

Bowdoin Student Government

BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Meeting of the **Bowdoin Student Government**

28 Nov. 2007

- I. **Call to Order** at 8:36 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Amir Abdullah, Dennis Burke, and Sam Scully are absent.
- III. **Approval of the Minutes:** Dustin asks everyone to look at the minutes. Motion to approve the minutes. Approval passes unanimously.
- IV. **President's Welcome:** Dustin says that this is a real meeting and emphasizes this statement with several pounds of the gavel. Travis will undoubtedly report what we will be talking about tonight. This is the first meeting with the real BSG gavel. Ten people went to "Inside Hazing" with Dr. Lipkin, a presentation immediately before tonight's meeting. She and the program were insulting, degrading, demeaning, and irrelevant to Bowdoin's situation. It was overall a poor representation and response to what is going on. Tonight is Clark Gascoigne's last meeting. This marks the end of his BSG career. Darren says that he can't go bowling, then. Clark says that he offered to stay on until we find a replacement. Clark explains that he is overbooked and it is in everyone's best interest to find a representative who can be fully committed. Dustin says that because the Cabinet is sponsoring the Hazing Bill tonight, Clark will be chairing the meeting when the bill is addressed. Hazing is the day's word. We are also doing movie tickets.
- V. **Public Comment Time:** Travis doesn't have a comment. He's waiting for the right moment.
- VI. **New Business**
 - a. **Hazing Proposal:** Clark takes Dustin's place and calls order. He asks the distinguished gentleman from Island Falls to present the hazing proposal. Dustin says that everyone should have seen this, unless they skipped their committee meetings. Nothing should be a surprise. The meat is the policy itself. In terms of why we are doing this, there are a number of reasons: to act as a response to the conversation that has been going on recently, because of our role as leaders on campus, in the interest of the way we ask club to conduct themselves, and to make a statement as to how we, as a community, see what happens on teams. This is part of our policy of affirmative practice, where we can deem what *is* okay in terms of the social aspects of clubs and club bonding. Clark opens the meeting for comments, questions, concerns, opinions.

- Sam D wonders if we are talking about the ideas or the wording. Are we creating something that is the verbatim account of what we present? Dustin says that this is less of a resolution than it is “The Rules“ by which the SOOC and SAFC approach these issues.
- Bryce points out that a lot of the stuff under “Acceptable Practices“ would be hazing under the definition of the presenter from tonight. He likes this version and thinks that the presenter’s opinions would have negative consequences.
- Dan wonders if our intention is to hopefully see something like this in the handbook or something like that. Dustin says that this will be the first time when a group of students has put forth a way of talking about and defining this issue. It can be a centerpiece for how it is addressed in the future.
- Ben F says that the presenter said “psychological“ a lot. Do we want to include that somewhere?
- Rutledge wonders if we feel like hazing is necessarily a problem that needs to be addressed, or if this is “Fun Police“ legislature.
- Alison says that it is better for us to construct a positive framework for clubs than to sit back and allow a negative definition to be imposed. The way it is being looked at has the potential to hurt students if we don’t step up to frame it in a certain way.
- Sam D says that they wanted to draw a distinction between positive team-building and negative, demeaning, “hazing“ activities. This is a way to say that we don’t condone hazing, but that team-building does occur in helpful ways.
- Kristen says that it is good for us to be pro-active about this, given the way that the administration is concerned with this. We are getting ahead of the curve, in a way. If this is something that we are committed to addressing, it’s good for us to have something on the books.
- Sam K says that he finds the Response to Concerns section troubling. It seems like after the first couple sections, the part about punishing clubs stands out. It makes less sense for the entire club to be punished because hazing often happens in small groups. Maybe we should say that this document should be applied in conjunction with the social code enforcement practices.
- Rutledge says that in light of Bryce’s comments, it seems that there is a wide interpretation of what constitutes hazing. Some hyper-sensitive student could be put through a tough time that is meant for a positive end, and it could get the entire club’s charter taken away. It could really come from a misunderstanding. How are we actually handling this? J-Board is famous for over-reacting, and there is danger for that here.
- John C says that the reason we have the entire Cabinet in addition to the SOOC looking at the proposal is to prevent arbitrary action on anyone’s part. He doesn’t think a kid having a bad week will fool the boards and the Cabinet.
- Will says that he understands that it looks like we are policing, but the intent is that it’s better to keep these things internalized. We have a budget that is independent and that we are responsible for. We need a functioning policy to determine how we will react so that we don’t lose the power that is invested in us every year. It’s an issue of maintaining the conduct of these clubs.

