

Bowdoin Student Government

BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Meeting of the **Bowdoin Student Government**

26 Sept. 2007

- I. **Call to Order** at 8:05 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Ben LeHay is absent, Dennis arrives late.
- III. **Approval of the Minutes:** The word of the day is “project“. We may have to stand and speak, which is not so hot. Dustin commands that the group take a look at the minutes, which they proceed to do. There is a request for more comments in brackets. Happy to oblige. Dustin orders that Matt sit on the couches. He does, choosing the opposite end of the couch that Ian Yaffe already occupies. Motion to accept the minutes. Approval passes unanimously.
- IV. **Public Comment:** Public Comment time is moved to now. Ian Yaffe stands and addresses the body. He is wondering if there are plans to reconsider the elections criteria for the office of BSG President. Dustin says that last week we announced the creation of the Commission for Elections Reform. They will be overlooking all aspects of elections. In early February they will present a report, and we will pass what stipulations we want.

Sam S says that there are three Sams, and that the only distinction is made for Sam K. She wants this taken care of. [I accept this request but find the timing entirely inappropriate. For the future, comments about the minutes would best be handled in the “Approval of the Minutes“ section.]

[And back to the issue at hand...]Ben thanks Ian for bringing this issue up, because it is something that needs to be examined. There is, however, work being done in this area.
- V. **President’s Report:** Dustin says that October will be a big month for action. This is an energetic assembly. There are a lot of ideas, and we need to be deliberate about how we are going about them. We want to do what gets results most efficiently for students. [Dustin is clearly nervous about radical action.] He understands if people are frustrated with the slow start, but we will get to the points that people are concerned about. He will be visiting the committees next week to talk about how this is going to far with a few meetings under the belt. He is talking about meetings themselves as well as assignments and how the system works. Next week, Tim Diehl of Career Planning is coming to talk about his new model. The following week Kim Pacelli will be coming, so think about what things you want to ask her. We can give her a heads-up so that she can bring statistics. Pres. Mills is interested in coming, and Dean Foster usually comes as well. We will balance the agenda on these nights accordingly. He notes that he has seen fabulous committee work. The committees are how we do our work, and it is great to

see all these active committees and the step-sister SAFC. Please create bills and get ideas to Kata. Also, anyone here can amend bills as we are here discussing them. Move to amend and we can talk about the changes instead of killing the bill. Talk to people and bring ideas from the constituents. Kata will present a communications strategy about talking to students. We've done poorly in the past.

John explains the packet and mentions the appendix, which is a new addition. In the future, people can send documents to add context to bills and discussion. This is the material that comprises the appendix. Next week's meeting is in Howell House. Dustin adds that there is a loose piece of paper to show how well our SAFC functions. Colby misplaced \$63000. The long hours pay off.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Student Activities Funding Committee: Nicole says that the meeting schedule was changed this week. They have had a hard time meeting with all the groups that they need to see. With the new system, smaller allocations will get 7 minutes and larger ones get 15. Allocations under \$100 don't need a meeting. The meeting went very smoothly. The Women's Resource Center works well and sets a nice tone.

Ben F asks if that implies that everything under \$100 is passed. Nicole says that she still looks reviews all requests and needs approval from members to pass them.

- b. Student Affairs Committee: Tony says that they had their first meeting this past week. The new time is on Mondays at 10 p.m. They brainstormed a lot about programming because this has not been an active area for BSG in the past. They talked about co-sponsoring with houses, conducting a drive about campus-wide issues, getting a suggestion box, working with Polar Bear Nation to get students to gather at games, and working on the first programming addition, which is leaning toward the red-cup affair. It focuses on the alcohol divide and other social issues. They want to sponsor along with ResLife. SafeSpace may be waiting on the side to help out, and they may talk to houses as well. Specifically, they want to make sure that competing events don't affect turnout to Red Cup Affair.

Kristen says that she knows Polar Bear Nation is looking at getting t-shirts, are we involved in that? No.

Dennis asks if the houses are sponsoring the red-cup thing by hosting parties with more options. Tony says that the houses would be involved by donating money and encouraging members to gather at the BSG event.

Nicole says that we can't have alcohol in here. Damn it, she's right. Dustin says that we will refer to Kate. Kate says that we can have liquor in the union if dining caters and get a license for the evening.

