

VSA Council Minutes

April 18, 2010

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00

2. Attendance

a. Joss Proxy, Jewett Proxy, TAs & Student Life were Late.

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of the Minutes from 4/11

b. \$300 to Vassar Islamic Society

4. Special Guest: Peter Leonard, Director of Fieldwork

Mr. Leonard arrived to announce that the main project of the fieldwork office was academic fieldwork. One of the things that Vassar excels at is fieldwork. The program has existed for 60 years and involves students working under faculty supervision for credit, somewhere off campus. Resolved to get students to placement with provided transportation. There are currently over 300 students involved in fieldwork and he estimates that at least 75% of students will graduate with some. The goal of fieldwork, according to Mr. Leonard, is to learn from experience. There is currently a dramatic divide between Vassar and the Poughkeepsie Community.

According to him, they are working on keeping the Community Fellow program running over the summer. There used to be 12 slots, this year there were only 8, with 98 applicants. Another job is the Community Action Coordinator, this was currently being phased out and replaced with active promotion by fieldwork students.

Academics wondered if the Prison Program fit the norm for structure. According to Mr. Leonard, the normal structure involved students finding work, internships and then working with fieldwork. The Prison Program is one of their biggest and most important programs.

Raymond wondered how Poughkeepsie had reacted to fieldwork, in addition, he asked that Mr. Leonard speak about the Poughkeepsie Institute. According to Mr. Leonard Poughkeepsie is surprisingly open. He mentioned that even little cities are infinite beings and one will never know all there is to do in a community. The Poughkeepsie Institute started in '94 to study community in America. They create a report and a short video. Each semester, the class ends with a press release.

Activities wondered if there existed a process for review with various programs. There had been some trouble with the Hospitals this past year, it seems that in the past, the volunteer department had been working to do fieldwork, this past year, their Education department discovered this and got upset. In addition, there has been problems based off the economic downturn. As the economy crashes, so does the abilities of these organizations to function properly.

The President noted that they had started a 3 week series on experiential learning. She

wondered how much the fieldwork office worked with other offices and wondered if a central database could exist. Mr. Leonard noted that a central registry could make people view the institution as a nuisance. He noted that the faculty fieldwork committee involved 9 faculty members who were involved and alert, remaining in personal contact. Every Monday, they send out 100 words on the last weeks work.

Raymond asked about the role of fieldwork in sustaining/expanding programs. he was told that there would not be much, if any expansion, due to cuts in the office.

5. Sustainability Proposal

Academics moved to endorse the sustainability proposal. All were in favor.

6. SAVP Proposal

Student Life moved to endorse the SAVP proposal. All were in favor.

7. FAQ's

Student Life moved to endorse the Security FAQ's. There had been a lot of back and forth on these, speaking to Luis, Don and Kim. They had agreed to place these documents in the handbook. Rich Horowitz thought that this was anti-authoritarian. According to SL, Rich had different answers from everyone else for number 12, 13, 14, and 18.

Raymond agreed that a point of contention was the idea that an admin had to be present for opening a door. Currently, this was being debated in CCL and he wondered if they could endorse a policy still in debate. It was decided to strike the line in question.

Noyes worried that Rich would change the document. Student Life noted that this document would lose all meaning if they took his suggestions.

Activities noted that Rich cannot make changes to security protocol, in addition, if Rich changed the document, it would lose Council Endorsement.

TH expressed the need for this document, and felt that attitudes like Rich's exemplified why they were so important.

All were in favor, except Main, who wasn't there.

8. Allocation of \$1,000 from Council Discretionary to Community Action

Finance first moved to moved \$1,000 from Great Works to Council Discretionary. All were in favor.

Community action described their event as a fundraiser for some organizations, while trying to increase contact between Vassar and Poughkeepsie Performers. There would be soul food for \$6 (in advance) or \$8 (at the door).

Noyes wondered why the difference in funds. According to finance they could not spend more that \$1,000 on non-organizations.

9. Open Discussion

2010 announced 31 days until graduation. She also promoted their sweatshirts that say "let us party forever" in Latin.

2012 wondered how the VSA was able to spend \$5,000 on the shuttle, a non-org.

According to Finance, it should have been budgeted last spring, but the finance committee overlooked it.

Operations reminded people to keep their eyes open for elections violations.

Activities reminded organizations to finish their organization reports.

Ruby Cramer announced the Misc Exec Board elections, Molly Turpin is the new Editor in Chief.

Operations congratulated the Misc. on navigated a tough year.

Activities reminded council that Peter Denny would be by to debrief everyone on the Flaming Lips.

THs reminded people about her upcoming event in the THs, there is going to be tie-die, henna, public art and people dancing. It starts at 1:00.

Main promoted her House's upcoming pool party. They will have a snow-cone machine and sports and toys and fun.

Academics invited people to Joss's Earth Day event on Joss Beach. The event was Cheap as Free.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:40