The treasurer of the Senior Class shall serve as treasurer.
B. All members shall attend the VSA fall conference.
C. Shall submit a budget to the VSA Vice President for Finance by the first day of classes.
D. Shall meet with the VSA Executive Board before the event.
E. Shall coordinate and plan the serenading event.

F. Shall report to the VSA Council upon completion of events.

**ARTICLE V – JOINT COMMITTEES**

**SECTION 1: TIMING OF ELECTIONS**

Unless required by position or as determined by VSA Council, all VSA committee representatives shall be elected in the spring elections.

**SECTION 2: PROCEDURE FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND THE REMOVAL OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Disciplinary actions against and removal of committee representatives shall run according to Article XII of the VSA Bylaws.

**SECTION 3: RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT COMMITTEES**

A. All representatives shall attend all committee meetings, except under extenuating circumstances.

B. Student Delegations to joint committee shall follow the rules of their respective committees.

C. Each delegation shall report to the VSA Council at the Council’s discretion.

D. All delegates must submit a Committee Report to the VP for Operations once a semester, unless otherwise noted. The VP for Operations may request additional reports if desired.

E. Each delegation shall report to the VP for Operations on any important action or deliberation, and it shall report periodically on general policies and actions within its jurisdiction.

F. A committee representative or contact shall maintain a file in the VSA office of all records of committee meetings, recommendations, and actions. The VP for Operations shall be responsible for the ongoing maintenance and organization of these files.

**SECTION 4: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE ARLINGTON SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE**

Shall consist of a member of the Activities Committee and the VP for Activities.

**SECTION 5: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Shall consist of two students: the VP for Operations one elected at-large.

**SECTION 6: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS INVESTOR RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE**

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

**SECTION 7: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS LIFE RESOURCE GROUP**

Shall consist of at least one member of the Student Life Committee.
SECTION 8: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE CAMPUS MASTER PLANNING COMMITTEE

Shall consist of six students: two members of the VSA Council and one representative from each class elected at-large.

SECTION 9: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

Shall consist of one representative from each class elected at-large and the VP for Operations.

SECTION 10: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE LIFE

Shall consist of six students: the VSA President, the VP for Student Life, and one elected from each Class.

SECTION 11: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGIES

Shall consist of two students: one member of the VSA Council and one elected at-large.

SECTION 12: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR POLICIES

Shall be chaired by the VP for Academics, and additionally consist of 5 students representing the 4 curricular divisions of Arts, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Social Sciences, Natural Science, and the Independent, Multi-disciplinary Studies, or interdepartmental studies. Members shall not be absent without an excuse from the VP for Academics for more than one meeting per semester.

SECTION 13: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON INCLUSION AND EXCELLENCE

Shall consist of three students: the VP for Student Life and two elected at-large, who will both serve two-year terms.

SECTION 14: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE COUNCIL ON ALUMNAE/I STUDENT ADVANCEMENT

Shall consist of the VP for Operations, the VP of each class, and two students appointed at large in the spring.

SECTION 15: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Shall consist of two students: a member of the VSA Council and one elected at large.

SECTION 16: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

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

SECTION 17: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

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

SECTION 18: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE PRIORITIES AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

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

SECTION 19: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

shall consist of the Sustainability Interns and one student elected at-large.

SECTION 20: STUDENT DELEGATION TO THE FIRST YEAR COMMITTEE

shall consist of the Freshman Class President.

SECTION 21: OTHER COMMITTEES

In the case that further student representation is requested or a new joint committee is formed, the VSA Council may fill that position at the Council’s discretion.

ARTICLE VI – BUDGETING

SECTION 1: GENERAL APPLICABILITY

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

SECTION 2: FISCAL YEAR

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

SECTION 3: VSA OVERALL BUDGETING PROCEDURE

A. The VSA Overall Budget shall be set based on a six-semester average of the previous three years of actual Full Time Enrollment.

B. The VSA Operating Budget shall be defined as the VSA Overall Budget less those monies budgeted to the VSA Contingency Funds by the VP for Finance as guided by these Bylaws.

C. All VSA Organizations and Funds shall be budgeted from the VSA Operating Budget.

SECTION 4: BUDGETING OF CONTINGENCY FUNDS

A. The budgets of the Contingency Funds shall be set by the VP for Finance prior to the budgeting of the VSA Operating Budget.

B. The budgets for each Contingency Funds (Organizational Contingency, Capital Contingency, and Supplemental Budgeting Contingency) shall be set as the average of the expenditures from that account over the previous three fiscal years, plus any addition seen necessary by the VP for Finance.

C. All excess monies remaining in the three Contingency Funds at the end of the fiscal year shall be used first to eliminate debts held by the other two contingency accounts. Any excess monies after all three Contingency Funds have balances of zero or greater shall be remanded to the Emergency Fund.

SECTION 5: BUDGETING OF THE EMERGENCY FUND

A. The Emergency Fund shall have a budget equal to one half of the combined budgets for the three Contingency Accounts.

B. The balance of the Emergency Fund shall carry over from one fiscal year to the next.
C. If the balance of the Emergency Fund is greater than one half of the combined budgets of the three Contingency Accounts, the excess monies above that amount shall be remanded to the Great Works Fund.

D. If the balance of the Emergency Fund is less than one half of the combined budgets of the three Contingency Accounts, the amount necessary to reach this amount shall be budgeted by the VP for Finance.

SECTION 6: BUDGETING OF VSA ORGANIZATIONS

A. The VP for Finance must inform all treasurers of VSA organizations of the annual budgeting process at least a week before the budgeting process begins.