- Dan says that it isn't within the scope of the BSG to determine whether or not something is hazing. The J-Board is set up to deal with violations of the social code. The BSG doesn't have the resources or the authority to take these situations and determine whether or not they are hazing. Yes, the SOOC is responsible for Club life, but their role should be active after the J-Board makes the determination. It is a weird mixing of BSG becoming a judicial board.
- Sam D says that the first part covers the policing concern: it says that we are not looking for incidents, but rather waiting to hear about something that's happened. He disagrees that this is overstepping, because we *are* responsible for club life. The J-Board deals with individual cases, not clubs. Given that we do oversee clubs, this is well within our purview. We have largely elected members from the SOOC and SAFC and those elected on BSG...people that the student body has shown trust in.
- Ben F says that it seems odd that if 3 kids on a team go and do something that doesn't involve the team, the whole group could potentially be jeopardized. For a club to be restricted like that seems weird. He would motion to strike the last section.
- James points out that we are all elected, but this reasoning goes into why the J-Board is made up of students. In dealing with this ourselves and keeping it within our discussion, he's concerned that the discussion doesn't end here. The punishments could double up. (Why is this a problem?)
- Bryce says that the acceptable practices could be very subjective. There should be a statement that people can opt out of "club activities". Will says that there is a clause. Bryce says that there needs to be a system for team members to go to others on the team first. We should be able to go there to say that we're not comfortable.
- Will says that anyone could go to their leaders. We can't force people to address the issues internally. We are dealing here with a matter of maintaining our autonomy and legitimacy as an overseeing body. If we don't have this, what's to prevent the dean's office to making or revoking club charters do deal with problems? We would start losing our authority and the SOOC would be completely negated. This is to keep it in the student context...to be able to advocate. The policy now is pretty conservative, and we are defining what it means to us.
- Dooley says to think that when we sat down and wrote this, the goal was to lay down guidelines. This was meant to be a dynamic policy. Our intent is not to carry out punishments unfairly. This is not a hand-of-God type document.
- Alison says that the 2nd-to-last paragraph only includes group punishment. Maybe we should say that there are ways to handle this on an individual basis.
- Nicole says that with individuals, we don't have the responsibility to be doling punishment. For these situations, we are talking about structured activities. If three people separate themselves, then those individuals will be individually accountable. When there are organized activities in question, then we would review the Charter. This doesn't look to punish individuals.
- Dan is uncomfortable that hazing is not unique to club life, because there will be different policies for clubs and athletic teams. Also, he questions whether or not

the SOOC has the scope as a body to investigate things. He doesn't understand how that would work. How would they get information, etc. That isn't something that we are set up to do. A complaint isn't enough and can't be taken as self-evident.

