

Bowdoin Student Government

BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Meeting of the **Bowdoin Student Government**

11 April 2007

- I. **Call to Order** at 8:09 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call** absent: Charlie
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Rob was not absent last week, he merely came late. Also, Jacquie has several complaints about the spelling of her name. So do I. Approval of Minutes passes unanimously.
- IV. **Reports**
 - a. **President:** DeRay says that the election season is under way. There was also an email sent about the referendum, which is important for the elections coming up. Faculty/Staff is one of our last big events of the year. There are a few things around Ivies time, like the campus photo and 50 Things. We are talking tonight about the College House System, a continuation of the discussion when Kim was here. We all expressed interest in having the conversation when everyone is present. There are two questions to guide the conversation, the first topic is that of identity (what would it mean for houses to have identities) and the second is of upper-class involvement. Should upperclassmen be involved? How should this be achieved? As we go through the discussion, keep in mind that we have all heard people complain about the system. We get that people have problems, and the complaints are easy, but not the best use of our time. We want to entertain ideas about the best possible system at tonight's meeting. Also, (D) under New Business will be a funding request for SARRT programming. We are also coming to a close as the official BSG. Tonight will be one of our last full-agenda meetings. Next week will be in the middle of elections, and the final meeting will be to pass the torch. With that said, we are still the functioning BSG and need to respond of things come up. Committee appointments for next year will be made as well.
 - b. **Treasurer:** Becca says that SAFC is in a perfectly wonderful place. Money went to the Democrats and Obvious got handkerchiefs to dance with. The Art Union is doing public art during Ivies in a Chuck Close-style (a portrait of Barry Mills). Men's volleyball is having a dinner and Meditation is bringing a speaker. BCF and AfAm came for money for food during Gospel Fest. There is money moving around for the speaker coming to talk about sexual assault as well as advertising for this event. Men's Rugby was awarded money for 5 balls instead of their tournament. Solar Fest is May 5. The Longfellows are making a CD.
 - i. Sam asks why rugby was denied. Becca says that they are technically on an operating budget, and should have planned for it a year ago or come in earlier. They will still be able to participate.

- c. IHC President: Alex says that there are two 'R's in SARRT. We are talking about houses later. The big thing that happened last week was a ton of money to bring Racer X for Ivies. It makes Burgess's life. We are also dealing with coordinating a house-system-wide donation for Safe Passage. We want to send boxes of stuff over

V. Old Business

- a. Faculty/Staff Appreciation Day: Carolyn points everyone toward the sign-up sheet for tabling in the Union.
 - i. Burgess says that for superlatives there will be one box for everyone to put the superlatives in. She lists the categories, of which there are 5. One is "make up your own." They are each different colors for ease of sorting. Carolyn continues about the great orange/coral bin that she was lucky enough to find at Wal-Mart. The winners get sparkling cider, for which she searched for the specific variety that she wanted (not grape, the only kind available at Wal-Mart).
 - ii. DeRay mentions that people need to start the buzz. Torri says to email people in the morning. DeRay says that there already was a campus-wide email, and another will be sent.
 - iii. Carolyn continues that people need to sign up for polar pics with profs. We need suit wearers and picture-takers. Shifts are in the Union taking pictures with profs (and staff), or you can go to Searles or something in transition times. Please don't interrupt classes. The picture-taker is the awkward one.
 - iv. We also need an ice-cream social scooper in the pub. DeRay says that the entire faculty and staff, or just the entire staff, are invited to the ice cream social. Also, faculty and staff are invited to lunch. Actually invite professors. There are bargains with dining for this to be easier.
 - v. Additionally, with the professor display, people were excited but needed more time for preparation. It won't happen for tomorrow, but it could happen later.
 - vi. Emily asks how lunch works. Burgess says that there is a sign-up sheet. Carolyn asks for questions, of which there are none.
 - vii. DeRay says that it is important for us to be the first wave of sticker-enthusiasts. Burgess says that Merce won't be here, and asked for a rain check. DeRay says to sign the cards so that it will not be awkward for departments that don't get any.

