

# Bowdoin Student Government Meeting Agenda

21/10/09 - Daggett Lounge

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. President`s Welcome
- IV. Approval of the Minutes
- V. Public Comment Time
- VI. Guests- None
- VII. Old Business- None
- VIII. New Business
  - a. Town Liaison Position
  - b. Credit/D/Fail Conversation
- IX. Committee Reports
  - a. BSG Affairs Committee
  - b. Student Activities Funding Committee
  - c. Student Affairs Committee
  - d. Student Organizations 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

# Bowdoin Student Government

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### **Bowdoin Student Government**

Oct. 14, 2009

- I. **Call to Order** at 8:31 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Anirudh says to feel free to ask to see the email concerning the table drama. Mark and Greg are absent.
- III. **President's Welcome:** Dooley extends a special welcome to Tim Foster and to our new Orient reporter, who didn't realize that she had a name card at the table.
- IV. **Public Comment Time:** Rutledge makes a comment on behalf of the public: we need more bike racks outside of Farley and outside of Moulton. People have had to lock their bikes to trees.

V. **Approval of the Minutes:** Motion to approve seconded, minutes pass unanimously.

VI. **Guest, Tim Foster:** Dooley explains that Dean Foster is here without an agenda, so now is the time to ask questions.

- Addison asks how Tim Foster is doing. Foster responds that he is fine, and eager for this opportunity to come in without an agenda to see what is on people's minds. This is better than coming in under reactive circumstances. We are just getting underway this year. Dean Foster also wants to celebrate the generous gift that BSG made to renovate the Watson Fitness Center into a new space for students. He doesn't think this got enough attention, and hopes the Orient will write about it. This is a really sweet thing, and we need to think about how we make a difference in the lives of students. It will bring joy to a lot of people.

- Rutledge wants to give Dean Foster props for the improved schedule-izing. The system is greatly improved. He also appreciates the longer library hours. He wishes that the LMC hours could be extended as well. Tonight, for example, he didn't have time to watch his Russian film, and wonders if he'll be able to finish it before the center closes. Bryce says that the LMC is considering cutting Saturdays. Rutledge suggests a rollover minutes system. Bryce says that they could see about moving the hours into the week—maybe keep it open until 12. Rutledge says that this would be huge. Dean Foster suggests looking into study spaces on campus, and considering 24-hour spaces and opportunities for more. Dean Foster mentions the cost-cutting guide, and thinks that students would wildly appreciate a guide for 24-hour study spaces. He hates to give them out, because then they are no longer secretive. Isa mentions Kanbar, Druck, and Moulton.

- Kyle is interested to hear what the trustee stance on allocating the student activities fund is. There was an increase last year. The SAFC works with almost 700,000. Most of our peer schools work with 400-500,000. He could see this as a place that trustees might cut. What is their opinion? Dean Foster says that they looked at this a little last year. It is rare that schools tie it to tuition and fees the way we do. Some use a flat allocation, and others use a percentage. He doesn't think that this is an area that the trustees will delve into. It is tied to the increase in tuition and fees, and it remains to be seen how aggressively we will increase these areas. The number has gotten big, and the compounding on a number that large is some serious cabbage. He especially appreciates that this last year, as difficult as things are, we were able to make an incredible gift. He wants to consider seeing us use that largess. He knows Kyle has done brilliant work portraying requests and spending. Requests continue to be heavy. He wonders how much we can educate people that everyone is feeling pressure and that we need to be wise about requests. There is not a savings in cutting the SAFC allocation; there is a savings to families if they are expected to pay a smaller amount

- Kata asks what is on the agenda for the trustees meeting this weekend. Dean Foster says that we were initially intending to celebrate the success of the campaign—it was a wild success and makes a huge difference in terms of the long-term success of the college. It didn't seem appropriate to have a wild celebration, so this aspect of the weekend will be more subdued. There will be time to thank people for generosity. We will be talking about carbon neutrality. There will be a presentation about that, a budget update, and committee reports. In the student affairs committee, they are talking about swine flu—not because it is fascinating and interesting, but because it was a training episode about something that could be more dangerous and virulent. This has generated a lot to think about. We are also talking about the opening of the Buck Center. We will take some time to walk people through and see the space in action as a space that's alive. There is one individual living in the swine flu crash rooms.

