

# Bowdoin Student Government

## Meeting Agenda

12/08/10 - Daggett Lounge

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. President`s Welcome
- IV. Public Comment Time
- V. Guests
- VI. Old Business
  - a. Fall Break Scheduling
  - b. Veterans Proposal
- VII. New Business
  - a. End of Semester Survey
  - b. Health Services Event
- VIII. Committee Reports
  - a. BSG Affairs Committee
  - b. Student Activities Funding Committee
  - c. Student Affairs Committee
  - d. Student Organizations Oversight Committee
  - e. Academic Affairs Committee
  - f. Facilities Committee
- IX. Member Reports
  - a. Class Representatives
  - b. IHC Representatives
  - c. E-Board Representative
  - d. Athletics Representative
- X. President`s Report
- XI. Adjournment

# Bowdoin Student Government

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# Bowdoin Student Government

## Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101106

Proposed by: Academic Affairs Committee

Date: December 5, 2010

### RESOLUTION REGARDING THANKSGIVING BREAK CALENDAR AND FALL BREAK NAME CHANGE

#### Opinion

#### Thanksgiving Break Length:

Fall break and Thanksgiving break are two important periods of rest and family visitation for Bowdoin students during the fall semester. As the calendar currently stands, fall break is four days long and consists of a weekend and the subsequent Monday and Tuesday. Thanksgiving break is currently five days long. The first day of Thanksgiving break is officially a class day, but the College mandates that courses on that Wednesday “will be rescheduled on a class-by-class basis by the course instructor.”

Many students, faculty, and staff feel that these breaks are “geographically discriminatory” and that neither break provides sufficient time for those who live or have relatives far away from Maine to travel for the holidays.

The College should extend Thanksgiving break by four more days to a total length of nine days, while keeping fall break at its current length of four days.

This scheduling change should be enacted because:

- Students finding it impractical to travel home on a five-day break will have more options if the break is extended to nine days.
- The day before Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the year, causing steep ticket prices and hectic driving. The proposed change would allow students to book flights for earlier days, which could result in dramatic savings in time and money and make the journey home safe and more feasible for a wider array of students regardless of their socioeconomic status.
- Bowdoin’s academic calendar would more closely reflect those of many peer institutions.
- Students would have time to study for finals or relax before finals period commences.
- Professors would benefit from all of the above and could also use the added flexibility in their schedules to catch up on grading and prepare final exams.

This goal could be accomplished through a variety of different changes, several of which are listed below:

- (a) Classes could begin one day earlier on a Wednesday (and thus all pre-semester activities, such as Pre-Orientation trips, the Bowdoin Science Experience, and Residential

Life training will also begin a day earlier) in order to provide an actual vacation day on the Wednesday of Thanksgiving week. The “reschedule day” that is currently on Wednesday will be pushed earlier in the week to Monday, and an additional “reschedule day” will be added for the Tuesday of that week. With this option, no classes would officially be dropped from the schedule and arrival day for First-Years both going on Pre-Orientation trips and those arriving after these trips would be close to the weekend (Monday and Friday respectively). The proximity of these days to the weekend will make it easier for parents and/or guardians of First-Year students to take off a day from work to help their student move in.

- (b) The academic year could be shortened by the removal of the Monday and Tuesday of the current Thanksgiving break week (and Wednesday would be kept as a reschedule day).
- (c) The current Wednesday “reschedule day,” which many professors do not make use of, could be removed by beginning classes a day earlier as in suggestion (a) above, with Monday and Tuesday still being cut—similar to option (b) but the Wednesday “reschedule day” would become an actual day of break.
- (d) Classes could begin two days earlier so that Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week could be taken off without losing any class days. First-Year students going on Pre-Orientation trips would then be arriving on a Sunday instead of Monday, which might make parents/guardians helping their student move in even more feasible.
- (e) Orientation could be shortened to allow classes to begin one day earlier, on the Wednesday, without affecting other start-of-the-year activities. This change would compensate for one additional day of break, and then an additional day could come from any combination of the above including another “reschedule day” or merely removing the day of class.

Any of these changes would result in an entire week class-free. The weekends before and after that week would create a break nine days long, as opposed to the current five days, and several these proposals accomplish the goal of a nine day break without eliminating any days of class.

#### Fall Break Name Change:

In addition to this Thanksgiving break length change, the name of fall break should be changed to “reading period.” With an extended Thanksgiving break encouraging more students to return home for the holiday, students should be encouraged to remain on campus for the comparatively short fall break, and this name change will help to encourage that process by re-orienting the thinking about the break to recognize that it is often geared more towards studying than relaxing. Not only would this change potentially reduce Bowdoin’s carbon footprint (without altering anything but the name of the break) by encouraging fewer students to travel, it also follows the practice adopted by some peer institutions.

#### Action Requested

The Bowdoin Student Government requests that the College Calendar for future academic years be modified to extend Thanksgiving break to nine days utilizing one or a combination of the methods listed above or by other means that maintain the current length of fall break. Should Thanksgiving break be lengthened, fall break should be renamed “reading period” to encourage more students to stay on campus so as to offset the potential environmental impact of more students returning home for Thanksgiving.

# Bowdoin Student Government

## Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101108

Proposed by: Anirudh Sreekrishnan on behalf of George Aumoithe '11, Rory Brinkmann '11, Sean Campos '11, Nick Daniels '12, Amanda Gartside '12, and Steve Robinson '11.

