

**Vassar Student Association Council**  
**Agenda for September 6, 2009**

*Time: 7:00pm*

*Location: College Center 223*

“It is the specific task of politics to apply the criterion of law to power, thereby structuring the use of power in a meaningful manner. It is not the law of the stronger, but the strength of the law, that must hold sway.”

--Joseph Ratzinger, (Pope Benedict XVI), *The Dialects of Secularization*

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance.....Operations
3. Special Guests: Rachel Kitzinger, Dean of Planning and Academic Affairs,  
Betsy Eismeier, Vice President for Finance and Administration
4. Announcements
  - a. Open positions.....Operations
  - b. Fines.....Finance
5. Reports
  - a. Exec Report.....President
  - b. Exec Report.....Operations
6. Goals Document.....President
7. Appointment of Lindsey Andon to Noyes Secretary.....Operations
8. Appointment of Michael Mestitz to Noyes Treasurer.....Operations
9. Declaration of Four Open Positions on BoE.....Operations
10. Allocation of \$5000 from Council Discretionary to Community Shuttle ....Finance
11. Athletics Proposal.....Student Life
12. Addition to Article IV, Section 25 of the VSA Bylaws.....Operations
13. Open Discussion.....Anyone
14. Adjourn

### VSA Position Application

Position you are applying for: Noyes House Treasurer

Please fill out all sections to the best of your ability. Do take time to consider your responses, and be fair and honest!

#### Information

- 1.) Name: Michael Mestitz  
 2.) Telephone: (952) 847-3750 3.) E-mail: [mimestitz@vassar.edu](mailto:mimestitz@vassar.edu)  
 4.) Campus Box #: 2725 5.) Class Year: 2012

Are you planning on studying abroad anytime over the next year?

YES

NO

If yes, which semester?

A

B

#### Short Response Questions

1. Please list all student organizations and Vassar affiliated groups that you are currently and have been involved with, including any position(s) held and years affiliated.

- Opinions columnist for the Miscellany News  
 Actor in Philalaethius  
 Volunteer tutor with Protect The Dream youth program  
 2012 rep to the Campus Master Planning Committee  
 (All for the duration of last year)  
 2012 rep to Committee on Inclusion and Excellence

2. What motivated you to get involved and what characteristics do you have that would make you a good contribution to the position you are applying for? Please describe why you would like to serve on the positions you have listed.

Last year I ran for the VP of Noyes, and in my candidate statement I said that I wanted to help make Noyes a fantastic house for next year; that wasn't just rhetoric. After consideration, I've decided to apply for the position of Treasurer because I'm responsible and I'm comfortable managing money. Beyond the specific responsibilities of the Treasurer, I'd also like to be a part of house team and help facilitate all the programming in which Noyes takes part.

3. What ideas do you have relating to the position you are applying for?

I'm almost hesitant to rehash the "in these hard economic times" discussion that everyone's heard, but the fact is that less money may have to go further next year, meaning that innovative programming ideas will be key. I'd love to work with house team to figure out how to keep the Noyes budget in a good place through the entirety of this year as we also work to maximize the amount of fun, awesome things that we can do as a house. "Noyes @ Night"s with YouTube and a projector, like our last one watching a Very Potter Musical, provide entertainment without undue cost so that we can devote more resources to, say, buying more toga fabric for this year's DayGlo toga (because, based on feedback from last year, more will be needed). The trick is to be creative in cutting costs, but not to cut corners.

### VSA Position Application

Position you are applying for: **Noyes secretary!**

Please fill out all sections to the best of your ability. Do take time to consider your responses, and be fair and honest!

#### Information

- 1.) Name: **Lindsey Andon**  
 2.) Telephone: **(978) 994-3566**  
 3.) E-mail: [liandon@vassar.edu](mailto:liandon@vassar.edu)  
 4.) Campus Box #: **1124**  
 5.) Class Year: **2012**

Are you planning on studying abroad anytime over the next year? **No**

#### Short Response Questions

1. Please list all student organizations and Vassar affiliated groups that you are currently and have been involved with, including any position(s) held and years affiliated.