B. At this meeting the VP for Finance shall explain the budgeting process, the applicable section of the VSA Bylaws, the dates of mandatory meetings, and deadline(s) for budget requests. Failure of an organization to send its treasurer or a proxy to this meeting may be grounds for personal or organizational disciplinary action and/or funding ineligibility.

C. On the date set by the VP for Finance, all VSA Organizations must submit their budget requests by the previously specified deadlines to the VP for Finance.

D. Within a week of the due dates of the budgeting application, the Finance and Activities Committees shall hold a joint meeting. This meeting shall allow all organizations at least 3 minutes to present their case for their budget and answer any questions.

E. If an organization does not turn in a budget request before the joint Activities/Finance meeting, the organization must not be included in the Spring Budgeting allocations, except in extreme circumstance at the discretion of the VSA Executive Board. If an organization turns in the budget request after the appointed deadline, but before the meeting, the organization must not receive a budget increase and must be penalized by a seizure of no more than 50% of the organization’s account.

F. The Activities and Finance Committees shall meet and review the budget requests. The committee may meet with any person or organization or review any financial documents in the course of their meetings. The committee shall vote on the final recommendation.

G. The recommendation of the Finance and Activities Committees shall be forwarded to the current Executive Board and incoming Executive Board. The joint meeting of the Executive Boards shall recommend a budget to the VSA Council. In the spring semester, any member concurrently holding a member-elect position shall have only one vote.

H. The recommendation of the Executive Boards shall be posted for a petition process of 48 hours. Any VSA member may petition any aspect of the budget. Such a petition shall be submitted to the VP for Finance and all petitioners shall be brought before a joint session Activities and Finance Committees and both Executive Boards.

I. All petitions shall be reviewed by the joint committee and final recommendations shall be made by the joint committee. The final recommendation shall be posted no less than 24 hours before the VSA Council budgeting meeting.

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

   1. Organizations in debt will receive a maximum allocation of the recommended starting balance. Allocations will not be made to cover previous debt.

   2. WVKR, Vassarion, and The Miscellany News shall be exempt from the above provision and shall receive an allocation equal to the amount in the approved recommendations.

   3. If a final recommendation is not applicable the organization's starting balance for the next year will be their balance from the previous year.

K. After the process in Section 6, J is carried out, 25% of any remaining money shall be allocated to the Supplemental Budgeting Contingency Fund and 75% of any remaining money shall be allocated to the Council Discretionary fund.
SECTION 7: THE VSA BUDGETING MEETING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 8: STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE ACCOUNT

A. Surpluses from the Student Activity Fee (SAF) account after the final semester enrollment figures have been computed by the VP for Finance, in accordance with the Offices of the Controller and Registrar, shall be devoted to the Great Works Fund account.

B. In the event of a deficit in the SAF account after the final semester enrollments have been computed, monies shall be first transferred from the Great Works account and then all appropriate Contingency Funds in order to balance the SAF account.

ARTICLE VII – FUNDS AND ACCOUNTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS

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

SECTION 2: APPROVAL OF FUND APPLICATIONS

As stated in Article III of the VSA Bylaws, Finance Committee shall review and make final recommendations on all fund applications submitted to the Council by VSA Organizations. To make this recommendation, Finance Committee shall meet with Treasurers to discuss their respective applications. The Finance Committee’s recommendations for all fund
applications shall be placed on the Consent agenda at the start of each Council meeting, and may be removed from the Consent agenda according to the procedure laid out in Article II, Section 6 of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 3: EMERGENCY FUND

The Emergency Fund is intended to cover the debts and liabilities of the VSA. The Emergency Fund may not be allocated to any other VSA account except under extreme financial circumstances which affect the integrity of the VSA as a whole. The VP for Finance must make a recommendation in such a situation, and any action requires a unanimous vote of the Council with no abstentions, even if an emergency session must be called.

SECTION 4: CONTINGENCY FUNDS

A. Requests for Contingency Funds must be presented to the Council and voted on after the VP for Finance and VP for Activities make a recommendation.

B. The Supplemental Budgeting Contingency is intended to allow active organizations to function under dire financial circumstances limited to the following:
   1. The organization was under budgeted during the spring budgeting process to an unsustainable degree.
   2. The organization has decided to increase its programming of an “annual” event, which had not been considered during the spring budgeting process.
   3. The organization has sustained substantial deficits due to financial mismanagement by previous officers or members, whom no longer hold a position in that organization.
   4. This Fund may only be used in the fall semester.

C. The Capital Contingency is intended to replace lost, stolen or broken capital items.
   1. All claims of loss and/or theft must be presented to the VP for Finance in writing. An audit must be conducted prior to any allocation approved by the Council unless the VSA Executive Board unanimously agrees that an audit is not necessary.
   2. The Capital Contingency shall only be used to replace capital items purchased by VSA organizations.
   3. The VP for Finance shall make a recommendation to the VSA Council as to what percentage, if any, of the loss shall be paid by the Capital Contingency. This percentage shall vary based on the degree of negligence the investigators believe was associated with the loss.

D. The Organizational Contingency is intended for the following purposes:
   1. To assume any liability, surplus, or debt of any inactive account.
   2. To fund a one-time allocation for a newly certified VSA organization.
   3. For supplemental budgeting should the Supplemental Budgeting Contingency no longer have funds.

