

# Bowdoin Student Government

BOWDOIN COLLEGE

Meeting of the **Bowdoin Student Government**

*10 Oct. 2007*

- I. **Call to Order** at 8:05 pm
- II. **Roll Call:** Liza and Dennis are absent
- III. **Approval of the Minutes:** Dustin requests that everyone look at the minutes. Kristen indicates that she is not responsible for the Baldwin Center...it was actually Christian, close friends actually do make fun of him sometimes by calling him "Kristen." Motion to approve the minutes: Approval of Minutes passes unanimously.
- IV. **President's Report:** Dustin says, into a microphone, that we have microphones. The Blender at the café upstairs is formidable competition nonetheless. Some people need to use the microphones. If you find one in your face, do not be insulted, but know that you are advised to use it. This will not be the normal set-up of the meeting, and the weirdness cannot fairly be attributed entirely to John. Dustin does a quick review of the packets for this week, which includes an excerpt from a faculty meeting from last year and a schedule of BSG events. There is also a sheet that Kim brought of ResLife statistics.  
  
Nicole talks about the changes of books. Oh sugar, people don't have copies of the blue and yellow books. They are basically the same, with a few minor changes. She came into this not completely understanding the process. It isn't complicated, but it is very institutionalized. This is her effort to make it work as well as possible. She wants the process to be much more open, which she hopes is reflected in the guidelines. Dustin says that we will do reports while people look at the pages.
- V. **Teach for America Presentation:** Dan Sieffert, a 2005 graduate of Colby College, speaks about Teach for America. He taught on a Native American Reservation and is hoping to enlist students here in the movement. Let's start with some depressing statistics about American education: 1/10 students in low income communities earn degrees. 50% graduate from high school, many with 8<sup>th</sup> grade level skills. Students that the program reaches are usually 3 years behind the curve by 4<sup>th</sup> grade...this suggests abject system failure. This affects 13 million children in the country, and not in isolated pockets. In the short term, we hope to enlist the most promising graduates for classroom work. Students can't wait for the long term changes. After two years, the teachers leave with experience, skills, and knowledge that they take with them. Sixty percent go into education, and the rest go into areas where they can address

educational issues (government, law). People take this classroom experience to a variety of vantage points. After a year of teaching in his classroom, the average reading level rose over 2 years. These children are capable of receiving the help and very willing.

- Sam asks how many Bowdoin kids go on to this every year. Dan responds that the enlist 5-10, usually.
- Amir asks to describe the training that students get coming out of college. He indicates that some people just aren't cut out for teaching. Dan responds that they do need high caliber support. Once enrolled, you receive a curriculum and are asked to do 10 hours of observation to notice the gap between poor education and good education. There is training for 5 weeks and a week-long orientation in the region that a person will be teaching in. He, for example, learned about Native American history and culture so as to be an effective member of that community. Once in the program, you get access to a director, who is available directly and on an informal basis. There is also access to professional learning communities. Teachers who teach the same thing get together and talk about challenges, ideas, etc.
- Ben F asks what sense of teacher achievement there is. Dan says that they are 5,000 teachers, and that 80% brought students up at least 1 grade level. He includes statistics about reading level improvements according to state tests.
- Jess asks if a person can choose what he wants to teach, or where. Dan says that they try to honor the requests in terms of age level and subject.
- Justin asks if there is parent-teacher training. Dan responds in the affirmative. He says that encouragement from home adds greatly to the overall effect of the program. This is another thing that they communicate about within the program. They share ideas between the communities, but also specify techniques to reach out to parents. He invites anyone to speak with him about any questions after the meeting.

**VI. Chem-Free Programming Presentation - Kayla Baker:** There is a group, "Anonymous" that focuses on chem.-free needs without being affiliated with any groups. She will come at some point, but could not come to the meeting tonight.