VI. New Business

- a. College House System Discussion: DeRay introduces the College House discussion. Go! People talked about houses not having identities. People say that there is nothing that binds, for example, Baxter, from year to year.
 - Ben says that these two topics are related. Encouraging juniors and seniors to live in college houses against the stigma (that they are for sophomores) will induce continuity through the years. Rollover could help the creation of identity.
 - Burgess asks if when people leave a house, there is any written record of what people do. Alex answers yes and no. There is a historian in every house, whose job is to record what happens over the year. It is therefore up to the house how well the historian puts together the year's

history. This year there was a bigger effort to check up on, encourage, and guide the recording. Alex White adds that the constitution was changed so that there should be tangible evidence of the history.

- Steph says that we should think about the possibility of having different programming for houses. For example, campus-wide or chem.-free programming is required. If some houses could just be places for kids to live without programming required, people may be drawn to live there.
- Clark says that a big problem is that the rooms aren't as nice as a lot of the other rooms. He is corrected by a number of people. His point no longer seems to be true, so he agreeably detracts it.
- Jacq says that an important part of identity is that it's okay for the dynamics to change. Mac gets people coming back because it has a great, though different, dynamic every year. The houses as they are aren't set up to be attractive to seniors and juniors, who prefer smaller gatherings, for the most part.
- Emily H thinks that we could do something fun like a Field Day with the house and the affiliates. Something that happens annually would include people and encourage them to be tied to the houses. Everybody would be involved, which doesn't happen in Orientation.
- Ben says that he knows there is a tough dynamic between the fraternities and now, but that it might be good to look at what the frats were doing that was good. He mentions having pictures of everyone as something unique to leave behind in the houses. It also may be beneficial to look at the way the college wants to deal with the system. Does it want to be its own body, or to be integrated into the rest of ResLife? If it's a separate system, the work could be done within the houses instead of the tension with trying to reconcile. Events that aren't parties could be an example.
- Bryce says that in terms of the Olympics, it was poorly done. A Field Day during the day could be better, because at night there is temptation to act like it's a party. Bring people outside, have a barbecue. Maybe allowing more mixing instead of the fast pace, etc. could work.
- Sophia says that having freedom within programming is a really good idea. There should be an element of choice within affiliation beyond the chance matter of where you live freshman year. Half of one day could be social house shopping. It could be like Rush in one day. The houses could have activities. It could be more like a competition, with build-up and identity. Programming could be another way to build identity. There are some things that houses are known for, which are always successful.
- Kristen says that there are some returnees, and some alums that stay in touch, but that it is otherwise hard for upperclassman to remain involved. It is hard to know what programming attracts upperclassmen.
- Emily H says that a lot of this is a product of there not being as strong of a link in the beginning. In terms of something as far as dinners, and inviting affiliates to dinner or something, is that done? Alex responds that part of the budget is for dinners, either for proctor groups or specific academic guests. Emily says that there could be collaboration with ResLife, where the proctors could be involved. Alex says that they started doing joint sessions with ResLife. Emily says that people don't mingle, and that it shouldn't be done in ResLife meeting, but in separate collaborative efforts.
- Becca thinks that food is a nice way of bringing people together, and that if there were required dinners and barbecues, that this may work for house unity. The Baxter barbecue is always a lot of fun.