- c. BSG Affairs Committee: Kata says that BSG Affairs is working on finalizing the communications strategy. E-mail her with ideas about communicating with the student body.
- i. BSG Buddy System: We will also vote on the BSG buddy-system soon. Kristen had some concerns, so we can raise them now. This system would pair a BSG Rep with a place of residence at Bowdoin. Residents can go to the representative with concerns about a variety of things. We can hammer out more details later. It will be very symbolic.
- Kristen says that her only thought was that the college houses already have reps.
 - Clark says that the buddy system works more as a go-to system, not necessarily to represent the views of people in the residencies.
 - Sam K wants to finalize the proposal more before voting on it. We do have a one-week interim that will serve this purpose.
 - Ben F asks if this will be like: there's something wrong in the house, they go to the member? Kata says that it applies for questions concerning the house, academics, anything, really.
 - John says that it's not just symbolic. It gives a go-to source that's clear and accessible. There are all these committees and we can deal with a lot of issues, and if there is one person with information about who to contact, this will get students in touch with the right person. The bonus, or symbolic effect is to get us out there to the student body.
 - Sam S asks about the houses, because they already have reps. She wonders if they will reconcile the two roles or add this on.
 - Rutledge says that we hear what the IHC concerns are, but there is one person for three houses by this system. Adding reps for the houses cannot hurt anything. It just gives people a resource. It's like having the local doctor and 911 available.
 - Sam D thinks this is a great system but wonders how it would work in a place that doesn't have a central lobby.
 - Amir likes the idea, but practically, in thinking about upperclassman housing, there is no common space. Training the people that are already there, like ResLife Staff, could have the same effect.
 - Bryce says that you have the ResLife staff for people to question already.
 - Houston says that this would be particularly helpful for freshmen, who are in the dark as far as what BSG is.
 - Dan is with Rutledge. This requires nothing from us but putting our pictures somewhere. It can't do anything bad. We are all representative from groups already, but so what? There can be no bad effects.
 - Ben F motions to table and have BSG Affairs rework this. [Unnecessary, the new system provides that we vote on this next week.]
 - Rutledge says that this is a great outlet to get ideas from the students.
- d. Student Organizations Committee: Will says that they worked on internal stuff this week. Their work now is building up for Monday,

when they will be working on the new charter process. He also mentions the communications meeting. The surveys that were sent to members served to collect information on how to contact people as well as to compile statistics, like gender distribution and class representation [not class as in bourgeoisie/peasant, but as in 2011, 2010, etc.]. There are significantly more men than women, which is something to consider and question. He runs through the statistics for class representation, which are as would be expected. Dustin says we're doing better than Bates. [I'm a huge fan of constantly comparing ourselves to two tiny schools in Maine in these pathetic attempts to compensate for our weaknesses.]

- e. Academic Affairs Committee: Sam says that they had a quick meeting. The main project now is an audit of the course catalog. They read through the course descriptions to see what distribution requirements the courses fulfill. That should be done Sunday.
- f. Facilities Committee: Dooley says that they talked about upperclassman housing, which comes up every year. They talk about how to attack that issue, but didn't get into specifics that he feels like bringing up now. He mentions dorm visits and how to make them effective. They talked about administration that could help with this. They also talked about study space on campus: what are good places to publicize? Big News: shuttle starts this weekend. The Night Taxi starts as well. Dustin says that it is the first time in 4 yrs that it has started in Sept. Cue applause.
- g. Preamble Subcommittee

VII. Old Business

- a. Carbon Vouchers: Dustin says that we are voting on an Old Bill, which is Carbon Vouchers. Dooley reiterates the idea, which is to offset the carbon dioxide emitted from the Night Taxi. It's green, which Bowdoin loves.
 - Jess asks if there is a cheaper way to plant trees in Maine. Dooley says that he went through this a while ago, and class of '07 bought vouchers that applied to a closer area, so we can do that.
 - Rutledge says that it seems arbitrary to throw money into planting some trees. He's not against helping the environment, but he doesn't know if it'll make a difference.
 - Sam D says that Pres. Mills signed a carbon neutrality agreement last year, so this is part of an initiative that started from the top. This is us doing our part in this.
 - Liza says that it's a small step toward something greater.
 - Jess asks if we are trying to neutralize the shuttle as well. Dooley says that we could, it would just require more money.