E. The VSA Council shall deny any Contingency request made by an organization that has:
   1. Fiscal problems due to financial mismanagement, irresponsibility, or impropriety of any present officers or members.
   2. Organizational spending practices inconsistent with the stipulations of the VSA Bylaws.
   3. Failed to regularly attend meetings called for by the VSA Council or VSA Executive Board.
   4. Failed to meet budgeting deadlines or attend mandatory treasurer's meetings.
   5. Failed to submit organization reports to the VP for Activities upon request.
   6. Failed to submit a Constitution to the VP for Activities and adhere to its stipulations.
   7. Failed to attempt to fundraise on its own.
   8. Failed to operate in accordance with the VSA Constitution and VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 5: SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS
A. Special Purpose Funds are those Funds established by the Council during the spring budgeting process for a predetermined general purpose and method of allocation. The Council, prior to any allocation, must approve guidelines for the allocation of Special Purpose Funds. The Council may allocate these Funds to any member or group of members of the VSA throughout the fiscal year.

B. No special purpose fund allocation may be approved for a project or event for which any participating student will receive academic credit.

SECTION 6: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS

A. During budgeting for each year, the VSA Council shall set aside funds for allotment to the following VSA Special Purpose Funds, unless otherwise noted: Conference Fund; Hosting Fund; Speaker’s, Lecturers and Panels Fund; Collaboration Fund; Community Fund; and New Organizations Fund.

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

C. Only certified VSA organizations may apply to these Funds.

D. Organizations shall not be eligible for Special Purpose Funds for the semester during which they are certified and for one full semester after their certification, with the exception of the New Organizations Fund.

E. Each project or event may receive money from only one Fund. Only an entire project or event may apply for money.

F. If the demand for any special purpose fund exceeds supply, the VP for Finance and Finance Committee may recommend to VSA Council a reallocation of fund from one Special Purpose Fund to another. Council may not reallocate more than 25% of the original value of any Special Purpose Fund per academic year.

   1. The original value of a Special Purpose Fund shall be the balance of the Fund at the beginning of the academic year.

G. No more than 60% of the original value of any Fund shall be allocated in the first semester, except where otherwise noted. Money from all Funds shall be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. When Funds are depleted, and no further transfers are possible, applications for money shall no longer be accepted.

H. For Special Purpose Funds, on-campus is defined as land owned by Vassar College, including but not limited to the campus proper, the Farm, the Alumnae House complex, and the boathouse complex.

I. All Special Purpose Fund applications shall be submitted to the VP for Finance.

   1. All Fund requests must be submitted in writing.

   2. Applications must include fundraising proposals.

   3. Applications must state whether or not there will be a charge for the event.

   4. Applications must be submitted to the VP for Finance no less than 14 days prior to the event or publication date.

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

J. Appropriate recognition must be given to the VSA during or prior to all events, which are funded, in whole or in part, through Special Purpose Funds.

K. Should a fund allocation be deemed to have been used inappropriately by any member of the VSA, an audit must be conducted on the individuals in question. If necessary, the allocation may be remanded to the appropriate fund.

L. If a Majors Committee is deemed to be in ‘good standing’ by the VP for Academics, the committee may apply to any of the special funds. It shall be considered as an organization and be subject to the same funding rules and penalties.

SECTION 7: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE COLLABORATION FUND

A. This fund shall be used to sponsor any event for which 2 or more organizations jointly apply. Collaboration includes, but is not limited to: the planning, executing and/or funding of an event and must be substantive, which is determined at the discretion of the VSA Council.
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B. Any one organization may receive money as a main applicant from this Fund a maximum of four (4) times per year.

C. There can only be one residence in the main applicant section of each application.

D. This fund shall only be used to sponsor events not listed in the operating budget plans of any of the organizations.

E. Monies from this fund may cover up to 75% of the costs of an event, not to exceed $3750.

F. As part of the application process, a member from each collaborating organization must be present at the VSA Council meeting at which the event is being considered to discuss the finances and details of the event.

SECTION 8: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE CONFERENCE FUND

A. This Fund shall be used to sponsor the participation of members of the VSA in non-annual off-campus conferences that are relevant and compatible with an organization’s goals and objectives as stated in its Constitution.

B. VSA leadership conferences and conferences held at Vassar are not eligible for the Conference Fund.

C. Organizations are limited to receiving funds for four (4) conferences per year.

D. If 1-2 members of an organization attend a conference, the maximum that may be allotted for each person is $500; for the next additional 3 people that attend the conference, the maximum that may be allotted is $350 each; for the next additional 5 people that attend the conference, the maximum that may be allotted for each person is $150 each. The Conference Fund may only cover up to 10 people.

E. Monies from this fund may cover 100% of the cost associated with the number of members stipulated in Section 8.D.

F. By the end of the semester, the participants in the conference must report to their organization’s membership and submit a written and/or oral report to the VSA Council about the events of the conference attended.

SECTION 9: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE COMMUNITY FUND

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

B. Applications for the Community Fund monies must be presented no fewer than 30 days prior to the event.

C. Monies from this fund may cover up to 100% of the costs of the event.
   1. Applications submitted at least 60 days prior to the event may receive up to $10,000.
   2. Applications submitted less than 60 days prior to the event may receive up to $5,000.

D. Organizations may apply to this fund a maximum of four (4) times per year.

E. By the end of the semester, organizations must submit an oral report to VSA Council about the event.

SECTION 10: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE SPEAKERS, LECTURES AND PANELS FUND

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

B. Monies from this fund may cover up to 100% of the related costs, including but not limited to honorarium, transportation, room and board, fire watch, security, and publicity, not to exceed $10,000 per event.