- Torri says that branching out to dorms and affiliates could be done better. Coming back from abroad, she tried to go to parties and everything, but that there isn't branching out in terms of fliers, etc. in upperclassman dorms. She likes Becca's suggestion, because her dorm has tried to do dinners in Thorne, but that this is something that houses could do even in the dining halls. Centering around dinners is a really good idea.
- Dustin agrees about starting early, and a way to do this could be to expand or alter the buddy system. Having upperclassman affiliates in the Buddy system is one idea. Also, to be a house officer, do you have to live in the house? Alex says yes, officially, but in practice, no. Dustin thinks that it could be valuable for officers to be able to be outside the house.
- Lynzie asks about the idea of having first-year reps, and if upperclassmen dorms have reps from the houses. Alex says that there are not official upperclassman reps, but that there are upperclassmen in every house meeting. Sophia says that Quinby doesn't. Other houses have upperclassman involvement. Alex says that house meetings are not closed, and that anyone could go to offer opinions and views. Lynzie says that there could be emails sent to entire dorms for representatives in the beginning of the year. Alex wonders how that would work because upperclass dorms aren't affiliated. Lynzie says that they would ask for people willing to make the connections. How would this work for houses that don't have the identities, like Howell, who is chem.-free? Lynzie responds that they would have to choose which dorms are represented by which houses, and that it would rotate annually. Alicia suggests that it could be part of the job of the RA, who is responsible for programming anyway.
- Jack asks if upperclassmen receive minutes. Alex says that they do send them out. Jack says that the houses do a lot of stuff, and that they can't physically advertise hugely all the time. People who want to be involved can and many people come in with the notion that they don't want to be involved in the system, however cool the programming is. Rob says, "Leave no child behind."
- DeRay asks what could change to increase likelihood of our involvement.
- Carolyn mentions programming in locations besides the houses. Face time throughout campus and dispersal of programming is the idea. Events away from houses remove the stigma of them being college house events and makes them more like campus events. The larger campus community could be involved. There is not enough advantage taken of the Quad. Getting out around the campus and targeting non-central places could help.
- Ben asks if upperclassmen in houses tend to do more to make the houses more effective. Alex says that it is dependent on the individual, but Alex W says that those people pretty much need to be there.
- Becca says that you don't want to force people to be part of the houses, but that keeping in touch with people who have been involved is a good approach.
- Sophia says that they have had successful events when they send individual emails to past residents, who love the house. There was a party for previous residents, which ended up being awesome, with great beer and enthusiasm. We stop focusing our energy on potential people when there is no interest.
- Burgess agrees, and like the point of chooses affiliation. Affiliates could be used if they purposely choose a house. It could be an exciting thing, and the give-and-take of the relationship would add ownership and enthusiasm. That kind of participation would sell people early.
- Alex talks about something that came up and that they struggle with, which is the idea of identity. What would stop a house from being "The Soccer House," for example. The point is to include everyone. There is merit in letting people choose affiliation, but at the same time, we

don't want to divide the campus by what they like. The randomness was what was cool. This is a complicated issue that there are many conversations about.

- Sam thinks that the houses need to be appealing to a lot of people. Alex says that this is part of the reason the blocks are smaller. Unsuccessful houses only engage their friends, and fail to make other connections. People could end up being left out.
- DeRay says that the college does a lot to make sure that people participate in the houses in substantive ways.
- Dustin thinks that a "Soccer House" could remain that. We rely on the college houses a lot, and when they aren't 100% there, the campus is quiet as far as programming and community building. If we make it more selective, we have to think about what drives the system.
- Torri says that you still control who lives in a house, and having first-years choose an affiliation makes houses sell their events. Selling during the first week means that you will end up with a very random group of people. DeRay asks how this would work practically. Torri says that there would still be cutoffs. You are just assed-out if you're that person who slept through your picture or didn't turn in your form. When people are allowed to select, especially first-years who haven't formed groups and don't know people with similar interest, it is hard to ask people to choose. Alex asks if the chem.-free would still be a choice. Torri says that it doesn't need to be a mandate, but that people could choose affiliation with the chem.-free house or with another one. Alex says that it is helpful for first-year affiliates to be in one place as far as targeting, and that connecting is significantly easier. It would be hard for Quinby to go to all freshman dorms and find people spread out. Torri says that it would mean stronger programming at the houses. People need a reason to get up and go to the houses. Alex mentions that she is hearing two very different things. Torri says that you could still do programming on the Quad, but that there doesn't need to be stuff inside the dorms.
- Jack says that as far as choosing houses in the beginning, etc., what makes this different so that it doesn't turn into a fraternity system? The houses are about who's living in them at the time, and the concern is not the best programming. She also thinks that we need to work within the system we have now.
- Dustin thinks that it would be interesting to select a house at the end of the first year. Making the upperclassman affiliation mean something could be achieved in this way. The process would be more informed. Alex says that the problem comes with the fact that houses change every year and could be different events, etc. Dustin says that it could actually fix this. If moving in is bound with affiliating, tradition could be bound in.
- Steph says that (1) because there are eight houses and the student body isn't growing, why is it necessary to spread people out more throughout the houses? It is still new and in the process of growing. Adding houses dilutes the system. Cutting the number of houses and leaving the other as residences might be better for the system. Alex says that they had a number of discussions about the new houses, and that it was a struggle to get people involved when houses had a huge number of affiliates. We decided that it was important to have each dorm paired with a house. That is where the new houses came from—the discomfort from burdening the houses with a huge number of affiliates. Alex admits that it is a problem that there is no small-house residency for upperclassmen. Steph thinks that more upperclassmen will move off campus. Having to comply with programming rules, etc. does not appeal to upperclassmen. Can people put on events in the spaces of the houses? Alex says that there are agreements to sign, but that groups do use the houses. The point is that they are spaces for the whole affiliation to use. Steph thinks that this could be better advertised.