- Bryce is curious if there was any conscious decision to keep the hours of Dudley Coe the same and not extend them because of swine flue. Dean Foster replies that everything was on the table. He says that we had the first unconfirmed case on the first day of classes. We had to wait because of issues with the state. There was a bimodal distribution. On one Tuesday, there were 32 people present with influenza-like cases. There was a lot of activity on that weekend, and the health center remained open and continued to meet people as they came in. There are a lot of people on the swine flu front that have done fantastic work, including students, facilities, dining, health services, peer health volunteers. It was extraordinary to see how Bowdoin rallies around something like that. We found ourselves in the infirmary business, a place we haven't been in 15 years.

- Branden knows that invitational weekend is coming. He has talked to people who have visited and those who have been part of invitational weekend. Does he find the invitational effective? For students who do come after those experiences, how do they transition? Dean Foster says that the second question is hard to answer. He doesn't think that there is a better way to check out the campus than to visit. At the end of the day, the place sells itself—the students sell it. Visitors can ask unfiltered questions, meet students, go to class, and experience Bowdoin for themselves. There have been questions about how authentic the event is. This is best answered by us—people who have done this—is the experience in line with how Bowdoin seems when we actually arrive at Bowdoin? As far as wondering how these people transition...he yield is high—people who come after being

involved in these weekends. There are very few people who come to Bowdoin and find it not to be the place for them. Our retention is 96-97% Are people thriving or surviving? That is a different question.

- Jordan thinks that people transition easier after the Bowdoin Experience—they already know people when they arrive. Dean Foster replies that the networking opportunities are huge. He loves that we added the bus ride from urban areas—the bonding starts before people even arrive.

- Bryce wonders about the increase in first-years. How many more are there, why, and how are people adjusting with forced quints? Dean Foster says that the number is 14 more than last year—497 this year. This is where we wanted to land. There was a lot of talk about budgeting, and we decided that over several years, we wanted to grow the student body slightly in order to help with the budget pressures. Because of a perfect storm, there was an imbalance in study-away numbers. There is now a large first0year class, and many more people studying away in the spring—so there are a lot of people on campus now. There is an enrollment committee that meets to consider the number of students here, housing demands, course demands, budget issues, and decide what the proper size for the incoming class is. That process is underway already. If you think about the classes as being in the snake already—they travel through the body as they are digested—these classes affects the numbers for the coming years as well. There are factors you don't control, like a leave of absence, studying away, and other variables that switch.

- Bryce wonders about getting the last 10-14 students. Do they come off the wait list and not get financial aid? Foster says that this is correct. Bryce says that this skews the diversity of Bowdoin students, does it not? Dean Foster replies that they maintain that 40% of students are on aid—this is still the case. We considered what adding these 10 people would do, and we have maintained the commitment. This was part of what we needed to do—10 people playing the bill is 500,000 toward the bottom line. There are lots of ways to get there, but we wanted to do it without having people lose jobs or losing programming. We call it the blue tarp. He thinks that it was a good choice, but it involved lots of discussion.

- Derek understands the need to bring students that pay full tuition. Does this affect our claim that we are “need-blind”? Dean Foster says that they have said we are need-blind during regular admissions—not necessarily for wait list students or for transfer students. We are upfront about this.

- Mike thanks Dean Foster for coming. Dean Foster thanks the group for its leadership.

## **VII. New Business**

**a. Polar Bear Nation T-Shirts:** Mike presents this bill. Basically, in years past, we have funded the Polar Bear Nations shirts. We have allocated \$1000 as a line item for the t-shirts. We were expecting this cost. The shirts are distributed this Friday at a pep rally. There are 200 or 250 t-shirts. We are trying to get the best deal possible.

- Isa asks if these are the get blacked out shirt. Absolutely not. They say “Polar Bear Nation” on the front and “Black is Back” on the back.

- Kyle wonders if BSG is on the shirt anywhere. Clare says that they aren't sure.

- Isa asks if there is another group funding this. Clare says that the athletic dept. will pay the \$300 extra because this is a late order.

- Rutledge wants to know how much of the proceeds are going to save polar bears in North America. Clare responds that the shirts are free, so there will be no proceeds.

- Isaac asks who will pay if we don't decide to fund this tonight. Clare says that the athletic committee will have to front the cost.

- Aaron asks if the Homecoming Committee should be asking us directing. Dooley responds that they are not a chartered club, so they can't apply for funds.

- Rutledge says that people paid \$5 for t-shirts last year for the class. He is all about free stuff, but he is more about saving the polar bears. We could ask for a \$2-5 donation and say that we are doing something for the environment.