**VII. Res-Life Q&A with Kim Pacelli (Director)L:** Dustin indicates that Kim Pacelli is here tonight from ResLife.

**(Public Comment Time)** Oops public comment time. Anyone need the use of said time? Nope. Public Comment time is quickly over.

Back to Kim. ResLife is a huge part of life at Bowdoin, so this can be a productive meeting. Kim starts by saying that she has brought new numbers with her. Lisa pulled a lot of information from the database, and this is the first cut of some statistics. Kim thanks the group for the opportunity to visit. She encourages anyone to swing by ResLife, where there are couches and candy. She wants to fly through some non-numbers things first. The office has been talking about chem.-free housing. They talked with a student who

gave them some suggestions and feedback. They want to pull something of a brain-trust together. She encourages the group to think about the best forum for ResLife to communicate in this issue. Maybe she should be meeting with Tony of Academic Affairs regularly so that information could flow. As far as Kim knows, there are no plans to have student housing on the base area. She doesn't imagine that people would want to live out there, because people already complain about housing as far away as Brunswick Apartments. There are no specific plans. She turns to off-campus issues. For years, there have been meetings with off-campus students and Brunswick police to talk about responsibilities and rights associated with living off campus. They took the show on the road this year because attendance was falling, so they went around to talk about these issues...alcohol, Maine state law, safety issues, Safe Ride, security accessibility. 17 Cleaveland is right across from security and the Orient Office. Her sense is that some of the neighbors are upset about the density of students living in the building. She doesn't think that it is the students in particular, but rather the living situation that people are trying to get used to. Her guess is that they will continue to raise issues about zoning, etc. Ben asked about coming back from abroad. This year, there is a balance between fall and spring. This makes a big difference, and she expects that there will be space for everybody. They do their best to accommodate people, and they are pretty successful. Peoples' plans change a lot, though, which impacts the ability to make promises. She doesn't expect any concerns. As far as Quiet Housing goes, this idea was adopted when they decided to have 8 houses and 8 freshmen dorms. It is running on a trial basis after interest was expressed. About 30-40 students actually requested it. A lot requested quiet and chem.-free: more like 15 just wanted quiet housing. They are on the top two floors of Moore Hall. It was offered with the stipulation that it would run if there was demand. They want to go back to the students to see how this works. The understanding is that it may not be that quiet at all in the space. There wasn't a huge request for it. ]

- Nicole wonders if there would be more support from an upperclassman perspective. It might be good for older students who want something in-between. Kim says that it may make sense for people to make those decisions with some context.

Kim moves on to talk about chem.-free housing. She points to the "quick and dirty" sheet of statistics. There is a data set of where chem.-free students lived previously and how the trend plays out through four years. There are about 150 students in upper-classman chem.-free housing. This group was helpful last year in talking about a configuration for chem.-free space. They wanted to offer some singles as well as some apartments, and needed to replace chem.-free beds that were in Reed. They found spaces in Stowe Inn and Brunswick Apartments. She lists the buildings that have chem.-free upperclassman spaces. Just over ½ lived in chem.-free last year. 55% are sophomores who did *not* live chem.-free last year. She ran some numbers specifically on Howard, which seems to be an issue as a desired space. She looked at where Howard's residents lived last year. 64 % lived chem.-free last year. The issue of which spaces to offer as chem.-free is tough because she is committed to providing

this space. She wants to meet this demand, but with too many spaces it could draw the wrong students. They ask for people's intent, and from that number make a prediction. That's how they look at the spaces.

- Sam D asks about how many people chose chem.-free as their first choice. Kim has those stats, but not ready. There are maybe a dozen students who ended up chem.-free without it being their first choice. She thinks that those students had other options, but chose chem.-free because it was comparatively better than their others. Sam K says that the lottery stats are online.

- Kristen asks about the 35% of Howard students who weren't previously chem.-free. She wonders if the blocks are mixed, or if previously non-chem-free people stick together. Kim was wondering this too, but didn't have time to look at this specifically. She started asking if she could get these people together as a focus group to know why people chose chem.-free housing after the first year. She wonders if it is a change of lifestyle, or if it is just better housing. Maybe it is because it is earlier in the lottery.