- Torri says that the term we started using was “rush,” which was a mistake. There will consistently be a turnover, which makes it different. People who become affiliates have programming in mind, which is how they sell the houses.
- Alex says that the concern in having houses outside the system is that it would become exclusive. The divide would still be there. There is no reason for people to extend outside if all of their friends live in the house. It is hard to make a party happen. There need to be event hosts, cups, kegs, etc. It is a stressful event. It is okay for houses to be sophomores who are energetic and excited about what it going on. Senior houses would divide people.
- DeRay says that Kim wants tonight’s minutes, so these ideas will get out.
- Sophia says that Quinby was all sophomores. She loves the house, but it was an exhausting experience and she is not living there again. People go abroad and get into other things. A way to reduce this could be having freedom to do different programming based on personality and identity. Alex doesn’t think that there are the quotas that people are mentioning. We ask that there is a variety, but there are not mandates. Sophia says that she, as the house treasurer, got an email about the money left and the programming that they need to do for the rest of the year. There are expectations about what the houses should do.
 - b. End-Of-the-Year Conversation: DeRay says that we all talk about having institutional memory, etc. and that we do a lot in this group. He asks people to respond to the question: “What is student government? Why do we do what we do?” We will have to transition the new officer team, and will have to transfer the idea of what student government is all about and why we do it.
- Sam asks how time between BSG and class elections works. It will be half new and half old BSG. We don’t anticipate meeting after next week. DeRay clarifies that we are doing this so that the officers can come up with an awesome statement.

Begin Statements...

- Clark thinks that the most important thing that a student government does is to serve as the voice of the students. With the administration and the faculty, we know who to talk to with concerns. We also serve as a support for the students in their endeavors.
- Steph says that we are a body that represents and supports the student body.
- Bryce thinks that the student government should look to improve certain functions of the school and act as a force for what the students want.
- Nate says that they should work for the student’s benefit.
- Jack wrote what she would change, which should be less constitutional reform. There are a lot more important issues that they should focus on, and we should become more aware to the campus and their needs.
- Emily K was also thinking about reaching out to the students. People are confused about what goes on.
- Lynzie thinks that we act as a liaison between faculty and students, and that we could work on the connection with students. Random emails about who to contact, etc. could help people a lot. Getting the name of BSG and of people to contact are important. She talked to a senior today who said that BSG should burn. He didn’t understand the purpose.
- Will says that BSG is love, because it takes love to be here. If Rob didn’t love this a little bit, he would walk out. DeRay says that he might, and Rob says that his car is blocked in. BSG is the middle man that connects students to the administration and the community.
- Torri says that we are for the people and by the people, and that we are committed to the people’s best interest. We are the bridge between the college and the students.