- Bryce doesn't know if charging for the t-shirts would be the best way to do something on this front. We could set up a donation box on the weekend, not even necessarily connected to the shirts.

- Rutledge is aghast. He says nothing, but his face betrays him.

- Dooley thinks that saving polar bears is great, but he doesn't think that this would be the best opportunity for that. It's not the focus for the weekend. Rutledge responds that the focus is more about giving away free stuff, then...? Kata explains that it's about celebrating Bowdoin. Isaac thinks that this requires a forum to address how we could look at the environmental issue—we could be looking at any number of issues, you know—save the koala bears. Rutledge says that something about handing out polar bear shirts made him think of polar bears.

- Derek says that we are donating money for this, but we are not in charge of the shirts. Kyle says that if we

fund them, they are ours.

- Tessa doesn't think that people would pay for shirts that a lot of people already have. We could take this into account for the future, but this wouldn't be a lucrative way to raise money for this cause.
- Rutledge thinks that we need to take baby steps—this is how the environment got this way. We pass up on opportunities to give back. He thinks that people would give a few dollars for a t-shirt. This isn't controversial at Bowdoin. Everyone wants to save the environment.
- Kata moves to vote tonight. Isa and Rutledge are opposed to voting tonight. Kyle abstains because he is uncomfortable funding something that may or may not bear the BSG logo. If we want people to know we do stuff, it should have the BSG logo to increase our presence. Anirudh agrees with the man who brings home the bacon. Kata thinks that this is legitimate, but that we should do something more than give away free t-shirts to make people notice us. We want to advocate for students. Branden also abstains because he doesn't think we reached a conclusion in the debate.
- Kyle wants to make an amendment to see something listed about the design of the shirt.
- Dooley reminds people to raise their hands if they want to speak.
- Clare says that it is being advertised that BSG is funding the shirts. We wanted BSG to fund this to show that there is broad support for this weekend's events from the students. She thinks that BSG is on the shirt.
- Aaron says that it's a cool shirt, and that BSG could do other things to make people know that we funded it without ruining the aesthetic of the shirt.
- Branden wonders how many people would walk around with a bucket to ask for donations for the polar bears. Few people raise their hands. Rutledge says that he is disappointed with people tonight. Branden says that he will organize this if people want to do it. Mike says that if people are interested, we will do it but it can't be a joke show.
- Aaron moves to vote on 080938. Those in favor: 17; Those opposed to voting tonight: 4; Abstaining: 1, Anirudh because we don't have the facts. The two-week rule is here so we don't rush into things.
- This is the vote on whether or not we are funding the t-shirts. Mike makes the vote very clear. Those in favor: 17; Those opposed: 3; Those abstaining: 4. Rutledge thinks that we should fund the shirts, but he thinks that we should be resourceful about distribution. Branden says that we don't have the facts. Kyle agrees, he wants to know about the logo. Anirudh says that it would look weird if he voted now, because he abstained in the last vote.

**b. CFL Lightbulbs Request:** Every year, we have contributed to the funding of low-energy lightbulbs that you might have in your rooms. We give money, Sustainable Bowdoin gives money, and we pass them out. Last year they all went (200 count) in a day. We get our name on a sign, and people appreciate the bulbs.

- Bryce wonders if earlier was better. This is the plan Mike got from Payson.
- Those in favor of voting tonight: unanimous.
- Aaron moves to vote. Those in favor of funding: Unanimous except for Lyne, because there are 5 in her room that no one uses. People suggest that she bring them to the next meeting.

**c. Campus Conversations:** Bryce says that next Friday, we plan to have a Campus Conversation. The topic is academic advising. We may also talk about peer advising. The biggest reason that these began is to facilitate dialogue between faculty, staff, and students. The topic for next week is academic advising. We will advertise, potentially put up table tents in the dining halls...and for the event itself, we need money for linens, dessert plates, coffee, and water. He wants to raise this up to \$150 because Daggett is booked, so we are moving the event to Maine lounge. That requires people to get food downstairs and bring it up. He would like to add one small thing: add table tents and other advertising costs to the cost list in the wording of the bill.

