

Bowdoin Student Government

Meeting Agenda

04/06/11 - Kanbar 107

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. President`s Welcome
- IV. Approval of the Minutes
- V. Public Comment Time
- VI. Guests
- VII. Old Business
- VIII. New Business
 - a. Guest Meals in the Dining Hall
 - b. First Year Book
 - c. Gender Neutral Housing
 - d. Movie Tickets
 - e. Suggestions about the Pub
- IX. 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
- X. Member Reports
 - a. Class Representatives
 - b. IHC Representatives
 - c. E-Board Representative
 - d. Athletics Representative
- XI. President`s Report
- XII. Adjournment

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Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101117

Proposed by: Facilities Committee

Date: April 6th, 2011

PROPOSAL TO ADD GUEST MEALS AT THE DINING HALLS

Opinion

Many students have voiced support for the idea of having a few free guest meals each semester for students to use for visiting friends and family. The vast majority of our peer institutions include guest meals in their primary meal plans, the numbers ranging from 2 to 25 per semester. Only 5 of our 22 peer schools have no guest meals whatsoever. Although students can use Polar Points for guests, paying for multiple meals is an expensive burden for students who only have 100 points per semester. Bowdoin should join the majority of our peer schools in welcoming visitors to our dining halls by adding guest meals to our meal plans. It is the opinion of the Facilities Committee that BSG take action to ask Dining Services to consider such an addition.

Action Required

BSG recommends that Dining Services add 5 guest meals, possibly called "Polar Pals," per semester to Bowdoin's primary meal plans.

Bowdoin Student Government

Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101118

Proposed by: Student Affairs Committee

Date: April 6th, 2011

PROPOSAL REGARDING THE FIRST YEAR BOOK

Opinion

The three survey data presented above are not conclusive because 1) there were not enough respondents 2) the numbers were not absolute enough to prove whether the program is helpful or not. However, based on the feedback and many comments the Students Affairs Committee received throughout the process, we concluded that the First-year Book has a value: academic discussion opportunities with the entire class, community building, and exposure to new and important knowledge students might not seek themselves etc. Therefore, instead of removing the system completely, we would like to propose a plan to keep and improve the system considering the feedback we recieved from surveys and conversations.

Action Required:

- Student Affairs Committee proposes that the Orientation committee takes on the first-year book.
- A student representative from BSG will be a part of the book selection discussion process. Furthermore, the book choice will be presented to the BSG Assembly.
- The entire student body will be notified of the book finalist, and a survey will be conducted to get feedback on the titles.
- To provide opportunities to students to explore the book, we propose that a panel of volunteer faculty members give a brief lecture or presentation about the book. This setting will include faculty members with an interest in the discussion, and also provide chances for students to develop their questions and thoughts for the following small group discussions.
- After the lecture, students will be divided into smaller groups and discuss the book. To address the lack of faculty interest, we propose that upperclassmen, selected through an application process, lead the discussion (supported by 60% of student respondents). We expect that this will ease the often complained of “awkwardness” of the group discussion.

Bowdoin Student Government

Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101119
Proposed by: Facilities
Date: April 5th, 2011

PROPOSAL TO REVISE CURRENT GENDER-NEUTRAL HOUSING POLICY

Information

The College implemented our gender-neutral housing policy last May, because many students, LGBTQ and heterosexual alike, desired to live with members of the opposite sex during their time at Bowdoin. In order to apply for gender-neutral upperclassmen housing:

- 1) Applicants must complete the Housing Intent Survey for Residential Life usually a week or so before the housing lottery begins.
- 2) Gender-neutral applicants must live in doubles.

It should be noted that students who do not request gender-neutral housing are not mandated to turn in the Housing Intent Survey, and can elect to live in any of the available upperclassmen housing options. Furthermore, most of our peer schools with similar gender-neutral policies do have these restrictions. The Facilities committee believes the College should remove these current limitations to the housing policy.

Action Required

- No prior permission or notification should hereby be required to sign up for gender- neutral housing.
- Gender-neutral housing should be made available for all upperclassmen housing (not only for doubles).

Bowdoin Student Government

Proposal to Vote

Proposal 101120
Proposed by: Facilities
Date: April 5th, 2011

FUNDING REQUEST CONCERNING MOVIE TICKETS

Information

Over the past few years, the BSG has purchased movie tickets for sale at a reduced rate to the student body. The Facilities committee purchases the Regal Movie Tickets at the rate of \$7.50/per ticket. It is the opinion of the Facilities committee that the BSG should order 100 movie tickets for this semester. Tickets will continue to be sold at the standard \$7.00 price.