Date: Decemeber 1, 2010

### **VETERANS PROPOSAL FOR BOWDOIN STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

#### **Opinion**

Bowdoin Student Government requests that the Office of Admissions actively recruit academically qualified veterans beginning with the Class of 2016, with the aim of having a few such students in each matriculating class. The Office of Admissions is under pressure to meet the demands of many constituencies on campus; BSG recognizes this, and submits that it is nonetheless a priority to bring a few veterans to campus.

- 1.) Veterans have experiences, ideas, and perspectives that no other types of students do. They would contribute to the intellectual vitality and diversity of the College, enhancing the academic experience of students and faculty alike.
- 2.) There are among the men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan some of the future leaders of our country, and these are people whom we want to have Bowdoin degrees. The College's own commitment to the Common Good makes us particularly aware of the sacrifices made by those who have served our country.
- 3.) The College's commitment to recruiting the best students in America should not be restricted to 18-year-olds who are seniors in high school. We recognize that there is more than one path to Bowdoin, and that participation in the armed forces should not preclude talented students from being recruited and admitted.
- 4.) The Bowdoin community has long had a warm relationship with the armed forces. Many recent graduates have become officers, two recent high-profile alums attended Bowdoin after serving (Wil Smith '00 and Alex Cornell de Houx '06), and the Naval Air Station in Brunswick has made this community welcoming towards veterans.
- 5.) The new Yellow Ribbon Program makes bringing veterans to Bowdoin a financially-positive proposition. With the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) providing a housing stipend, a contribution based on the tuition at the University of Maine—Orono, and matching funds for Bowdoin grants, veterans can afford the College, and Bowdoin can afford them.

- 6.) This policy is not unprecedented; Stanford, Dartmouth and the College of William and Mary have recently been recruiting and admitting veterans as undergraduates. Students and faculty at these institutions have been very supportive of the veterans on their campuses. And while some veterans need additional support services, these expenses are easily covered by the financial support conferred by the Yellow Ribbon Program.

**Action Required**

Bowdoin Student Government requests that the Office of Admissions actively recruit academically qualified veterans beginning with the Class of 2016, with the aim of having a few such students in each matriculating class.

# Bowdoin Student Government

## Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101109

Proposed by: Anirudh Sreekrishnan on behalf of Peer Health

Date: November 10, 2010

### **FUNDING FOR HEALTH SERVICES EVENT**

#### **Opinion**

This event is scheduled to take place during one day of reading week- Tuesday Dec. 14th. Three massage therapists will be hired to work with students (offering head, neck, and shoulder massages) for 3-4 hours on the given day (at \$75.00/hr for each massage therapist).

This event should provide approximately 70 students with a massage, and its total cost should be \$900 total.

Note: This Event received \$400 from BSG for the last two (academic) years.

#### **Action Required**

Anirudh Sreekrishnan requests on behalf of Peer Health that the BSG allocate \$400 to this event.

# Bowdoin Student Government

## Fall Break Survey

Survey Outcome			
Total Respondents:		487	
Class Distribution:			
2011		20.90%	102
2012		18.90%	92
<b>2013</b>		<b>30.60%</b>	<b>149</b>
2014		29.60%	144
What Did You Do Over Break?		:	
<b>Stayed at Bowdoin</b>		<b>39.80%</b>	<b>194</b>
Went Home		36.30%	177
Traveled		30.80%	150
If you stayed, why?			
Too much work		43.20%	67
Wasn't financially possible		49.00%	76
<b>Just wanted to relax here</b>		<b>51.60%</b>	<b>80</b>
In other box; LSATs, sports, and distance from home were cited as primary reasons.			
		155 Answered this question	
		332 Skipped this question	

# Bowdoin Student Government

## Academic Calendars of Other Schools

### Event: Classes Begin

August 23<sup>rd</sup>: Davidson

August 26<sup>th</sup>: Hamilton

August 30<sup>th</sup>: Swarthmore

August 31<sup>st</sup>: Haverford

September 1<sup>st</sup>: Brown and Yale

September 2<sup>nd</sup>: **Bowdoin** and Connecticut

September 6<sup>th</sup>: Wesleyan and Middlebury

September 7<sup>th</sup>: Trinity and Amherst

September 8<sup>th</sup>: Williams, Colby and Bates

### Event: Fall Break (Days Off)

October 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> (two days): Connecticut

October 11<sup>th</sup> (one day): Brown

October 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> (two days): **Bowdoin**, Amherst, Davidson, Colby, Trinity, Williams

October 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> (entire week): Haverford and Swarthmore

October 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> (three days): Hamilton

October 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> (two days): Middlebury and Wesleyan

October 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> (three days): Bates

### Event: Thanksgiving Break (Days Off)

November 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> (entire week): Amherst, Bates, Hamilton, and Yale

November 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> (three days): Brown, Colby, Connecticut, Davidson, Middlebury, Trinity, Wesleyan, and Williams

November 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> (two days): **Bowdoin**, Hamilton, Haverford, and Swarthmore

### Event: Last Day of Exams

December 16<sup>th</sup>: Davidson

December 17<sup>th</sup>: Hamilton, Brown, and Haverford

December 18<sup>th</sup>: Wesleyan, Bates, Yale, and Swarthmore

December 20<sup>th</sup>: Williams, **Bowdoin**

December 21<sup>st</sup>: Colby and Trinity

December 22<sup>nd</sup>: Amherst

December 23<sup>rd</sup>: Connecticut