C. Applications must include each speaker’s bio and information.

D. Organizations may apply to this fund a maximum of four (4) times per year.

SECTION 11: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE NEW ORGANIZATIONS FUND
A. This fund shall be used to sponsor events held by newly certified organizations.
B. Monies from the New Organizations Fund may cover up to 100% of event costs, not to exceed $2000.
C. Only organizations certified within the last two semesters may apply to the New Organizations Fund.

SECTION 12: VSA COUNCIL DISCRETIONARY FUND

The VSA Council may establish an operating budget to be administered by the VSA Council titled the VSA Council Discretionary Fund. It may be used to sponsor proposals and investments.

A. Any member of the VSA may request funding from the VSA Council Discretionary Fund.
   1. VSA certified organizations may receive a maximum of $5000.
   2. All other VSA members may receive a maximum of $1000.
B. VSA Council may review and/or approve any request at its discretion.
C. Following an allocation, applicants must return to VSA Council and present an oral report on their use of funding by the end of the fiscal year.

SECTION 13: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE CAPITAL BUDGETING FUND

A. This fund may cover up to 100% of extraordinary/one-time costs incurred by a certified organization, subject to approval by both the VSA Finance Committee and VSA Council.
B. The fund may be used to purchase items for the VSA Capital Loan Inventory, to be purchased, maintained, and loaned at the discretion of the VPs for Finance and Activities.
C. Capital Items shall be defined as items, which are anticipated to last at least three (3) years.
D. Individuals are not eligible for the Capital Budgeting Fund.
E. One-time costs are non-recurring and are subject to approval by the VP for Finance.
F. Capital Budgeting Fund monies shall be dispensed twice per academic year.
   1. Applications for the first round of Capital Budgeting shall be submitted to the VP for Finance no less than two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of Fall Break, the precise deadline to be set by the VP for Finance.
   2. Applications for the second round of Capital Budgeting shall be submitted to the VP for Finance not more than 4 weeks after the end of Winter break, this deadline is to be set by the VP for Finance.
   3. Within 48 hours of this deadline, the VP for Finance shall give a copy of each application to the members of the Capital Budgeting Committee.
   4. The members of the Capital Budgeting Committee shall have 48 hours to submit any questions about these applications to the VP for Finance, who shall then forward these questions to the contacts of the appropriate groups.
   5. The contacts shall have 48 hours to respond to these questions to the VP for Finance, who shall then pass these answers on to the members of the Capital Budgeting Committee.
   6. The VP for Finance shall then call a meeting of the Finance Committee with the VP for Activities and the VSA Auditor.
   7. The recommendations for Capital Budgeting shall be e-mailed to all contacts and treasurers 24 hours before the VSA Council meeting at which they will be considered.
   8. VSA Council must vote on allocations as a block. There shall be no line item changes allowed.
   9. Should the allocations fail to pass this vote in the VSA Council, the VP for Finance shall make any changes he/she may feel necessary at any time. He/she shall then bring the new allocations before Council to be approved.
G. No more than 2/3 of the Capital Budgeting Fund monies shall be allocated during the Fall round of budgeting.
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H. No organization shall be allowed to use its previously allocated capital budgeting monies to purchase items for which those monies were not approved.

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

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

SECTION 14: THE VSA OPERATING FUNDS

The VSA Council may establish operating budgets to be administrated by the VSA Executive Board. These shall cover, but are not limited to covering: an overall Operating Budget, Fall Leadership Conference Budget, a Leadership Series Budget, a VSA Council Retreat Budget, and a Poughkeepsie Journal Budget. The exact accounts and amounts allocated for these budgets shall be determined during the spring budgeting process and shall be used solely for the expenses incurred in the completion of duties mandated in the VSA Constitution and Bylaws. The VSA Executive Board shall independently administrate these funds and shall not be obliged to fundraise.

SECTION 15: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE GREAT WORKS FUND

A. This fund shall have two purposes:
   1. To provide the campus at large with substantial investments in capital items and/or facilities on campus.
   2. May be used to replenish any special purpose fund that has been emptied before the end of the second semester. Each fund may be given a maximum of $3000.
   3. Any money left in the replenished fund at the end of the year shall be returned to the Great Works Fund.

B. Monies for this fund shall come from surpluses generated in the SAF account after the spring semester full-time enrollment (FTE) figures have been computed.
   1. In the event that the SAF account no longer generates a surplus, the Great Works Fund shall become inactive.
   2. In the event that the SAF account remains negative at the end of the Spring semester, money used for Great Works must be remanded to the SAF account in order to eliminate the deficit.

C. For uses falling under A.1 any member of the VSA may submit a proposal in writing to the VP for Finance. For uses falling under A.2 the VSA Executive Board must submit the proposal.

ARTICLE VIII – VSA ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1: APPLICABILITY

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

SECTION 2: MEMBERSHIP

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

SECTION 3: MEETINGS
A. Meetings shall generally be open to all members of the Vassar community, unless stipulated otherwise in the organization’s Constitution, and be publicized. The Vassar community shall be defined as active, matriculating students, faculty, staff, and alumnae/i of Vassar College.

B. VSA Organizations may occasionally hold closed meetings as stipulated in their Constitutions. Organizations may be asked to justify any closed meeting to the VP for Activities.

SECTION 4: CONSTITUTIONS

A. Each VSA Organization is required to draft its own Constitution stipulating the functions and objectives of the organization, the positions and responsibilities of the officers, how amendments to the Constitution may be proposed and ratified, the process for election, impeachment and removal of the organization’s officers, the organization’s membership guidelines, meeting format, and the definition of quorum. Residences and classes are exempted from this requirement.

B. If any organization fails to forward a copy of its Constitution to the VP for Activities, disciplinary action may be taken, in accordance with Article VIII, Section 21 of the VSA Bylaws.