- Dennis tries to move to vote, which is impossible before time runs out or there are no more speakers. There are no more speakers.
 - Those in favor: Dooley, Clark, Kristen, Sam, Liza, Allison, Dennis, James, Justin, Sam K, Ben, Bryce, Tony, Hannah, Kata, Dan, Amir, Nicole, Will, Darren, Sam S; Opposed: Rutledge, Jess; *Motion passes*
- b. Chem-Free Housing Letter: Dustin hopes that everyone got a chance to look at the chem.-free housing issue. Is this part of the alcohol divide issue, or part of the upperclassmen housing issue? Who should we talk to?
- Kata says that we need to look at this from the housing perspective. There is limited upperclassmen housing directly on campus.
 - Ben F says that this brings up an issue of chem.-free housing. He doesn't think that there is much wrong with upperclassmen housing. We need to keep this in perspective: sophomores get screwed everywhere, and it's not especially bad at Bowdoin.
 - Dooley agrees with Kata and thinks that this should be part of a broader discussion. We need to work with improving housing in these areas it is not meeting student needs.
 - Alison agrees with Dooley because this could isolate people who are passionate about chem.-free if it is made into that issue. Other people might feel attacked as well.
 - Dennis disagrees and thinks that this issue is more pressing than we think it is. The fact that these students have to live far away because there aren't options is wrong. If we take both perspectives and merge them together, this could expedite the process. The students asking for this wouldn't feel exiled, because we are trying to help them address this issue.
 - Bryce doesn't think that off-campus housing is really that far away. In reality, Bowdoin is small and it just seems distant in relative terms.
 - Amir thinks that this will get lost in a larger issue, and that other things will be prioritized above chem.-free.
 - Darren agrees that it would get lost in a larger context, and think that there should be a system to give people priority for spaces in Howard (which never ends up completely chem.-free).
 - Clark sees this as two separate problems: upperclassman housing and upperclassman chem.-free housing. We are faced with the lack of a plan.
 - Sam K says to keep in mind that chem.-free housing and chem.-free living are not the same thing. We should also think about the quiet house option that Bowdoin is piloting.
 - Dustin asks which comes first in planning these discussions: chem.-free or upperclassmen housing?
 - Liza says upperclassman, because it is a larger group. She realized that there is a problem and thinks it could be interesting to have a facilitated discussion, because the best issues often come from within.
 - Sam D thinks that these should be separate issues. He doesn't think chem.-free would be addressed quickly enough if it were part of the large

discussion because the upperclassman space-issue is a long-term thing. San says that saying our housing is a problem is like complaining about dining at Bowdoin. It's so much better than it is in other places. He thinks that ResLife should take the lead.

- Kata disagrees [At this point the assembly pauses the meeting to wait for what sounds like a large electric drill to cease its screaming]. Yes, housing is fantastic, but sophomores would complain about the residency issues at Bowdoin above all else. Because ResLife isn't addressing this, it is our job to be the voice for the students.
- James says that because living is such an important part about the experience here, this issue needs to be addressed.
- Alison says that the problem she was trying to point to would be that it would create antagonism in non-chem-free people feeling that the chem.-free people are complaining.
- Tony says that if we make this part of the bigger issue, it will get lost. It's not just sophomores who are chem.-free, but other classes who are getting shafted as well.
- Amir adds that this is a minority issue, because chem.-free students are vastly outnumbered. We can be their representative voice in talking with ResLife.
- Sam S says that it's not just about chem.-free living, but chem.-free housing. We're dealing with the lack of housing.
- Darren says that if we focus on Howard, which is already chem.-free, it won't aggravate the divide as much.
- Kristen says that this is something to really get our hands on. Even giving people Howard preference...it is something we can do.
- Kata says that there would be space if East and West went back to triples for freshmen.
- Dustin says that the details aren't something to deal with now. He asks Dooley and Tony to get us the opportunity to herd in some chem.-free students to speak with in an informal setting. We can talk about this with Kim on Oct. 10.