- Anirudh says that we have allocated \$500 for Campus Conversations. He asks Bryce if we want to vote tonight. Yes, we will want to override the two-week rule. A pattern emerges.
- Branden asks what the average cost for the rest of these will be. Bryce says that there will be 5, he thinks. They usually cost \$100. This one is extra because of location. He doesn't want this to fall on its face, so he is putting more money into it. He hopes to recoup the cost in the coming events. He wants everyone to keep their schedules clear for the 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Kyle wonders if there are alternate locations or dates. Bryce mentions the 6<sup>th</sup> and...another date he can't recall. They are on non-Common-Hour days. Another factor is when Daggett is booked. It is booked for the 23<sup>rd</sup>. It's not ideal, but Bryce doesn't think it will be a great hindrance. Just invite people.
- Kata wants to know how many people came to these, on average. Bryce says that more faculty usually come than students, embarrassingly. Usually the students are all BSG members. There were maybe 15 faculty, 10 or so students. Mike thinks that the biggest problem was getting non-BSG students in the room. It is up to BSG members to bring friends and roommates. It's a good experience, and the success is up to us. It'll be great

if we get other people in the room.

- Bryce decided on academic advising, but he hopes the people bring suggestions for future conversations. He thinks that one topic could be sustainability—what role do students and faculty play.
- Rutledge moves to extend discussion, Kata seconds.
- Rutledge likes the truth that has come out, which is that not many students attend these. He wants us to send text messages. We should put posters up in Moulton and Thorne to ask people to come to the event. He doesn't know how hot of a topic academic advising is. He has brought trays of cookies and jars of coffee home after these failed events. Bryce says that they don't have cookies—they have tiny dessert trays.
- Kata wants to set up a mechanism to get people to come—send RSVP invitations to specific people or something. This could be a way to get other people to come.
- Rutledge adds that the only additional funding is because it is in a different location and questions this fact.
- Tessa thinks that people have good points, and that she would vote in favor because the additional money is *for* advertising.
- Jordan is in favor of the additional money, but thinks that it's better spent on advertisement. He is confused and doesn't realize that this is a lunchtime event—this is cleared up.
- Mike explains that the budget can slide toward advertising if necessary. Isa says that these prices aren't set by Bryce, they are set by dining. Also, one of the goals is for students to connect with faculty. They are highly successful events—professors love it.
- Emma says that printing at the copy center is extremely cheap. \$3 can paper the campus. Bryce says that we would be putting table tents out in Moulton and Thorne that ask leading questions.
- Lyne thinks that professors are scary. That's the first thing that comes to mind and would make her not want to come. You can just talk to them—advertise it this way. Bryce says that this is a reason to do this—because students view professors as scary. Maybe we can overcome this in these conversations.
- Rutledge understands that time is precious and doesn't want people to think that he babbles. We should think about the time we are spending debating this. He would rather spend time talking about what this event is. There are people here who don't know what it is, and we should spend out time wisely and resourcefully, instead of talking about some poorly-worded thing about cookies and coffee.
- Motion of vote tonight. Motion passes.
- Vote on the bill: passes unanimously.

### VIII. Committee Reports

- BSG Affairs:** Anirudh has an attendance sheet. He keeps attendance, and he will know if you don't show up. BSG Affairs will meet next week and talk about elections reform. If you have questions, concerns, comments, come to the meeting on Tuesday at 8 or email him suggestions. After the meeting tonight...don't stick around to clean up.
- Student Activities Funding:** They didn't meet because of fall break. Kyle and Branden will be making youtube videos to explain how SAFC works. It would be nice if anyone with editing experience wants to help him out.
- Student Affairs:** Addison says that they haven't met, but that they will meet Monday at 8 p.m. Location TBA for next week.
- Student Organizations:** Branden says that they talked about leadership development. Dean Foster and the student activities office met today to talk about it. It is good for applications to show that you are officially trained to be a leader. It sounds nice. There are clubs waiting to be chartered. Turn to the back of the packet, where you will find something about the social issues task force. This is to address issues that are discussed casually on campus. This year we are trying to do something different to get conversations started. This started with a few ideas—things that students weren't talking about openly. We tried to bring the discussions to the campus. We set up displays in the union. They were about sexuality, race, drinking, etc. and let students write responses to the different issues.
- Academic Affairs:** Bryce says that October 23<sup>rd</sup> is the first Campus Conversations. They are meeting Sundays at 9:45.
- Facilities:** Isa has nothing new. Airport shuttle was... It ran.

### IX. Member Reports

- Class Representative:**
  - Peggy says that they haven't met because of Fall Break.
  - Rebecca has nothing.
  - Juniors are not present. Aaron says that Greg is watching TV. He doesn't think they have met.