C. After an organization has passed an amendment it must be submitted to the VP for Activities, who shall then act with all due expediency in reviewing the amendment. The VP for Activities has the power to veto amendments which are deemed to be non-structural and do not affect the nature of the organization; all other amendments are subject to the veto of the VSA Council.

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

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

SECTION 5: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

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

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

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

SECTION 6: CERTIFICATION

The VSA Council may certify an organization. Any organization pursuing formal certification must consult with the VP for Activities to discuss the objectives, membership, functions, plans, proposed budget, and other relevant aspects of the organization. The VP for Activities may also sit in on an organization’s meetings, review sample publications, or observe an organization’s functions in order to assess student interest in the organization and its likelihood for long-term successful and responsible campus programming.

A. Organizations whose certification is revoked may re-apply for certification under normal procedures.

SECTION 7: PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATION

A. In order for an organization to be considered for certification, the following requirements must be met:

1. The group must have a core membership and/or strong support of at least 20 VSA members.
ARTICLE VIII – VSA ORGANIZATIONS

2. The group must show that there is no other already existing organization that duplicates the purpose and needs of their membership.

3. The group must submit a budget proposal to the VP for Finance and VP for Activities prior to certification. The organization must meet with the Finance Committee to discuss their funding within three weeks of becoming certified.

B. The group must submit its mission statement, a detailed description of its history, a formal Constitution, a letter requesting formal certification, and a signed list of at least 20 VSA members who strongly support and/or plan involvement with the organization.

C. Upon approval of the VP for Activities, the request for certification shall be brought to the VSA Executive Board and, if approved, a motion shall be brought to the VSA Council to make the group a certified organization. The members of the group shall be advised as to the date the vote shall take place, and shall be asked to appear before the Council in order to answer any questions Council members may have. Both the certification request and the proposed Constitution shall subsequently be presented to the VSA Council for final approval.

D. Once certified, an organization is required to present a list of its executive board members to the VP for Activities, as well as turn in organization reports upon request of the VP for Activities.

E. Certified organizations shall receive a VSA Budget number, into which they may complete financial transactions, in cooperation with the VP for Finance. Funding is not guaranteed for any VSA organization.

F. If a certified organization incurs a debt, it must repay that debt within two academic semesters or its recognition must be revoked. Such organizations may not re-apply for recognition or authorization for at least one calendar year. The statement of purpose shall determine if a group represents a new organization, or an old organization attempting to be re-certified.

G. A certified organization may reserve tables in the college center, reserve rooms and spaces throughout campus and officially use “Vassar” in its title.

H. If a group is not certified by the VSA Council at the meeting when the vote is held, the group may request again to be certified in one semester’s time.

SECTION 8: DEFICITS

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

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

C. Organizations that accumulate debts are expected to have eliminated those debts through fundraising two semesters after the debt is incurred.

SECTION 9: MONETARY RESPONSIBILITY

A. Organizations are expected to spend money responsibly.

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

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

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

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

SECTION 10: BUDGETING ELIGIBILITY
No organization shall be eligible for budgeting without formal VSA Certification, without having its Constitution on file with the VP for Activities, or failing to comply with budgeting procedures.

SECTION 11: BANK ACCOUNTS

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

SECTION 12: FUNDRAISING

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

SECTION 13: OUTSIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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

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

SECTION 14: ANTICIPATED REVENUE FOR PROGRAMMED EVENTS

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

SECTION 15: FUNDING AND ACADEMIC CREDIT

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

SECTION 16: PAYMENT OF STUDENTS IN A VSA ORGANIZATION

No VSA organization, with the exception of the Classes, Residence Halls, and the VSA Executive Board, may pay a member of its own constituency for services rendered to that organization.
SECTION 17: POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS AND FUNDING

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

SECTION 18: DONATIONS TO OFF CAMPUS GROUPS OR ORGANIZATIONS

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

SECTION 19: PUBLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 20: ORGANIZATION REVIEW PROCESS

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 21: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

B. Grounds for disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to comply with the Organization Review Process.
2. Non-compliance with VP for Activities’ or VP for Finance’s requests, including attending meetings
3. Non-compliance with the VSA Bylaws.

C. When a motion is made to censure, decertify, fine an organization more than either 5% of its budget or $100 whichever is less, freeze or revoke funds of an organization, or censure an officer of an organization, the motion shall be referred to the VSA Activities Committee. A referral may be overridden by a 3/4 majority of Council.

1. The Activities Committee shall gather information from the offended party, the organization in question, and any other relevant third-party sources. The Activities Committee shall consult with the VP for Operations and the Chair of the Judicial Board. If any member of the Activities Committee has a direct conflict of interest, an alternate from the VSA Council shall be chosen randomly.

2. The Activities Committee shall consider the VSA governing documents and the organization’s governing documents. Any alleged infraction of College Regulations shall be referred to the Dean of Students and the College Regulations Panel. This does not preclude action by the VSA Council.

3. In one week's time, the Activities Committee shall make a final report to VSA Council outlining the results of the inquiry and any recommended disciplinary action. After the Activities Committee makes their report, Council shall deliberate on the issue and vote on any motion recommended by the Activities Committee. Any motion made while deliberating on this issue shall not trigger another referral to the Activities Committee. The Activities Committee may request additional time from the VSA Executive Board before making a report.

4. Appeals may be made to the VSA Judicial Board within one week’s time if evidence of procedural errors, lack of due process, or imposition of excessive penalty is presented. The decision of the first appeal is final.

