

VSA Senate Meeting Notes
10/25/2020

1. Consensus Agenda

- a. Allocations
 - i. Capital:
 - 1. Bike Shop: \$0/\$50
 - a. Not a capital fund item
 - 2. Big Night In: \$7.77/\$7.77
 - a. Small item needed
 - ii. Discretionary
 - 1. Vassar College Democrats: \$742/\$742
 - a. Collab with vassar republicans
 - 2. ASA: \$250/\$250
 - a. speaker
 - 3. Comedy Normative: \$960/\$1010
 - a. Did Not approve \$50 ask for something unnecessary
 - 4. KoDC: \$210/\$210

2. Executive Board Updates (Executive Board)

- a. Equity and Inclusion
 - i. Disconnect with remote/international students
 - ii. Planning event to help remote students connect with on campus students (on the weekend)
- b. Residential Affairs
 - i. Indoor dining has begun on second and third floors of the deece
 - ii. Food truck -- TAs on wed and THs on thursdays
 - iii. Survey coming out about fall dining experience
- c. Health and Wellness
 - i. In collab with VCPP -- shared resource bins in all basements of doors and TA/THs
 - 1. Menstrual, safe sex, and first aid supplies
 - ii. Participating in spooktacular stroll
 - 1. Trick-or-treat simulation
 - 2. Event from 11am-1pm
- d. Organizations
 - i. Pre org applications and interviews almost done
 - ii. At least 7 more preorgs coming
 - iii. New guidelines for org advisors coming to campus were revised and released
- e. Academics

- i. Spring semester vote coming this wednesday
 - f. Finance
 - i. Allocations
 - ii. Spending has increased
 - g. Programming and Traditions
 - i. Finishing up halloweekend planning
 - h. Operations
 - i. Continued conversation from last weeks senate discussion
 - ii. Sat on alumni association board/meeting yesterday
 - 1. Discussed climate plan for next 10 years
 - i. VSA President
 - i. Changing Traditions (In regards to their origins and practices)
 - 1. General VSA practices
 - a. Make things more equitable and inclusive
 - ii. Board of Trustees Meeting
 - 1. New logo
 - 2. Told them we'd appreciate more/better communication
 - iii. Censuring
 - 1. Be respectful about the situation
- 3. Committee Chair Updates (Committee Chairs)**
 - a. Environmental Action
 - i. No updates
 - b. Planning
 - i. Meeting today at 5
 - ii. Meeting with admin about communication (brought up at operations meeting)
 - c. First-Year Programs
 - i. Planning end of semester event in cooperation with first year experience
- 4. Senator Updates (VSA Senators)**
 - a. Class of 2024
 - i. No updates
 - b. Class of 2023
 - i. Meeting tomorrow about concept of student union/student government in general
 - c. Class of 2022
 - i. No updates
 - d. Class of 2021
 - i. No updates
 - e. College Planning
 - i. Working on short statement to send out on mental health and academics

1. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Lt2P2BD6DkLKG-slcR16wBPKSKOFyV5aJhgLYwc-800/edit?usp=sharing>

5. Constituent Concerns

- a. Space for music orgs and clubs to participate indoors
 - i. Orgs should reach out to Alistair

6. Open Discussion

- a. Chair of Finance: On the Record about Office Renovations
 - i. “As the Chair of Finance, given the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, the large discrepancy between the amount allocated and amount received from the students active fee, and consequent the org budget cuts, I am not in favor of office renovations beyond basic repair to make the space functional this fiscal year.”

7. Workshop

- a. VSA Statement re: Mental Health, Academics
 - i. Space to talk to admin/faculty about how students are struggling
 - ii. Students have gone to faculty directly but not always helped
 - iii. Not a lot of support right now; campus is very isolating
 - iv. Recommendations could be better/more strongly worded
 - v. Points need to be more fleshed out
 - vi. Brainstorming/suggestions
 1. Some professors trying to finish the syllabus/all assignments before thanksgiving break
 2. Encouraging standardization among faculty
 - a. Faculty reaching out to remote students
 3. Difficult transition for first year students
 - a. Be more lenient for class participation-- advice for this
 4. Send out wider survey
 - a. Can send out survey today -- will have data for ops meeting on wednesday
 5. Faculty needs to know that mental health is worse during covid/this semester
 - a. Emphasize how added workload/added stress is causing this
 6. Can send both this and the survey at the same time. Data can come in 'live'
 - a. No delay in sending out second email with results
 - b. Can just include results for wednesday Ops meeting
 7. Work on it over the next 2 days
 - a. Want strong and influential wording--can't be rushed
 - b. Have it checked by Ops and send it out Wednesday night
 8. Faculty should value quality over quantity

- a. Should not be compensating for different learning experiences by substituting new work
- 9. Current version seems very geared towards on campus
 - a. Add question to specify if student is remote or on campus at the beginning
 - i. Add a couple questions about remote learning
 - ii. Can lead to different form depending on the answer
 - iii. Ideal to have same form sent to all students
- 10. Will send the form out to group wednesday night to have it approved, and then will send it out to student body
- b. VSA Slack
 - i. More effective messaging app
 - ii. Can help with communication
- c. Feedback about structure of Senate
 - i. none