- Dooley says that BSG should advance the interests of the student body. They should raise interest and awareness about issues and things that they otherwise may not be interested in.
- Kristen says that it is a place where voices from all parts of campus can come together and discuss issues that are significant to the student body. We need to ask next year: What do people want us to talk about?
- Kata says that she agrees with what has been said, and that sadly, we *have* become the voice of the student government (as Clark misspoke earlier), not the students. Public comments are valuable. It is not our fault, completely, but it would be nice to see more interest and activity.
- Dustin says that this is a place where people can learn to be leaders. It is a practical workshop for leaders. This is the group that gets to be the experts, which is an important idea. This needs to be a repository for knowledge. A goal for the coming year should be in blurring the lines and finding ways for students to interact with administration and get people talking on campus.
- Burgess agrees with what has been said, and thinks that our role has moved into a bad-guy position, which could actually be good. Today's conversation, for example, was a chance to fight the fight of the students in a more public forum. Things might actually happen. If we want to change things, we can get it to happen, and that's what it should be. This is our school.
- Alicia mentions having information trickle down. It shouldn't be confined here, but should spread through campus. As we are doing reforms, we need to advertise and get input more actively.
- Sophia doesn't have a whole lot of new things, but she says that the majority of people here were voted for, so they were entrusted to make decisions. There is a responsibility to know that we are representing people. Our opinions can be given and should matter. We could try to not be paralyzed by certain issues, for example, constitutional reform. There are constraints, but it would be great for this not to happen.
- Becca says that it is important to remember that this is a small part of what everyone in the room does, and that the roles go outside this room. People approach us because they know that we are active, and this is a rewarding thing.
- Sam says that she agrees with Burgess that we are the body that can affect change. As much as we love Bowdoin, there is a lot of room for improvement, and we should work on things that we think should be better.
- Alex L says that we connect that college to the students, but that she feels that the college is the students. They used to run on things that seemed ridiculous, but were actually important to the students. Doing more about things that are basic life concerns should be part of the BSG and our impact.
- Emily H. agrees with Burgess and Sam, and that we do have a big impact, even when we have a symbolic stance. People take notice of reports in the Orient and the connections that we make. We should also make the specific roles more clear.
- Carolyn says that this is a body to effect change. Also, the body entrusts our judgment in giving us their votes. We bring niches of campus together and weave them together to be one Bowdoin student body.
- Ben says that this is a place where reps. should speak in a manner that best represents their constituents. We could do more about responding to the students and acting on this. Why did we move here, for example? We need to be in Daggett or the Union, even. We should be the voice of the people, but we often aren't, and need to break out of this routine. Also, we should realize that our opinions are not the majority of the campus. Rob and Alex W., for example, have views that are more insightful to that of the general Bowdoin population.

- Rob says that Ben is right. What BSG is to me: it is a group of diverse and committed individuals that tackles important issue. We also like to repeat ourselves weekly in a stuffy barn located on the very edge of campus (or something along these lines).
- Alex W appreciates a lot of what Ben said. He has only been here a semester, is happy he was part of this, and realizes a lot more of the effort put into getting shit done. Also, he hopes that what he saw this semester isn't indicative of what BSG is. It was mostly about the group itself and not who we represent. He was put off by the vibe of self-importance.
- DeRay says that they will try to come up with a reflection. We have a top-down system. We certainly did talk about ourselves a lot, but another 5 seconds is another BSG moment. We need to focus on the little stuff, and know that this is important but not talked about. The committees need to be better, and people should take ownership. This isn't easy, and we have done a phenomenal job. Faculty wants to be invited to the meetings, and the work that we do is good. He is happy that people left frustrated sometimes.
 - c. Movie Tickets Funding Request: Will says that we know what this is. Tickets keep selling out, and the money almost makes itself back. We have between \$650 and \$950. We are moving money around. Will says that the minimum that we can order is 50 tickets.
- Jackie asks how long it took the previous tickets to sell out.
- Dustin asks how the money works. We will get back \$250, but the money from the shuttle gets the net loss smaller. Alicia asks if the people use the shuttle as well. Will doesn't think so. This is the universal shuttle. It varies from weekend to weekend. That's the way it goes.
- Becca doesn't think that it's worth it.
- Emily asks if we will get \$250 back. Yes.
- Torri wonders if they could sell after 6 or 7. Will says that they sell tickets after hours, or that they should. Torri says that they haven't done this. It could be an issue of training.
- Sam thinks that we should do this. People utilize it. Will says that this is absolutely direct.
- Ben asks if we can afford to lose \$100 on something that has twice sold out, and we represent students, it is absolutely something to do.
- Becca doesn't think that we should deficit spend. Will says that he could raise the price of the tickets.
- Steph agrees with Ben. People love this, and it sells out, so why shouldn't we provide it. Clark thinks that we absolutely should do it. Torri asks about the other request, which is \$200.
- Those in favor: Everyone except Opposed: Becca
 - a. Funding Request for SARRT: Alex says that she got an email from someone from BMASV. One of the lawyers who helped to put together the policy is coming. They need the money, and this is an important thing for us to support. He will run three sessions, one for staff, one for all students, and one for male students. He is a speaker and a lawyer. It is coming from SARRT, SafeSpace, BMASV, and a number of other sources.
- Becca says that it is the Wednesday before Ivies, which would be a good time to talk about this. He costs \$6000 total.
- Carolyn wants to know where other money is coming from. The Classes of 2008, 2009 are both giving \$100, IHC will make up what doesn't happen, Helmreich gave \$300, Mac \$150, and the deans are chipping in \$1000 for travel. SAFC is giving \$4500 and Reslife may kick in. Becca says that the dean's office would like to give less. The deans feel like they made it happen, so

they will blunt the costs. Their office doesn't really want to use their funds to pay for this, and are reaching out to places to get it.