- Ben F doesn't think that this should fall under the jurisdiction of the SOOC. He asks Nicole and Will: Why would you want to have to do this, as fellow students? You would have to analyze actions of your peers and slap them on the wrist. The entity wasn't meant to have that much power. It's not the right place.
- Dustin says that this isn't an addition of the SOOC's power in any capacity. Right now, the SOOC and SAFC are responsible for chartered groups. They sometimes deny money because the groups have died, because they have stolen money, etc. They assign account numbers and delegate money weekly. Now the baking club hazes its members. (May it be clear that this situation is entirely fictional, constructed by Dustin for illustrative purposes) It is brought to the administration and they handle it. It was clearly a structured activity: hazing these 5 new bakers. Something has to happen to the baking club. There is no structure within Student Affairs. The J-Board specifically can't deal with issues that aren't individual cases. A Dean could deal with this issue. Or, the SOOC/SAFC would be asked to do something. The way clubs are dealt with, they *would* be asked to do something.
- Darren says that regarding the power struggle, the important thing to remember is that there is no proactive policing. Athletics is a separate issue and is not under our jurisdiction. This issue is a responsibility of the BSG. We need a positive definition of what hazing is. A lot of clubs that have taken flack are not actually doing dangerous things. This is a way of giving those groups something to turn to.
- Sam K is concerned that this policy is not fitting. If he's a first year baker, and he knows that there is the danger of the group disappearing if he comes forward with a complaint, this is a problem. This needs to remain on an individual basis.
- Tony says that to an extent, there is significant leeway in this bill, and we are over-analyzing it. The leaders should be monitoring what is happening within these groups. There is no I in team.
- James says that for something to be structured within a club, everyone would have to be an active member. The lady who presented said that the largest group involved are bystanders. Disbanding the group would be hurting the bystanders, who may not have had an active role. If it was entirely structured, the J-Board would handle each person.
- Alison doesn't think that the wording reflects what Dustin said. It looks like this person is first addressing the BSG, not like they are going through the administration and the J-Board.
- Bryce notes that nudity should be taken from unacceptable activities on the grounds that there are parties with no clothing. Dooley asks where he hangs out. Bryce says that there are these parties, which are structured activities. They are not his thing.

- Will says that in terms of investigation, we need to not be afraid of taking on more responsibility and consider things seriously. In the past, there has been fiscal irresponsibility without records and accounts. We are solidifying something here to take on responsibility and react maturely. The clubs must to be bound to the honor code when they are chartered. It is therefore appropriate that there be a policy to handle this. The SOOC is considering new charters this year very seriously. He cites the considerations that went into the Pucinian Society Charter. We have already does investigation in other areas. Also, in terms of the toolbox: the SOOC, as peers of these club members, will not immediately revoke charters. There are other things to consider, like changing club leadership. The group acts rationally in passing judgments here. Another thing to keep in mind is that any punishment can only last two semesters. We don't want to let things slide. Teams get entire seasons canceled for major violations, so this seems appropriate.
- Clark points to the quote of the day: "Brevity is the soul of wit." Rutledge asks if this is in reference to his cutting his term short.
- Sam D would support adding a paragraph to the response portion that would say that the SOOC would question whether this is an issue of the whole team or of individuals to allow for people who weren't involved to continue.
- Nicole thinks that by enacting this document, we are saying that the student body doesn't endorse hazing activities. There's no way to tell a captain that something is wrong, because there is no document that lays down guidelines. This allows us to empower members with these statements so that they can say something when they are uncomfortable.
- Dan says that there is a total lack of a campus-wide policy. What we are doing seems a procedural concern. We have to take a step back. The problem is that hazing is not addressed in any other areas. There needs to be a conversation that includes a number of areas of campus that defines hazing so that we can then go about dealing with it. He thinks that we should take the bullet points and present them differently: present a list of acceptable activities to start a conversation with all these groups.
- Ben F motions to take out the "Response to Concerns" section. There wasn't much of a discrepancy on the first page, and it isn't appropriate to have a procedural part on this bill. The motion is seconded.
- Dooley thinks Ben is really wrong. This document should show the administration that we are serious about holding our clubs responsible. We may see that a conversation would come up from making a strong statement like this. Without the response section, this is just another esoteric motion. This last section solidifies it as a statement and a response.
- Bryce agrees with Ben but has a question. Is the only time there is a response is when there is a written statement? If he finds out about something, is he obliged to bring it forward? No. Anything brought forward like that is as a student, not a BSG member.
- Dustin agrees with Ben that there are parts that have broad approval. The way to do this is to split the clauses instead of eliminate one. He would ask that we think carefully about passing a bill without substance attached to it (a favorite

pattern of the BSG). He would rather we have our statement of purposes out there, and he would rather there be a process.