**Operation Donation:** secretary (2008-2009), president-elect (2009-2010)

**Hunger Action:** affiliate member (2008-2009) –I volunteer with them every Friday at the Lunchbox (Family Partnership Center).

**Vassart:** member (2008-2009)

2. What motivated you to get involved and what characteristics do you have that would make you a good contribution to the position you are applying for? Please describe why you would like to serve on the positions you have listed.

I am really hoping to join the Noyes house team because I want to be involved in making our dorm the best it can be. I hope to be a positive influence on the incoming freshmen and a good intermediary between the residents and house team. I initially ran for the position of president, but having lost, I am still looking to be a part of the house team because I think it is important that we have a strong and supportive family running the dorm. I am applying for secretary because I want to apply my experience and ideas in order to contribute to the dorm. I am a reliable and organized individual, and will make my obligations to Noyes a priority. I will provide very thorough and enthusiastic minutes, in order to summarize the purpose of each meeting.

3. What ideas do you have relating to the position you are applying for?

I hope that my responsibilities will go far beyond that of simply being a secretary for the house team. I really want to be involved and share my ideas for the upcoming academic year. In working closely with the student fellows and other house team members, I think we will be able to make more effective decisions with the input of our residents. It is important to me that we really focus on listening to each other and taking into account what everyone wants. (This past year I, and many of my fellow freshmen, felt that our opinions were never considered.) As secretary, my role would essentially be to ensure each of these ideas was recorded for future consideration—as well as to note every decision we did make. I would also provide reminders of what needed to be accomplished. However, as a house team member, my primary purpose would be to work in collaboration with others to improve Noyes and make sure the dorm ran smoothly. It is my hope that Noyes will become an even more closely-knit community, and as always, remain a home we can all be proud of.

**Fund Being Applied For: Council Discretionary Fund**

VSA Organization: Executive Board

Name of Applicant: Scott Pascal

Applicant E-mail Address: [vsafinance@vassar.edu](mailto:vsafinance@vassar.edu)

Event Name: Poughkeepsie Shuttle

Location of Event: Poughkeepsie

Date of Event: 2009-2010

**Description of Event:**

For the fall 2009 semester, Vassar's free Poughkeepsie Shuttle bus service resumes on Monday, August 31, at 2:00pm, and continues through Wednesday, December 9 (with the exception of the October break and the Thanksgiving break). Both the weekday and weekend shuttles are operated by the Leprechaun Lines company. Monday–Friday a white 10-passenger van runs on a half-hour loop, and Saturday–Sunday a white 29-passenger mini-bus runs on an hour loop. On campus, the shuttle continues to pick up and drop off riders alongside the Chapel lawn, across from Main Circle.

Monday–Friday the first stop on the loop continues to be a short walk to Poughkeepsie Middle School and Poughkeepsie High School, for people who tutor, student teach, and have other activities at the schools. The remaining downtown Poughkeepsie stops include the train station, and are an easy walking distance to a variety of organizations, programs, schools, and businesses, as well as to eateries, galleries, theaters, and other entertainment and arts venues.

Saturday–Sunday the loop begins with one central downtown stop at City Hall, followed by stops at the train station, the Poughkeepsie Galleria mall, and a large Stop & Shop supermarket on Route 9.

**Benefit to Students:**

The Poughkeepsie Shuttle enhances both the Vassar curriculum, by providing access to fieldwork opportunities, and the extracurricular lives of students, by providing access to the myriad places of interest in the city.

**Costs of the Event (Itemize and Be Specific): --**

Total Cost of Event: \$5000

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

--

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

Collaborating Organizations and HOW they are contributing:

Amount Requested: \$5000

The results of this submission may be viewed at: <http://vsa.vassar.edu/node/42/submission/65>

**VSA COUNCIL POLICY RECOMMENDATION 24-1 FOR THE ADOPTION OF ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR VARSITY ATHLETES**

September 6, 2009

The Vassar Student Association (VSA) Council recommends that Vassar College commit to extending academic credit to varsity athletes, to be implemented for the 2010-11 academic year. This recommendation is founded on the understanding that varsity sports at Vassar enhance the academic experience of the athletes, engendering lessons of collaboration, respect, and dedication. By enacting this recommendation, Vassar will be a leader in affirming athletics as a form of the creative and performing arts. By participating in athletics, students develop cognitive abilities that complement training in other disciplines, and in some cases discover and develop talents and interests that will shape their interested and passions.<sup>1</sup>

In Vassar's mission statement, the College strives for the "development of the powers of reason and imagination through the processes of analysis and synthesis and the use of all our human resources—to speculate, to feel, to inquire boldly, to enjoy, to change, to create, and to communicate effectively."<sup>2</sup> Because it is the mission of the College to broadly educate students' mind and body, the VSA Council believes that the granting of academic credit for varsity athletics programs is consistent with our core values.