- Carolyn says that they are over budget now. The \$1000 is a theoretical number. Carolyn agrees that we should give something to this effort, but has frustration with the dean's office shifting the payment for this onto classes, the body, etc. It seems very hypocritical. Given what we have, she supports funding in some capacity.
- Dustin says that he can promise \$300. You can never predict how much newspapers will cost or how much this room costs to rent. DeRay mentions the campus photo. Dustin says that we can do more concrete things, and that this is one of them. We will need to be creative about funding later.
- Torri asks why Alex brought this here. Alex is involved in this, and that is why she came to spoke about it.
- Alicia asks why there is a separate forum for males. Becca says that he focuses on males. Alicia could see Safe Space members or other girls wanting to be involved. Alex says that it is all about this guy's program and BMASV. Everyone can hear from him at some point.
- Clark says that they came to the class meeting and that their class would give \$250 if they asked the same for other classes. He doesn't think that BSG should be a place to come for money.
- Sam says that he thinks it is important for BSG to give something. We wanted to push this policy, and this is the only way that people will be able to see something beyond a document. He would prefer to give \$100 instead of \$200. Alex says that she wants this to pass and for us to fund this in some way. It would be irresponsible for us not to do something. We should get whatever we can.
- Those in favor of \$100: Unanimous

VII. Reports (Continued)

a. Classes

- i. Emily H. says that they got sweatshirts.
 - ii. Clark mentions that they are planning a supersnack-like event for the class in Dagget before Ivies, which is when they will give out remaining sweatshirts.
 - iii. Sam says that they are ordering sweatbands and planning a pubnight for the end of the year. Ben also refers to Solar Fest, Relay for Life, and a hip-hop show, which the class is helping to sponsor.
 - iv. Alicia says that there is an information session for first-years as well as a pubnight and t-shirts coming up.
- b. CSC Representative: Emily says that this is kNOw Poverty week, and that there are still a number of events this week. Relay for Life and the Blood Drive are coming up.
- c. IHC Representatives: Alex mentions a holding pattern.
- i. Jacque talks about a successful art walk. Sophia adds that Quinby is having a toga party, a barbeque, study breaks, professor lectures, a dinner with advisors, and a former/future party.
 - ii. Kristen refers to Relay for Life.
- d. ResLife Representative: Lynzie says that Ivies is coming up. Alcohol is bad and freshman shouldn't be drinking it, but they are.

- e. A-Board Representative: Rob disagrees. Alcohol is great and freshman should be drinking it. A-board has laser tag this Friday. Ivies is just around the corner, and Charles the Speaker is coming.
- f. Academic Affairs: Burgess says that she is going to the Library Advisory Committee meeting on Friday.
- g. Student Affairs: Carolyn says that the attendance policy meetings are intense, and that it was revised this week. It is going in front of the faculty and there is a prayer in hell that it will pass. They tried to incorporate professor's comments. She is reading off when people signed up for tomorrow. Please come and help with this effort. Encourage involvement among your friends.
- h. Student Organizations: Steph is indignant about the accusatory remarks directed toward her and the Faculty/Staff sign-up sheets. She is always active in tabling. SOOC is figuring out ways to round out the year.
- i. Facilities: Will says that 50 thing is going out on Friday. Bryce says that the Facilities Meeting went well. Will met with Randy, who wants to redo the webpage. They could do that as an end-of-the-year project with the committee. He also mentioned something that he requested be off the record. However, Dustin waved for me to continue typing, and I'm very torn as to what to do in this situation. I guess I'll just see if I get yelled at during approval of the minutes next week.
- j. BSG Affairs: Dustin will get a budget report and closing-up next week. The Community Response Committee is not dead, but will be worked on by next year's team.

VIII. Adjournment at 10:21 p.m.