Action Required

The Committee requests that the BSG support the aforementioned initiative by allocating \$750 for the purchase of movie tickets.

Information Regarding Peer School Comparison

SCHOOL	POLICY	MORE INFO
OBERLIN	5 and 7 Meal Plan: 2 guest meals per semester 10, 12, 14 and 19 Meal Plan: 4 guest meals per semester	Other options: cash, CDS Flex Points, Obie Dollars, or Stevenson Meal Ticket
POMONA	No guest meals	Other options: cash, Board Plus (flex points in every meal plan)
SMITH	All Meal Plans: 8 guest meals per year	
SWARTHMORE	14 and 17 Meal Plan: can swipe twice for a meal	Other options: cash, points
TRINITY	21 Meal Plan: 200 Chartwells Dollars 19 Meal Plan: 50 or 100 C. Dollars 14 Meal Plan: 200 C. Dollars	Chartwells Dollars: like a debit account Students can use meals or C. Dollars for a guest
TUFTS	Premium Plan: 10 guest meals per semester All other plans: students may use meals for a guest	First years required to be on Premium Plan
VASSAR	All Meal Plans: 25 guest meals per semester	
WELLESLEY	All Meal Plans: 8 guest meals per semester	
WESLEYAN	5 Meal/Point Combo Plans: 4 guest meals per semester	First years/Sophomores required to be on any of 5 Meal/Point Combo Plans Other options: cash, points, Middletown Dollars
WHEATON	No guest meals	Other options: cash
WILLIAMS	21 Meal Plan: 10 guest meals per semester 14 Meal Plan: 6 guest meals per semester 10 and 5 Meal Plans: no guest meals	

Information Regarding The First Year Book

- In the spring of 2009, the first-year book program was discussed. A summer working group was assigned to evaluate the current program and discuss the future of it. The group reported that “the current program was inadequate, and proposed a much expanded program, involving a series of outside speakers, a panel discussion during orientation (in addition to the small group discussions), etc.” In the fall of 2009, the Committee on Governance and Faculty Affairs (GFA) conducted a survey for faculty members about their stances on the proposal. The proposal did not gain marked support: “18 % agreed or strongly agreed with the recommendations of the summer working group, 33 % were neutral, and 49 % disagreed or strongly disagreed. There was even stronger disagreement (70%) with the proposal when faculty members were asked whether they approved the reallocation of resources necessary. 58 % stated that they were unlikely or very unlikely to participate as discussion group leaders in the future.”
 - Institutional Research conducted a student survey in 2003 and 2009. For the 2003 survey, only about 43% of the first-years responded while the response rate for the 2009 survey was about 60%. However, 2009 survey answers were not conclusive: 32% thought it was not effective, 33% were neutral, and 33% thought it was effective. “Given the expense of the first-year book program (both financially and in terms of student and faculty time), having only 33% who thought it was effective is not very encouraging.”
 - BSG conducted a survey in 2011 and only about 16% of the upperclassmen responded.
 1. Of the polltakers (43.8% from Class of 2013, 21.0% from Class of 2012, 32.4% from Class of 2011 and 2.9% from Class of 2010 or later), 81% read the book completely, 15.2% read it partially and 3.8% did not read it at all.
 2. Only 41% actually enjoyed the reading. Many comments of why they did not like the book were criticisms of the quality of the book (depressing, boring, too slow) while others who liked the book commented saying that they enjoyed it.
 3. Only 32% enjoyed the book discussion. Many people claimed it was awkward or forced because a lot of people had not read the book or were not engaged. Others criticized the facilitator or mentioned that Orientation is already too busy.
 4. Having said that, 66% said that they would keep the first-year book assignment with the following improvements:
 - Better book (65.1%)
 - Bowdoin author or Bowdoin-related book (34.9%)
 - Bring the author to Orientation (53.1%)
 - Have upperclassmen lead the discussion (45.1%)
 - Change the book to a movie (17.7%)
- In the additional comments, many people repeated the above answers, though there were several comments saying to not change it to a movie.
- We sent individual emails to faculty members about the issue and received a few positive comments from professors; however, the majority of faculty members questioned the efficiency and necessity of the first-year book.