VIII. New Business

- a. Language Requirement for Study Abroad: Nicole says that the off-campus study committee is thinking about rearranging the language requirement. She gets the feeling that Bowdoin students generally don't like more rules, but she could be wrong in the sentiment. She is looking for opinions to bring to her committee meeting. The reasoning behind the committee's thought process here is that students are going places and not getting the full cultural experience. For some context, the committee says that the purpose of off-campus study is to get an academic experience that supplements the Bowdoin one.
- Liza says that it makes sense to have a cultural requirement, like a history class. Also, she thinks that it is prohibitive to have this requirement, which would be really unfortunate.

- James asks if this is a language requirement when you apply, or once you get there. Nicole says that if Bowdoin offers the language of the country that you are going to, you would need two semesters of the language here. If you go to a different country, you would have to take the language while away. Nicole says that it seems to value the languages here more than the ones we don't.
- Jess says that the language courses should be strongly recommended but not required. She doesn't think you need experience with the language in order to experience the culture. Language was a problem when she came here 5 yrs ago, but she was still aware of a lot culturally and socially. Also, a lot of schools in European countries are bilingual.
- Ben F says that it seems that if someone wants to go to Florence and they haven't taken Italian, what's wrong with that? You can't live somewhere for months without getting the culture. Why the restriction? It's an absurd stipulation. You can go to Bowdoin and not experience Maine.
- Allison agrees with Ben that it's awkward to force someone to experience culture. It's each student's own prerogative. Bowdoin can't force people to get something out of the trip, it's up to the student.
- Christian says that there should be no requirements for study abroad. It's about doing something new and it shouldn't ever be too late. Two semesters requires an early commitment to a program as well as early planning for course schedules.
- Dennis agrees with Christian and doesn't think that this is fair. You would have to know what you want to do when you get to Bowdoin. It's just too much.
- James says that the larger goal of study abroad is to give students the opportunity for cultural emersion. This would mean that fewer students have access to this experience.
- Rutledge says that we have to be fair and think that it's not a ridiculous requisite. Maybe one semester would make more sense. Bowdoin is putting more of an iron fist down on student at the same time they talk about the freedom of students. This goes down to the protection of individual interests. If there were legitimate requests or encouragement rather than requirements, it would be better.
- Clark understands why this would be enticing, but he thinks that it's problematic. If someone is focused on Art History or the European Union but not necessarily Italian or Flemish, this becomes a problem.
- Houston says that he hates blanket-policy that disregards individual situations. It's too set in stone and black-and-white.
- John says that this is basically saying that kids who are not as good at language don't deserve to study abroad. He thinks that off-campus study says it best: "do not assume that if you have no language backgrounds...(quote from the off-campus study literature)". They already recognize that there is value in studying abroad even without language as a factor.

- Sam D says that this is systematic of a general Bowdoin problem with the philosophical side of policies (profs.) and how students see problems. It comes down to two things: people are going to do what they want to do (for example, shop regardless of any program). This also encourages people to go to English-speaking countries.
- Sam K thinks we should look at where these rules are coming from. While this may not be the best policy, the intent is important. Unless we want asterisks on degrees...[What?] There needs to be regulation and some form of rigidity for off-campus study.
- Tony says that the school promotes being open-minded, so what if someone takes Chinese and then decides they want to go to Barcelona? Then you're fucked.
- Justin thinks it should be recommended, not required. The students should have control in their academic decisions. It is wise to take at least one semester to have some knowledge about the place you are going.
- James says that it's wise to take a language, but it shouldn't be a requirement because of circumstances when this would be restrictive. There is a role of the office to address programs that are academically relevant...that is their function.
- Kata asks when this would go into effect. Nicole says not for a while. She thinks we should be encouraging people to get out of Maine and break the Bowdoin Bubble. Going to a country is the best way to learn a language, not doing exercises in a workbook.
- Amir talks about students changing their minds about where they want to go. He wants to work with a requirement that's already here, like the IP requirement. We could say: fulfill that before going abroad.
- Darren says that it seems that students who go in programs that aren't approved get the most cultural experience, and approved ones keep students in groups with other American students.
- Tony says that it's unfair to let students go without any experience, but it is still limiting. Even with a language in Fall of Junior year, they could still be screwed. Requirements during the program wouldn't be as bad.
- Rutledge thinks it's silly to make kids try to meet requirements quickly. Kids just try to get rid of their dumb-ass requirements.
- Nicole says that this only affects a small percentage of students who go abroad. Not many go without studying the language. A lot of colleges like ours have this requirement, just to keep this in mind.
- Christian says that it's up to the student to jump into something he hasn't studied if that's what he wants. The application process for programs already involves a check.
- Ben says that other schools still have frats, theme housing, and co-ops. We hate co-ops. What's going on at other school is not a reason to change our policy.
- Jess thinks that there are many kinds of programs for study abroad with different requirements. Students pick programs according to their situation and what is appropriate.

b. Common Good Day Funding : Allison says that BSG is cosponsoring Common Good Day. The CRC is asking to cosponsor the snack.

