

Vassar Student Association Council
Agenda for September 13, 2009

Time: 7:00pm

Location: College Center 223

"And do as adversaries do in law -

Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends."

-- William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew* - Act 1 Scene 2

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance.....Operations
3. Special Guest: David Davis Van Atta, Director of Institutional Research
4. Announcements
 - a. Meet Me In Poughkeepsie.....Activities
 - b. Freshmen Elections.....Operations
 - c. Fines.....Finance
5. Reports
 - a. Exec Report.....Finance
 - b. Exec Report.....Student Life
6. Room Entry Policy Proposal.....Student Life
7. Allocation of \$2000 from Council Discretionary to Act Out.....Finance
8. Addition to Article IV, Section 25 of the VSA Bylaws.....Activities
9. Open Discussion.....Anyone
10. Adjourn

THE VSA COUNCIL POLICY RECOMMENDATION 24-2 FOR THE ADOPTION OF A ROOM ENTRY POLICY IN THE STUDENT HANDBOOK

AS IS:

SECTION 20: Residential Facilities

The Office of Residential Life, the Committee on College Life, and the Residential Life Advisory Committee together establish and review the regulations governing the residential life of students. Please review the Residential Life Guide for more information.

- 20.01 No fixture may be removed from or attached to any wall, door, or window without written permission from the director of Residential Life. Aside from painter's tape, no tacks, nails, screws, pins, tape, glue, etc., may be used in or on walls, woodwork, or college furniture. Pictures, bulletin boards, etc., may be hung from moldings with molding hooks and picture wire. Repair of damage to college property will be charged to the student responsible.
- 20.02 College property may not be painted.
- 20.03 Waterbeds may not be used in college housing.
- 20.04 No college furniture may be removed from student rooms without the permission of the director of Residential Life or designee.
- 20.05 Misappropriated property found in students' rooms will be removed and will subject the occupants to disciplinary action.
- 20.06 Unauthorized room changes are prohibited.
- 20.07 The possession or use of unauthorized items as outlined in the Vassar College Regulations or Residential Life website is prohibited.
- 20.08 Students may not make any changes in electrical, data, or telephone wiring (including attachment of dimmer switches).

PROPOSED ADDITION:

SECTION 21: Room Entry

The college respects a student's right to privacy and reserves the right to enter any room only when repair or maintenance necessitate, and in the event of an emergency, such as fire, fire alarm, fire drill, immediate threat to life, a call for help, or what reasonably seems to be a dangerous situation.

- 21.01 If a security officer is pursuing an investigation and a student refuses to cooperate, the security officer will begin procedures to enter the student's room without permission. This procedure requires the security officer:
- a. to identify him/herself and formally state the reason for requesting entry (e.g., suspicion of college regulation violation);
 - b. to communicate that if the door is not opened, a master key will be obtained and the room entered; and
 - c. to make efforts to have a house officer and/or the house fellow/administrator present when the room is entered.
- 21.02 The College conducts routine inspections of student rooms in the residence halls to check on violations of health and safety regulations and to recover misappropriated property. Inspections are held at reasonable times, in a manner that will least inconvenience residents. Students are notified at least 24 hours in advance of performing scheduled maintenance. During vacation periods, student rooms in College housing are inspected to check heat settings, to ensure that lights and appliances are turned off, and that windows are closed. Following such inspections, or at other times, facilities services personnel may enter student rooms to make repairs.
- 21.03 While it may be necessary for a College official to enter student rooms to conduct routine inspections, to make repairs, or to deal with an emergency situation as described above, student rooms will not otherwise be searched by College officials without specific authorization from the Dean of the College. When possible, the student or students concerned and a witness shall be present when a room search is conducted.
- 21.04 Whenever a student's dormitory room is entered by a College official to meet an emergency, to make a repair, to carry out a community service, to conduct a routine inspection, or to conduct an authorized search, a note will be left indicating the time, date, reason, and name of the College person or office responsible, unless the occupant of the room is present at the time of entry.

Fund Being Applied For: Council Discretionary Fund

VSA Organization: ACT OUT

Name of Applicant: Casey Katims, Leslie Hamilton

Applicant E-mail Address: ckatims@vassar.edu

Event Name: National Equality March

Location of Event: The National Mall and the U.S. Capital in Washington, D.C.

Date of Event: October 11, 2009

Description of Event:

Many influential leaders in the movement for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) equality have called for a national march on Washington to demonstrate political unity among the LGBT community. Organizations from across the country will be traveling to Washington, D.C., on October 10-11 to ensure that the Obama administration and members of Congress are working toward LGBT equality in all 50 states. The event, which is being organized by Equality Across America, will include: opportunities to network with other Hudson Valley-based groups; speeches from influential LGBT leaders; and a culminating march and rally from the Lincoln Memorial to the U.S. Capital. The National Equality March will be a defining moment for the LGBT community, and ACT OUT hopes to bring a group of Vassar students to be a part of history.