- Alison says that there is almost unanimous agreement with the first sections. It is a great step to put that definition out there. The sooner we get these principles out, the better. If that takes separating the documents, then that's what we need to do. She agrees that the SOOC and SAFC can take action, but it needs to be flushed out more.
- Sam D agrees but thinks that we should present this as two separate bills. Also, the first three sections are the definition of hazing. We are starting that conversation. We should present the second part as another thing.
- Dustin moves to amend Ben's amendment to put the last clause in a separate bill.
- Nicole wonders why we would ever pass responses to concerns without passing the rest of it.
- Dustin doesn't think that the latter half would pass without the first. Nicole thinks that these two things are inextricable.
- Jess thinks that the first half can be left separate as a unified opinion. Then it can move to a full school discussion. Then the SOOC and SAFC can design rules like they did for the Swahili Club, maybe.
- Liza thinks it's hard to say that we don't approve without answering the "so what?" part. If something comes up and there is no response, we will be scrambling. Splitting it will not work in our favor.
- Alison thinks that it is better to have one than nothing at all. Nothing will pass if we keep it as one. We should eventually figure out what to do, but that shouldn't be at the expense of stating our opinions.
- Dustin doesn't think that this is condition-less if we pass the first part. We need to have principles.
- Rutledge wonders if he is the victim of hazing, how does he know that this document exists?
- Dustin says that he doesn't think this will be the first thing that one comes to. A student will look in the handbook. No one will come to us first. It will come after a judicial process. Would a student really look for Will first to respond to a hazing incident?
- Will would rather have something as a guide if something should come up. We will never hash this out to everyone's satisfaction. There is nothing critically wrong here. We can fix things if they seem wrong. He would rather have the framework there to test out and possibly fuck up, but it gives him and Nicole a structure to work within if something needs to be addressed.
- Darren thinks that separating is important because we need to have the policies out there. Policies from other places won't look anything like this. This document is much more relevant and can give people ideas in examining this in other areas.
- Nicole feels like we have been struggling this semester in asking what we can do on campus. We talked in a circle talking about things that we can tangibly do. This is an opportunity to use what is within our purview and not just make a statement, but to use what we do have and use it to everyone's advantage. She

would much rather be in front of students than deans that don't have a concept of what it means to be in these situations. We are a student government and should be passing usable legislature.

- Ben F says that students judge each others' action much more harshly than deans do. Adults have a better concept of second chances. We are still passing something...a definition that can hopefully be used by the college. Why not pass something to have a definition?
- Alison would agree with Ben. She doesn't think that we aren't being proactive. We aren't throwing out a response. We will address it and pass something that we decide appropriately describes the power of the SOOC and SAFC.
- Justin thinks that while it is true that adults are more forgiving, he doesn't see this as the case in terms of hazing. Students understand team-building. Keeping this together and working on it continually, we are strengthening the BSG and might encourage the administration to come to us, instead of us having to turn to them. We should have a foundation. We can't have a blueprint without laying out any groundwork.
- Vote on amendment to split the legislation: Those in favor: Bryce, Ben L, Kata, Hannah B, Sam D, James, Alison, Sam K, Darren, Ben F, Jass, Kristen, Christian, Dan, Clark (15)

Those Opposed: Rutledge, Will, Justin, Nicole, Liza, Tony, Dooley (7)

Amendment to Amendment Passes

- Considering Ben's original amendment. There is no difference, as this vote addresses the exact same consideration as the last.
- Discussion on the first piece of legislation
- Kristen echoes Bryce. She wants to strike nudity. It can be acceptable.
- Sam D wants to move to end discussion because we end in 15 minutes. We can talk about this in committee.
- Rutledge points out that there are a lot of sports that are clubs. Their structured activities include the potential for physical harm and verbal abuse that exist with the nature of the game. He's of the belief that hazing is not a major issue on campus.
- Dooley says that nudity was included because, although they thought about when nudity is acceptable, there are a lot of things that go unnoticed. One of these things is body image issues. There is the potential for peer pressure, which isn't where they wanted clubs to be.
- Sam D says that they started passing the professor sheet for sign-up.
- Alison thinks that this policy addresses outside the game context. She plays rugby, and it doesn't say that you can't hurt people in the game. Rutledge is just pointing out the irony. Clark calls order.
- Ben L doesn't like nudity, but thinks that it should say "forced nudity". Team showers are a choice, for example. He also thinks that intimidation is a beautiful thing (he receives Rutledge's support in this belief). He is not pro-hazing, but intimidation teaches people to be strong. Intimidation happens without people doing things intentionally. Rutledge is huge and he's intimidated by him. It just naturally happens.