- Nicole asks if we are paying for the t-shirts. Dustin says that we committed to putting money for t-shirts that are more socially responsible.
- Sam D says that we have given \$1000. It's a great program but not our place.
- Bryce asks who else they have asks for money. Alison says that they went right to BSG.
- Dennis asks if it's too late for us to pay, because the event is this weekend. No, we could reimburse them.
- Clark says we already put \$1000 in and we don't have much money left. Dustin says that we haven't really spent the money that it says we have [I wonder how this is relevant; we *are* significantly committed to these expenditures: for example, my salary] and prospects for co-sponsorship for the shuttle are good.
- Ben supports this. It's a good day, but the condition should be that BSG's budget is raised. [Let me get out my magic wand.] We couldn't spend on anything. If we want to help clubs and cosponsor events, we need more money.
- James asks what the \$500 is for. It seems like a lot for snacks. Alison says that there are a huge amount of students.
- Dooley says that he would be willing to go with this if we are getting help with the shuttle.
- Nicole wonders if we could amend the amount of money. She motions to amend to \$250.
- Kata says that we should really support this. We will find money in other places. How could we not support Common Good Day?
- Dennis agrees to amend to a smaller amount. It ends around 4:30 or 5:00, so people can just go to dinner and eat a full meal. Alison says that it's not nourishment, but reward.
- Dan is for the motion to amend, because he thinks it could be good for the houses to throw some co-sponsorship in. Sam S agrees with the motion to amend. [At this point, let's just vote to show our approval or disapproval instead of just repeating it over and over.] Houses can help. We did show our support already by giving \$1000.
- Ben F says we should pay the \$500 and see if the houses will reimburse us.
- Rutledge asks if we can keep the leftover snacks. Alison will ask.
- Those in favor of amending: Jess, Clark, Liza, Dennis, James, Justin, Sam K, Nicole, Will, Rutledge, Sam S; Opposed: Dooley, Kristen, Sam D, Alison, Christian, Ben, Bryce, Tony, Hannah, Kata, Dan, Darren; Abstaining: Amir;
Motion fails.
- It is time for comments on the bill itself.
- Dooley says to do what Ben said.
- Sam D says we already have contributed a lot.

- Nicole asks what incentive IHC has to reimburse us next week. Kristen says that they like giving away money. Sam K echos the same concern. It means a lot to sponsor something before-hand. He doesn't want to be spiteful...
- Rutledge doesn't think that us not sponsoring for snacks is sending a negative message. He would rather send it to a legitimate charity. This is just...snacks.
- Kristen says that we shouldn't vote assuming that the IHC will reimburse.
- John says that we need to vote today for this to be effective. He also says that we can't give directly to charities. This allows us to support charity indirectly.
- Will says that his concern is that this became a matter of necessity...them coming to us a couple days before the event. He says that because they are in a jam, we should go for it. We lose nothing and it would be awful for us to leave them hanging.
- Bryce likes Common Good Day, but he thinks that the reward is doing it... donating time for the community. Is it necessary to reward with food afterward?
- Kata says that it shouldn't be about name-labels and commercial sponsorships, but the Common Good. It's a welcome surprise, not an incentive.
- Amir is with Will. They are in a crunch, but they need to prioritize in the future. We have to set a limit, but considering these circumstances, it's appropriate.
- Ben F urges people when thinking about these budget issues to consider how these debates will continue to come up. We need to think about the budget, of course, but also about how to reach out to the community. It doesn't seem like to much to ask to support the CRC.
- Darren thinks that this is a unique situation. He doesn't see it coming up again, and it's a good way for us to get out there.
- Clark says that we've given \$1000 and we don't have a lot of money. People come to us at the last minute all the time. They show up to us and need the money. We simply don't have that much to give like that. Dustin repeats that he did hear about this in July. It was a failure on his part to forget until now and a failure on the CRC's part not to remind him.
- John asks how many organizations bring the student body together like this for the Common Good.
- Dennis thinks that we've paid our dues with the shirts. The point of Common Good Day is to get people involved in the long term, which doesn't really happen. Us giving more money won't help the bigger situation.
- Bryce agrees and thinks that we can put money toward something that will lead to more community service. It's also not a vast majority, but about 1/3 of the campus.