**Context**

Currently, students are given the choice to take a maximum of two units of physical education credit to count towards the thirty-four units required for graduation. Before 1968-69, all students were required to complete two years of Physical Education and no credit was given for these classes. In 1970-71, Vassar switched to a unit system and all students were required to complete two years of physical education within their first three years and no credit was given for these classes. In 1971-72, the College then began extending credit to athletic credits. The outcome was such that the College increased its graduation requirements by two to incorporate physical education credits.

Vassar College currently maintains twenty-seven varsity athletic teams, twenty-one of which are designated "All-Academic" by the NCAA, indicating that Vassar athletes share a commitment to prioritizing academics.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gary Walters, "Give Athletics Credit, Literally," Princeton University. Available at:

<<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?key=/ncaa/ncaa/ncaa+news/ncaa+news+online/2007/editorial/guest+editorial+-+give+athletics+credit%2C+literally+-+08-13-07+ncaa+news>>

<sup>2</sup> Mission Statement of Vassar College. Available at: <<http://catalogue.vassar.edu/academiclife.html>>

<sup>3</sup> "All Academic" meaning the team carries a cumulative grade point average of 3.2 or higher. Statistics available at: <<http://www.libertyleaguesports.org/main/vassar>>

### The Proposal

Granting academic credit to varsity athletes would be an extension of the existing option for all students to elect to use physical education credits toward the graduation requirement. Note that the allowance of these credits will still be capped at two, and this option will be purely voluntary. Athletes will be required to register for this credit at the beginning of each semester in consultation with their academic advisor like any other physical education credit. Athletes should see this as supplemental option to their curriculum, adding greater flexibility to their schedules while in season. Freshmen or first year athletes will not be allowed to register for credit during their first year at Vassar.

### Additional Advantages

The granting of credits to varsity athletes will have extended benefits for the entire curriculum. Athletes who might ordinarily fill their schedules with the maximum amount of academic coursework might be less likely to overburden their schedule if their varsity credit counted toward the graduation requirement. The combined effect of this might take pressure off of departmental courses, including Physical Education and Dance. We believe this to be particularly beneficial, as the economic crisis has forced the College to reduce the number of sections offered across the curriculum.

The implementation of this policy would recognize the dedication and excellence of our student athletes. We propose that the Committee on Curricular Policy endorse the granting of academic credit to Varsity Athletes.

Respectfully submitted,

Caitlin Ly  
VSA President

Elizabeth Anderson  
VSA Vice President for Student Life

Brian Farkas  
VSA Vice President for Operations

Stephanie Damon-Moore  
VSA Vice President for Academics

Aaron Grober  
VSA Vice President for Activities

Scott Pascal  
VSA Vice President for Finance

### **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 VSA and Vassar College by extension, must abide by the articles herein:
- B. Approval of Trip:
  1. A request of approval must be made to the VSA VP for Activities a minimum of 4 weeks in advance of the planned trip.
    - a. The VP for Activities, along with the Activities Committee, will make a recommendation to Council to authorize or deny the trip.
    - b. In the case of denial, the organization will have 5 days from the vote of Council to make changes to the formal request, and resubmit to the VP for Activities.
    - c. A second denial by Council is final. This will prohibit the organization from representing the VSA and the College, as well prohibit the use of the organization's budget to fund the trip.
  2. 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 24 hours before the proposed departure.
- C. The members of the trip agree, to the best of their ability, to appropriately represent their organization, the VSA and Vassar College.
  1. Infringements of this agreement include, but 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 25% of the organization's budget or \$500, whichever is less. Council will vote on the appropriate penalty.