- Kata says that we are drifting away from the point of this. BSG doesn't care that people shower naked. In terms of intimidation, some people simply aren't comfortable and confident, as Ben L clearly is. Ben responds that he think that he is at all, but that he actually struggles with body image issues.
- Will encourages everyone to push forward.
- Discussion on the second piece of legislation: response to concerns. Dustin moves to table and refer to a presidential committee for anyone who's interested.
- Bryce thinks we should say a little more about what the committee should be looking at. Darren says that that will be done in the committee/group thing.
- Vote to table and move to committee: Unanimous except for Bryce, who is opposed. ***Motion to Table Passes***
 - b. Movie Tickets: The boys switch places again. Dooley says that they ordered more movie tickets a couple weeks ago. They are down to 10 already.
- Nicole says that because this is so popular, she moves to vote tonight. Those in favor of voting immediately: seeing 2/3
- Those in favor: unanimous ***Funding for Movie Tickets Passes unanimously***

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Student Activities Funding Committee: Nicole says that they finished fall semester before Thanksgiving and had the first meeting for spring semester allocations.
- b. Student Affairs Committee: Tony says that there is a canned food drive competition. They are meeting this Sunday about Red Cup.
- c. BSG Affairs Committee: Kata says that they are talking about hazing. They are filling Clark's seat and a Community Service Rep. position as well.
- d. Student Organizations Committee: Will says that they chartered Model UN and they reduced the Republican's status to Charter 2 for withdrawing funds that they were not allocated. They acquired a signature accidentally because of clerical errors. There has been a thorough investigation. They will get Charter 1 back at the beginning of next academic year.
- e. Academic Affairs Committee: Sam D says that he and Dustin are meeting with Mary Pat and Dena Cornish, who's bringing a proposal regarding what academic advising and peer advising will look like. The CEP forwarded the motion to the faculty regarding Credit/D/Fail. He is speaking on Monday after a lot of preparation. He's terrified. Pass on any thoughts about Credit/D/Fail. He is meeting with Dean Judd about academic instruction for clubs on Thursday. Get confirmation ASAP about bringing Professors to the meeting.
- f. Facilities Committee: Dooley says that they talked a lot about hazing. They have concrete plans for the use of OneCard downtown. Ben F is working a lot on that. The Parking Pass raffle is extended one more day. We are selling at the BSG dinner tomorrow and drawing at 6:30. It's embarrassing how little people sign up for

VIII. Member Reports

a. Class Representatives

- i. 2008: Ben L says that they had an awesome bowling night. This week is the ball.
- ii. 2009: Christian says that they have pub night right now. They are looking at Junior/Senior Ball and are mourning the loss of Drew Edwards.
- iii. 2010: Bryce says that pub night went well. They hit major snags with the sweatpants. Rutledge elaborates that they wasted hundreds on youth mediums and smalls. They hope to make up for it during recess hours. Francis is responsible.
- iv. 2011: Hannah says that they have pub night tomorrow and are talking about getting the class to bond.

b. CSC Representative: Alison says that she's scheduling meeting with the high school people next semester. There's a summer fellowship opportunity meeting tomorrow night.

c. A-Board Representative: James says that they have a masseuse coming for SunSplash. They aren't sure whether Bob Marley will accept the bid to come as a comedian. He is not talking about the dead Jamaican. There is a magician this Friday at 8. They don't have a final tally yet for Ivies.

d. Res-Life Representative: Sam K says that semester break housing forms are online.

e. IHC Representatives: Kristen says that they are set for the end of the semester. They have one more meeting. Dan says that there is a focus group for ReOrientation. Burnett is bringing a band to Quinby. Dan mentions his Holiday party on Saturday night.

IX. President's Report: Dustin says that anyone who wants to work on the hazing bill should email John Connolly. He will be getting in touch with people about the rest of the semester. Dooley says that he will be getting in contact with people about that timeframe. Dustin urges people to talk to students about this.

X. Adjournment at 10:05 pm