Benefit to Students:

In past years Vassar students have demonstrated a strong dedication toward equality for the LGBT community. Past ACT OUT actions have included canvassing campaigns, Don't Ask Don't Tell protests, fundraising for the "No on Proposition 8" campaign, and demonstrations of civil disobedience that resulted in several arrests.

This semester ACT OUT has the opportunity to bring 50 Vassar students to a historic moment in the LGBT equality movement—something that they will remember for the rest of their lives. The event will encourage active participation in the American political process, social and political awareness, and networking with other Hudson Valley activists.

Costs of the Event (Itemize and Be Specific):

1. The chartered Coach Tours bus, which seats 50 people, will cost approximately \$2750, plus 10% gratuity for the driver, bringing the total cost to \$3025. The bus will transport students directly from Vassar to Washington D.C., and will return directly to Vassar.
2. Vassar students will be expected to purchase their own food and drink.

3. Attendance at the National Equality March, and participation in the various events, is free.

The event cost is entirely based on transportation, and chartering a bus has been determined to be the most cost-effective means of transportation. (Other options, including Metro North trains and buses from New York City to Washington D.C., were also considered but were determined to be more expensive. In addition, Coach Tours has provided the most cost-effective and the only handicap-accessible offer, compared with seven other quotes that we received.)

Total Cost of Event: \$3025

Current Funding Plan (How will you help PAY for this event):

ACT OUT will contribute as much money as we can from our group budget, and will receive some financial assistance from the College Democrats (an amount be determined). If the combination of VSA, ACT OUT, and College Democrats' contributions are not enough, we will ask attendees to contribute \$10-\$15 each to help pay for the bus. In addition, ACT OUT is planning to fundraise by tabling in the College Center throughout September, selling baked goods and buttons to raise money for the trip.

List of Attendees (First name, Last name, Class year - when relevant):

Attendees will include Vassar students from: the ACT OUT General Body; the Miscellany News; the College Democrats; QCVC; and the larger Vassar community. If there are under 50 confirmed attendees by September 25th, ACT OUT will begin recruiting attendees from Bard College, Marist College, and New Paltz Community College. [Due to the timing of the event, we do not have a final list of attendees at this time.]

Collaborating Organizations and HOW they are contributing:

The College Democrats will provide financial assistance for the event, advertise the event to their respective General Bodies, and help encourage Vassar students to attend. The Miscellany News will send a reporter to the event, in order to take pictures and write a story on the event.

Amount Requested: \$2750

Finance Committee recommendation: \$2400

Executive Board recommendation: \$2000

Proposed Addition to the VSA Bylaws:

Current: Not Present

Proposed: Article IV, Section 25: Off-Campus Representation Responsibilities

- A. 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:
- B. Acknowledgement of Trip:
 1. A form of Acknowledgement of an off campus trip proposal shall be submitted to the VSA VP for Activities a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of the planned trip, with exceptions granted as his/her discretion.
 - a. This form shall include information as to the purpose, location, attendees, and other pertinent information regarding the trip.
 - i. Changes to the list of attendees on the form of acknowledgement will be accepted until 24 hours before the scheduled departure time.
 - b. The form will be considered completed by a signature of the VSA VP for Activities.
 - i. S/he shall sign and file the form as a means of adequately recording, and holding accountable, groups and individuals representing the VSA and college off-campus.
 - ii. Barring applicability of part B2 of these bylaws, the VSA VP for Activities shall sign the form.
 2. Organizations that have within the past 2 years violated part C of these bylaws:
 - a. Shall have their form of Acknowledgement reviewed by the Activities Committee in consultation with current organization leaders before automatic signature by the VSA VP for Activities.
 - b. A denial by the activities committee shall bring the form of acknowledgement to Council.
 - i. A simple majority vote in-favor shall prompt a completion of the form by signature of the VP for Activities.
 - ii. A simple majority vote opposed shall prompt a denial of the trip. This will prohibit the organization from using organization funds, traveling under their organization name, and representing the VSA and the College.
 3. An Emergency Contact form must be completed and submitted to the VSA 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.
 4. Signed statements of compliance with these bylaws by all members attending shall be submitted before departure from campus. Failure to submit statements of compliance will result in a fine of \$25 or 5% of an organization's budget.
- C. 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 or the College.
- D. Failure to adhere to these regulations for off-campus travel will be considered a severe breach of conduct, punishable by censure, decertification, and/or a fine equaling 10% of the organization's budget. Council will vote on the appropriate penalty.