She was also interested to look at pathways through the four years. She reads through the statistics about seniors who lived in Hyde their first year. She says that the quiet option gave them flexibility this year, by the way, so that they could fit chem.-free in Hyde again. Only 3 students that were chem.-free as freshmen live in chem.-free this year, as seniors. She is interested in how many people live in the Tower at some point. There has been talk that the Tower would be a good chem.-free space.

- Jess asks a question that no one but Kim hears.

Kim also points to the stats from seniors who weren't chem.-free as freshmen. She emphasizes the statistics about Howard, which speak to the concern that people live in Howard because it's good housing, not because it's chem.-free. On to the back of the page...she wants to know who to ask to get impressions from.

- Tony wonders why there are so few seniors who remained chem.-free from their freshman year. Kim thinks it is interesting that many went on to Howard, but then didn't continue chem.-free. Maybe they found housing that suited their needs elsewhere.

- Sam wonders what chem.-free is like for people who go abroad. Kim says that it is based on what is available. They don't get a whole lot of requests for that. It's not a concern, but she wants to be able to accommodate people.

- Nicole says that a lot of junior and senior housing is less communal. She understands the need to give freshmen and sophomores this option, but after two years of adapting to the culture, she thinks that it becomes easier to isolate yourself and block with people according to lifestyle. She thinks that the focus needs to be on freshman and sophomore chem.-free housing.

- Dooley says that they talked about concerns of abusing chem.-free because it's better housing. He wonders if they get complaints or see a lot of problems that would indicate that these people aren't chem.-free. This plays out in a worrisome way during the lottery. Kim cares about having enough spaces for people who indicate chem.-free preference. Sometime

they get the numbers and she realized that there is discrepancy. She has given stern sermons about people depriving others of chem.-free housing when it is honestly their intent. She doesn't hear a ton of complaints from students in chem.-free housing, and she doesn't know exactly why that is. Maybe people are adapting their behavior, maybe people just don't want to report these things. These focus groups would be helpful in discovering these patterns. She wonders if there should just be chem.-free for sophomores and leave people on their own after that.

- Rutledge adds that what seems to be a problem is the physical issue of location of the houses. Maybe the numbers are lower because these people don't want to be living far away. We should investigate this. Kim says that a lot of upper class housing is on the fringes of campus. Should Chamberlain be the right place? It's such a mixed bag of the most and least popular housing. Should they take a couple of floors in the Tower?
- Jess thinks that more students would apply for the wrong reason if there were floors in the tower that were chem.-free. Sam D says that if they offer chem.-free in buildings where the same is offered non-chem-free, people won't abuse it as much.
- Tony wonders if they have surveyed people currently in chem.-free about whether they are attracted to the chem.-free element or the quiet one. They could look at the reaction from this survey. Kim acknowledges this.
- Clark wonders if they have considered giving preference to people who lived chem.-free previously. Kim had that thought today and thinks that they need to talk more about that. The only downside would be if someone manipulated initial choice based on future gain. She would be concerned for people legitimately going for lifestyle changes, but there are ways to have flexibility for this. There is also the nitty-gritty of changing the lottery system.
- Kata wonders if it could be like applying for the houses. People would have to find other people to live with based on chem.-free priority. Kim says that they could work out a chem.-free preference system. Kata says that for people moving to the chem.-free option, finding other students could be a way into the system. Kim says that she hopes to remain engaged in these conversations with the student who wrote the letter, Dooley, and Tony.

She turns to upperclassman housing. They are preparing for the next phase. They just spent a lot on the bricks. Alums don't want to donate to dorms, and it will be a while before the college can borrow money again to do more ResLife work. We are now in the middle of playing catch-up. She would love thoughts. Some say that upperclass housing is the pits, some says that it's doing alright comparatively.