- Will says that he doubts that we would've declined \$1500 in July.
- Rutledge thinks that this is a silly argument: whether or not we will provide kids with snacks at the end of the day that will disappear in minutes. It will just encourage kids to hoard snacks in their rooms.
- Sam S says that BSG has spent money on this already. The fact is that we are dealing with this now, not in July.
- Nicole moves to vote. [Hallelujah] There is a clear 2/3 to end discussion and vote.
- Dan thinks we should pass it and figure out where the money is later. Let's be a little crazy.
- Dooley says that if this had come to the officers in July, we would have thought it was fine. We are here to help the students.
- Darren doesn't think that it would go to community service later on. He doesn't think we're here to debate the morality of Common Good Day.
- Those in Favor: Dooley, Kristen, Sam D, Alison, Christian, Ben, Tony, Kata, Dan, Will, Darren; Opposed: Jess, Clark, Dennis, James, Justin, Sam K, Bryce, Hannah, Rutledge [Honorary secretary's vote]; Abstaining: Liza, Amir, Nicole; Amir abstains because he sees both sides. We are tight in our budget and made a reasonable contribution already. Nicole thinks we should help, but doesn't think we should pay \$500. Having that money to give at other times would be helpful. Liza also wishes it were less.

IX. Reports: Dustin asks people to comment on this space in their reports.

a. Class Representatives

- i. 2011: Hannah says that they are having trouble getting their act together. They have a meeting Sunday. She thinks it is a good space, but hard to hear at times.
- ii. 2010: Bryce says that they are continuing what they were doing last week. He thinks we would need microphones for everyone for future meetings here.
- iii. 2009: Christian says that their Super Snacks event fell flat. Better advertising? Different night? Not at all? They are thinking about a different meeting time and looking for a record to set as a class.
- iv. 2008: Liza says that they are talking about senior pub night at Sea Dogs on Tuesday. They want us back. They are looking at a cocktail party and events for parent's weekend. She thinks that it would be weird and formal to have a microphone at meetings.

b. IHC Representatives

- i. Kristen says that she likes the idea of people coming in and out of the meeting space, but there isn't high traffic at this time. Also, we are taking a study space. Planning in IHC has to do with Homecoming. They are voting to cosponsor Racer-X. The bonfire is coming together.

- ii. Dennis says that Ladd has its luau party. He doesn't know what's going on at Baxter. At Reed, they could use better wireless for Macs.
- iii. Sam S says that Howell had apple picking. They had a party in the freshman brick, which was successful. They are talking about delivering newspapers.
- iv. Dan says that Mac had a good reception after Dante's Inferno. Quinby had successful 80's party and is continuing the coffee-house thing.
- c. CSC Representative: Alision says that Common Good Day is Saturday... we just funded for snacks if anyone missed that. Applications for the Grant Committee are due tomorrow at 5.
- d. A-Board Representative: James says that Homecoming is Racer-X. Friday Oct 19 is Red Jumpsuit Apparatus. Contracts are set for these events. There are Hawaiian dancers for Parent's Weekend and maybe a magician in November. The space is great for transparency.
Alison says that passing a mic will eat time.
- e. Res-Life Representative: Sam K says that they are emphasizing programming and holding staff members accountable to programming goals. There are more than 100 completed already this year. They will be more successful if more people attend. Get to their events.
Dennis says that he loves the space and will volunteer carrying the mic.

X. Announcements: Dustin says that there is dinner at 5:30 in Thorne on Thursday. There will be an opportunity to talk to chem.-free students about housing soon. Next week is at Howell House.
Ben F says that the eclectic collective is here Thursday.

XI. Adjournment at 9:46 p.m.