SECTION 22: LACK OF ACTIVITY

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

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

SECTION 23: OFF-CAMPUS REPRESENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

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

SECTION 24: VICE
Due to the unique role of Vassar College Entertainment (ViCE), the director or assistant director shall be required to report to the VSA Council once a month. They shall update the Council on upcoming events, as well as hear any suggestions or issues relating to campus entertainment. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

**ARTICLE IX - LIMITATIONS AND CONDITIONS ON ORGANIZATION EXPENDITURES**

**SECTION 1: GENERAL RULES**

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

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

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

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

**SECTION 2: ADVERTISING**

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

**SECTION 3: MEALS FOR SPEAKERS AND PERFORMERS**

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

**SECTION 4: TRAVEL EXPENSES**

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

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

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

C. Travel accommodations must be as inexpensive as possible. If an organization must spend more on accommodations than necessary, the organization must consult the VP for Finance in advance.

D. The VSA shall not reimburse individuals for parking citations, traffic citations, or any fines for violations of the law.

E. The VSA shall reimburse up to $10 per day for meal expenses, but it reserves the right not to reimburse that entire amount.

**ARTICLE X - ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**
SECTION 1: GENERAL TERMS

A. The VSA shall conduct a Fall Election and a Spring Election.
B. Elections shall be conducted by the Board of Elections and run in accordance with procedures as set forth in this Article of the VSA Bylaws.

SECTION 2: THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

A. The Board of Elections shall have two Co-Chairs. One Chair shall be a VSA Council member who will be a senior. One Chair shall be appointed at large. Both Chairs shall serve for a term of a full academic year. The outgoing VSA Council shall appoint the Board of Elections for the following year, after Spring Convocation.
B. The Board of Elections shall conduct and oversee all elections and referendums through reasonable interpretations of the VSA governing documents.
C. After consulting with the VP for Operations, the Board of Elections shall present to the VSA Council for approval: a list of all positions included in the election, dates and times of filing, meetings, campaigning, debates, elections, posting of results, and any other appropriate information to the election process. All other decisions of the Board of Elections shall be made independently, subject to the appeals process.
D. The Board of Elections must publicize all elections, including descriptions and requirements of vacant positions, dates and times of filing, meetings, campaigning, debates, elections, posting of results, and any other appropriate information to the election process.
E. The Board of Elections Chairs shall, at the conclusion of the election process, report to the VSA Council all results of the election and any changes to the applicable sections of the VSA Bylaws that are appropriate.
F. The outgoing Board of Elections shall train the incoming appointed Board of Elections prior to the completion of the academic year.
G. The Board of Elections shall consist of four or more individuals, open to the entire campus, to be appointed by the elections chairs and the VP for Operations, with approval from Council, for a term of a full academic year. They cannot be running in any election occurring during their semester term of office. Their job is to assist the Elections Chairs with all campus elections and referendums.

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

SECTION 4: PUBLICITY
A. The Board of Elections shall meet with *The Miscellany News* editorial staff well in advance of elections to discuss publicizing elections through articles or advertising.

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

C. The Board of Elections shall submit an advertising policy to the VSA Executive Board at least 3 weeks prior to the start of the filing period.

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

**SECTION 5: FILING**

A. During the period designated for filing, any eligible VSA member may file for candidacy under the guidelines announced by the Board of Elections Chairs. To be considered a ‘candidate’ for the official ballot, a VSA member must file for a position by completing the Standard Filing Form.
   1. The Standard Filing Form shall include the potential candidate’s:
      a. Name as it will appear on the ballot
      b. Class year and campus (or off-campus) residence
      c. Position being sought
      d. Description of the issues facing that position, and the candidate’s opinion of them. This will serve as the candidate statement.
      e. Verification that the candidate has read Article X of the VSA Bylaws.
   2. The Standard Filing Form must be submitted to VP for Operations before the end of the filing period to be considered a ‘candidate’ for the official ballot. The VP for Operations must review these forms within 24 hours of submission.
   3. Should a Standard Filing Form be rejected, a notification must be sent to the potential candidate within 24 hours of the form’s submission. An explanation must be presented with the reasons for rejection, and rejected forms may be resubmitted with revisions until the end of the filing period.

B. Candidates that have submitted their Standard Filing Form may only begin campaigning, as defined in Section 5(a) of this article, after both of the following two conditions have been met:
   1. The candidate has signed a statement prepared by the VP for Operations verifying that the candidate has read Article X of the VSA Bylaws, and has brought it to the VSA Office.
      a. Extra copies of Article X must be available at the VSA Office.
   2. The candidate has attended the mandatory candidates’ meeting described in Section 5.D and 5.E of this article.

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

D. A candidate’s meeting shall be scheduled and publicized by the Board of Elections for after the filing period has ended, but before the campaigning period has begun. At this meeting, the Elections Chairs shall review the applicable sections of the VSA Bylaws and VSA Constitution, answer any questions, and discuss campaigning spending limits. Candidates are responsible for knowing all relevant campaigning and elections information discussed at this meeting.
   1. All candidates must attend this candidate’s meeting; if they are unable to attend, they must send a proxy and alert the Elections Chairs of who their proxy will be before the meeting. Candidates who do not attend the meeting or send a proxy shall be disqualified, except in the case of emergency.
2. Attendance shall be defined as the continued presence of a candidate or proxy from the point in the meeting when the candidate’s name is called to the point in the meeting when the Chairs officially adjourn.