- Sam S says that Brunswick Apts were okay, but thought about the amount of money that could be put in there. It seems minimal in terms of care. There are no lights, just a Bowdoin lock on the door. Kim says that Bowdoin is a trouble zone. There is stuff going on in the summer, and it is hard to find the time to do work, which shows in placing like Brunswick Apts.

- Sam D asks what the plan with Harpswell is...will they be there for a while? Kim says that in the long-range plan, they call for Harpswell and Pine St to come down, but there is no short-term plan for these buildings. They are wood-frame buildings and are showing their age.
- Nicole loves Brunswick Apts and Harpswell. They have character. She wonders if there is a way for students living w/in construction zones to get the price of residency reduced. Kim doesn't make these decisions, but she can share that feedback.
- Ben F says that the voice of this body is pretty good. If the architect of Chamberlain had any foresight, this conversation wouldn't be happening. Apart from this, the scope is pretty good. Sophomores don't have great options, but that's the way it is...same goes with construction. It's just unavoidable.
- Sam K says that there has been a decrease in students living off campus. Is there any insight into why this is? Is there a way to support this decision? She can't speak over the past 25 years, and there isn't great data before 1999. They have about 140 students off campus, which is an "uptick" associated with two new properties. They attribute the decrease over the past couple years to the college buying the frat houses and the building of Chamberlain. They want to continue to support people living off campus, but she asks herself if students are moving off to avoid the disciplinary process.
- Sam says that people are more afraid of the disciplinary process off campus. He's never heard anything different.
- Bryce asks how many Chamberlain doubles there are. Kim doesn't know. Sam K says that it is available online. There is a race to look it up. There are 29.
- Sam S asks about party registration for private parties. If students have their own events, obtain kegs and need hosts, how is this working? Kim says that it's going fine. Students indicate willingness to be alcohol hosts. It seems to be going fine. They have asked people to step up on food and alternative beverages. Huge kudos to houses making this effort.
- Clark asks if there was reconsideration of the registration option for Thursday-night parties. Kim says to bring that up at the faculty meeting (tongue-in-cheek). They may be upset because there are classes on Fridays. Clark asks how things look with the two new houses and new dorms. Kim thinks that it is going well. Both houses have good energy. She is excited about the lower population density in the buildings, which means that the size of the affiliations will decrease as it spreads out through the houses. There certainly haven't been problems in getting the new houses up and running.
- Christian has heard conflicting stories about shotgun registering, when situations unexpectedly turn into party situations. Kim says that they call it "spontaneous registration". Kim says that students are welcome to call security. They get in touch with the dean-on-call, and if there is room under the keg limit, they are willing to work with people. It can't be a

pattern, though. Christian wonders what happens if there is not room under the limit...will they immediately get in trouble. Kim says that they should ask for permission before they buy a keg. They will take late forms as long as there room.

**VIII. Committee Reports:** Dustin says to cross off 10A and 11A and B. Officers: speak like lightning!

- a. Student Activities Funding Committee: Nicole says that tonight's meeting was awesome.
- b. BSG Affairs Committee: Kata says that there will be details about the Buddy System.
- c. Student Organizations Committee: Will mentions training tomorrow for SOOC and the email about the Calendar.
- d. Academic Affairs Committee: Sam D asks everyone to look at the preliminary report from the course audit. The facts are true, but they don't mean what we think they mean. That meant nothing. They had a meeting with Judd and Cornish and talked about the purpose of the new requirements. Fewer than ½ of the courses offered fulfill a requirement, which they don't think is as big of a problem as we do.

Dustin says that these are facts, but they are not a reflection of how this works. They will get a new version next week. They just need to clarify the numbers. Ben F asks why these don't reflect requirements. Sam responds that when the new requirements were put in place, they were meant to be much more specific. They didn't want as many courses to apply in the categories. Some classes weren't specific enough to fulfill the requirements. Dustin says that (a) this is based on the catalogue...they are kind of trying to make these courses work (b) this is a transitional year. Does that account for the confusion?

- e. Facilities Committee: Dooley says that they didn't meet, but they are hanging the homecoming banner.

#### **IX. Old Business**

- a. New SAFC Rules: Nicole talks about the changes of the books. Oh sugar, people don't have copies of the blue and yellow books. They are basically the same, with a few minor changes. She came into this not completely understanding the process. It isn't complicated, but it is very institutionalized. This is her effort to make it work as well as possible. She wants the process to be much more open, which she hopes is reflected in the guidelines. Dustin says that we will do reports while people look at the pages.

#### **X. Reports**

- a. Class Representatives
  - i. 2008: Ben says that tomorrow is the first class event at Sea Dogs. They have other things coming up.
  - ii. 2009: Christian says that they haven't met.
  - iii. 2010: Bryce says that they haven't met.
  - iv. 2011: Hannah says that they are starting dorm mixers on October 20.

- b. IHC Representatives (Dustin bellows: Brevity Brevity Brevity!): Kristen says that there is the bonfire/grill, Racer-X, and a number of Homecoming events. Racer X is in Morell.
  - i. Dan says that Quinby has the Artsy-Fartsy thing.
  - ii. Sam S says that the houses are looking forward to tailgating the bonfire. Howell Has the Vegas party coming up.
- c. CSC Representative: Alison has been talking to people about the high school student gov. thing. They are organizing a faculty/staff event to give money to the initiative for the Month of Giving.
- d. A-Board Representative: James mentions the Racer X t-shirts and Red Jumpsuit Apparatus.
- e. Res-Life Representative: Sam K says that the new fire marshal was on campus. Fire Safety Week is soon.

**XI. SAFC Rules Again:** Open debate for SAFC rules.

- Ben F wonders if budgets are due Thursday at noon. Yes. Okay, cool. Also, will the method of the SAFC assigning time slots continue? Nicole thinks that it will stay for this year. The time slot thing was not working for the amount of meetings that they needed. This is hopefully an improvement, and she thinks that it will continue to develop. He asks if people have been doing event debriefs. Nicole says that they are trying to get people to do this. People from SAFC will be responsible for groups of clubs and they will try to get kids to take care of this. Will points out that this is for large events that ask for a lot of money. Ben also asks about dinner rates. Nicole says that that is actually wrong. Ben wants this checked out.
- Clark wonders if they looked more into hypothetical expenditures according to the changes. Nope. Nicole says that Clark knows that it's totally arbitrary when it comes down to it. She's running it so different from Becca, who was different from Joe. She doesn't think that it will have much of an impact.
- Those in favor: unanimous. *New SAFC rules accepted.*

**XII. Important Stuff that Dustin forgot:** Dustin forgot a ton of important stuff. Comments about election reform should be submitted to Will Hales by Tuesday. He and Sam met with deans about committee restructuring. There are pages about this, including projections about committees that will be eliminated. They seem to be the ones that directly affect student life. The excuse is that the working groups will deal with this. His concern is that there is no student on the committee that forms the working group. It seems like it would be an amorphous process, but no student on COGFA. This is an important issue this year, in a crucial but not-all-that-exciting way. They sit as voting members on committees now and hold seats. They don't want to lose ground, but to stay part of the working group process.

The Community Response Committee is an object of concern. Prof. Bandy of Sociology is committed. They are looking at other potentials. He is going to optimistically say that he wants the committee to meet by the end of next week.

They want to make sure that everyone has the same idea about what the committee does.

Next week's meeting is at 8:30. BQSA is hosting a forum about if Bowdoin is queer friendly. He thinks that it is important for people to go. Oct. 31 is Halloween. Would Tuesday work? Should we meet on Halloween? (Affirmative grunts from the body) Okay, we'll meet Oct. 31.

**XIII. Adjournment** at 9:41 pm