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

SECTION 6: ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSIVITY

A. To be eligible for any office in the VSA, a candidate must be a VSA member.

B. No student may run for or hold any VSA Office of which the student is not an eligible constituent.
   1. Offices with a class prerequisite may only be sought by students expecting to become a member of that class in the following academic year.
   2. Offices with a residence prerequisite may only be sought by students with certification from the Office of Residential Life that they shall be assigned to that residence in the following academic year.

C. No candidate is eligible if the candidate has been granted a leave of absence by the College for any part of the term of office.

D. Unless required by the position, no student shall be allowed to run for or hold any position on the VSA Council or Chair of any committee until such time as he/she has completed one academic semester at Vassar.

E. No student may run for or hold more than one VSA elected position among a Class Council, a House Team or the VSA Executive Board. Students running for or holding a position on the Class Council or House Team may also run for positions on a committee.

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.

SECTION 7: CAMPAIGNING

A. Campaigning shall consist of solicitation of votes by a candidate or the candidate’s representative, and the display of posters and other campaign materials promoting the candidacy of a VSA member. All campaigning shall occur within the period announced by the Board of Elections. All acceptable forms of campaigning initiatives are herein defined and must conform to College Regulations.

B. All members of the VSA shall refrain from actions that might dishonestly or unfairly affect the election.

C. VSA members may not use the rights and privileges of an elected or appointed position to promote themselves or any other candidate.

D. Each candidate’s campaign expenses for each position sought shall not exceed: $45 for Executive Board positions; $35 for campus-wide positions; and $25 for House positions.
   1. It is the responsibility of the candidate to account for all campaign expenses. If a candidate is unable to afford materials, the VP for Operations shall arrange for the funds to be provided.

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

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

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

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

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

I. After the campaigning period is over, no elections-related posters are permitted by anyone except the Board of Elections.

J. Any candidate found to be in violation of Article X of the VSA Bylaws may be reprimanded or disqualified by the Board of Elections Chairs and/or the Operations Committee. A disqualified candidate shall not be considered a valid write-in candidate.
   1. A candidate who has been disqualified must remove all campaign materials within 24 hours of disqualification unless the candidate appeals the decision to the Judicial Board.
      a. If the Judicial Board affirms disqualification, the candidate must remove all campaigning materials within 24 hours of the Judicial Board ruling.
   2. The disqualification of a candidate may only be made public at the discretion of the candidate.

SECTION 8: VOTING FORMS

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

B. Any student who will not have access to a voting form on the day of voting must contact the Board of Elections Chairs at least 72 hours prior to the start of voting. The Board of Elections Chairs 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 Chairs prior to the end of voting.

SECTION 9: VOTING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 10: DESIGNATION OF WINNERS

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

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

C. In the event that aforementioned circumstances necessitate Ranked Choice Voting, the following procedures shall be carried out:

1. For a single winner election, the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated from the race and the second preference votes cast on all ballots for which this candidate was a first preference shall be distributed among the remaining candidates. If at this time the candidate with the most votes has received over 50%, this candidate shall be declared the winner. Otherwise, this process shall be repeated until a candidate garners over 50% of the vote. In the event of a tie between two candidates, in which each candidate has received 50% of the total vote, excluding abstentions, the candidates shall be required to come before the VSA Council for a question and answer period, after which the VSA Council existing during the election shall cast the deciding votes with everyone voting but the VSA President, who shall cast the deciding vote in the case of a tie.

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

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

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

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

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

H. In the event that any House Officer position has not been filled in a House during the Spring Elections, the Operations Committee will meet to review applications and appoint individuals to those positions. The Committee will inform eligible candidates of the open position and explain the application procedure. The Committee 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 Committee cannot select an appropriate individual, the position will remain open until the following school year, when the process will repeat.
SECTION 11: APPEALS

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

1. The Board of Elections Chairs 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.

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

1. The Judicial Board must hear and render a decision within 24 hours of the appeal unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise. Such notice shall be given by phone, e-mail, and written notice to be placed in the student's campus mailbox. All proceedings shall take place in accordance with Article XI of the VSA Bylaws. The decision of the appeal shall be final and binding on all elections.

SECTION 12: VACANT POSITIONS

A. The Board of Elections Chair(s) shall have the power to declare a position vacant if attempts to fill the position through elections and appointment have failed to produce eligible candidates. The vacancy must be declared and publicized to the relevant constituency, and that vacancy may be filled if interest in the position is expressed.

B. The VSA Council shall decide whether appointment or election shall fill a vacancy for an elected position. If the Council decides that the position shall be appointed, members of the VSA may nominate a student, subject to confirmation by a majority of the VSA Council. If the Council decides on an election, the Board of Elections Chair(s) shall be notified.

SECTION 13: EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

A. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the Board of Elections, in concurrence with the VSA Executive Board, may recommend suspension of any section or subsection of this article of the VSA Bylaws, excluding Sections 2 and 5 of this article.

B. Each section or subsection to be suspended must be explicitly stated.

C. The length of time for the suspension must be stated.

D. The VSA Council may substitute any procedure or rules it deems necessary in place of the suspended sections and/or subsections.

1. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of paper ballots, shortened voting times, or alternative formats for voting.

E. A two-thirds majority of the VSA Council is necessary to suspend any section and/or subsection of this article.

ARTICLE XI – THE JUDICIAL BOARD

SECTION 1: PROCESS

A. The Judicial Board Chair shall choose 4 of the other 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.
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B. After receipt of a written complaint, the Judicial Board Chair shall notify both parties involved and the members of the Judicial Board of the charges and arrange a date, time, and place for the hearing. Cases shall be disposed of expeditiously, within 72 hours unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise.

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 2: FORMAT FOR JUDICIAL BOARD HEARINGS

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

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

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

SECTION 3: RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT AND COMPLAINANT

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

A. To be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
B. To be given fair notice and a fair hearing.
C. Fair notice shall be given within 24 hours of the receipt of a grievance. Such notice shall be given either by phone, e-mail, or written notice to be placed in the student’s campus mailbox.
D. To be assisted in the preparation of their position by any student or member of the faculty of their choice, except current members of the Judicial Board.

E. To be judged by no person presenting evidence for or against them, or otherwise involved in the case.

F. To be informed by the Chair of the Judicial Board of these rights at the time the respondent is notified of the charges against them and again during the hearing.

G. To receive an open hearing unless the Judicial Board finds compelling cause to close it.

H. To demand that all of the evidence against them be present at the hearing.

I. To receive a copy of all proceedings involving them.

J. To appeal any decision according to Article XI, Section 5 of the Bylaws.

K. To call any member of the Vassar Community as a witness as deemed necessary for the effective execution of their position, subject to the approval of the Judicial Board Chair.

SECTION 4: APPEALS

A. The Judicial Board shall have the authority to retry cases on appeal from the original Judicial Board decision in the case that substantial new evidence exists and/or the procedural rights of the respondent or complainant were violated.

B. The individual may submit a petition for a rehearing to the VSA President. The Judicial Board Chair shall present the record of the case and the respondent shall have the right personally, or through a representative, to submit arguments on one’s behalf.

   1. In the event that the VSA President is involved in the case, this duty shall fall to the VP for Operations.

C. During an appeal the VP for Operations shall act as chair.

   1. In the event that the VP for Operations is involved in the case, this duty shall fall to the VSA President.

SECTION 5: ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

A. Members of the VSA are encouraged to seek resolutions of disputes through means other than traditional Judicial Board hearings.

B. Mediation may be a preferable means of resolving disputes. The goal of mediation shall be for individuals to reach a mutually agreeable solution to a conflict, rather than through an adversarial process. The solution shall create a binding agreement that is signed by all parties, the VP for Operations, and the Chair of the Judicial Board, depending upon the status of the complaint. The terms of this mediated agreement shall be made public and posted on the VSA Bulletin Board.

C. The Judicial Board Chair may suggest mediation. Such a suggestion shall not necessarily preclude judicial action.

D. During mediation, the rules governing time limits stating when the Judicial Board must meet to adjudicate a complaint are suspended. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, a hearing shall be scheduled following the guidelines stated in this Constitution and the VSA Bylaws.

E. In the event that an agreement is reached, the agreement shall be binding. Violations of such an agreement are grounds for a traditional hearing under the rules established in the VSA governing documents.

ARTICLE XII – DISCIPLINARY ACTION

SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS

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

SECTION 2: CENSURE OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

A. The VSA Council shall have the power to censure any of its own members, any elected or appointed VSA officer, VSA organization or organization officer. This shall be considered an official reprimand.

B. Censure proceedings may not be closed at any time.

C. Censured individuals or organizations shall be officially notified of the reprimand by the VP for Operations. In the event that the VP for Operations is censured, this duty shall fall to the VP for Student Life.

D. Upon censure of an individual or organization, a written notice must be signed by the VP for Operations and posted on the VSA bulletin board no later than 12 hours after the censure and must remain posted for no less than 72 hours. In the event that the VP for Operations is censured, this duty falls to the VP for Student Life.

E. The censured individual or organization must meet with the VSA Executive Board to be informed of the rationale for censure and to discuss possible courses of action to repair any damage caused by wrongdoing. The Executive Board must approve and monitor the implementation of any course of action. In the case that a member of the VSA Executive Board is censured, the rest of the Executive Board shall carry on without them.

SECTION 3: INDICTMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

A. The VSA Council shall have the power to indict any of its own members and any elected or appointed officer of any class, residence, committee, or organization.

B. Upon indictment, the VSA Judicial Board shall impeach, that is, formally try, the indicted officer on all charges within 72 hours, unless extenuating circumstances deem otherwise.

C. The indicted officer shall retain all powers and responsibilities of office while awaiting hearing and the judicial verdict.

SECTION 4: PROCEDURE FOR INDICTMENT PROCEEDINGS

A. The VSA Council shall have the power to conduct indictment procedures with a majority of its members present, exclusive of any Council member charged and/or bringing the charges.

B. The proceedings shall be chaired by the VSA President, or in the case of direct conflict of interest, by the VP for Operations.

C. Indictment proceedings may not be closed at any time.

D. The officer in question in an indictment hearing shall enjoy the following rights: to be present at and for the duration of the proceedings; to hear all charges presented against the officer; and to have the final words, before a vote, in the officer’s own defense.

E. A majority vote in favor, exclusive of any Council member charged and/or bringing the charges, shall be required for indictment.

SECTION 5: IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

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

B. Grounds for impeachment shall consist of one or more of the following: dereliction of duty, incompetence, employment of funds or property of the VSA for private gain, violation of the VSA Constitution or the VSA Bylaws, or repeated censure, or a violation of College Regulations that undermines an individual’s ability to serve in an elected or appointed position.
C. An individual sentenced to removal shall be relieved of the powers of office pending the Judicial Board's verdict. The VSA Council shall declare the position vacant and the removed individual shall have the right to run for, or be considered for appointment to, the same office.

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

SECTION 6: RECALL

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

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

C. If the constituency is not than 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 shall conduct an election for the office in question.

1. The officer in question shall have the right to be a candidate.

2. The incumbent shall retain all powers and responsibilities of office until the Board of Elections officially announces the election returns.