- Rachel says that the first pub night is tomorrow. They are selling lollipops.
- b. IHC Representatives:** Aaron says that they planned free barbecue at the non-football fields during homecoming. They are also planning a big house event that will be a lot of fun.
- c. E-Board:** Chris says that they are getting ready for Racer-X.
- d. Athletics Representative:** Clare says that there will be BSG t-shirts at the pep rally, which they have been planning. Homecoming is this weekend. If you live in a house, wear your colors.

**X. President's Report:** Mike says that it is Trustee weekend—these are the people in ties. We encourage trustee-student interaction, so bring your relevant comments forward. We are doing good things with the BSG, like the social issues task force. People were talking about this last year. Also, the cost-cutting guide is coming. Addison is working hard on finishing this. It is a booklet about living at Bowdoin—if you want to help edit, talk to Mike or Addison. The past two weeks have been odd due to calendar issues. You may leave thinking that all we do is fund stuff and debate about t-shirts. Things are heating up in other areas though, and you will see this in the next few weeks. Brace yourselves. Branden asks about the idea at the football game. It looks like the sign-up sheets got messed up. Mike says that he and Branden are sticking around, so talk to them about this. The football game is at noon.

**XI. Adjournment** at 9:45 p.m.

# Bowdoin Student Government

Proposal to Vote

Proposal 0809041

Proposed by: Student Organizations Committee

Date: October 21, 2009

## PROPOSAL TO AMEND BYLAWS AND CREATE TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON POSITION

### **Opinion**

As the voice of Bowdoin's Student Body, the Bowdoin Student Government should send a liaison to the meetings of the Brunswick Town Council (bi-weekly on Monday nights) to communicate between the two bodies.

### **Action Required**

The Student Organizations Committee requests that the Bowdoin Student Government Assembly creates a liaison position between the BSG and the Brunswick Town Council. This position will be appointed by the BSG Assembly from among its membership each semester. The BSG Liaison to Town Council will be responsible for: attending all Town Council meetings, bringing forward issues related to the Bowdoin community to the BSG in a timely fashion (preferably before they are voted on by Town Council), representing the BSG's opinion to Town Council during appropriate public hearings, and making a semester report of Town Council proceedings to the BSG Assembly. Add the following at the end of the bylaws:

#### Article V) Assembly-Appointed Positions

##### A. Selection Procedure

- i. Nominations will be taken from all members of the Assembly (excluding the President).
- ii. The candidates will have the opportunity to accept or reject the nomination.
- iii. Each candidate will give a speech of no more than two minutes as to why they should be selected for the position.
- iv. Each member of the Assembly will indicate her/his top two choices (or top choice in the case of a two-way race) on a secret ballot.
- v. The candidate with the lowest vote total will be removed from consideration.
- vi. This procedure will repeat until there is a two-way race.
- vii. The winner of the two-way race will take the position.

##### B. Town Council Liaison

- i. The Assembly will select, at the beginning of each semester, a liaison to the Brunswick Town Council using the procedure outlined above.
- ii. This liaison must be a member of the BSG Assembly.
- iii. The liaison will attend all meetings of the Brunswick Town Council and apprise the Assembly of issues relevant to Bowdoin Students. The liaison will attempt to communicate these issues to the Assembly before they are voted on by the Town Council.
- iv. The liaison will be responsible for representing the opinion of the BSG, and by extension the Student Body, at the town council meetings.
- v. S/he may not represent an opinion as that of the BSG or the Student Body unless a resolution has been passed to that effect by the BSG Assembly.
- vi. The liaison will make a semester report of town council proceedings at the end of each semester.

# Bowdoin Student Government

Old Proposal to Vote

## RESOLUTION REGARDING CREDIT/D/FAIL

### **Facts**

The Credit/D/Fail working group—appointed by Dean Judd and consisting of two students, two faculty members, and one dean—has recently issued a draft report discussing the group's thoughts on a number of issues under consideration. While the report is at this point only a draft, due to timing concerns it makes the most sense for BSG to comment on the group's report at this time.

### **Opinion**

There are three primary elements discussed within the report, as well as a general discussion that we have considered as well. Our comments here are derived from conversations within BSG as well as with countless other students throughout the past two years of Credit/D/Fail debate.

First, regarding the "D," BSG agrees with the committee's unanimous decision that a standard credit/fail option, without the intermediate grade, would be a better system. Our logic is consistent with that of the working group.

Second, regarding the recommendation for a shortened deadline, BSG does not agree with the recommendation of the committee. While we respect the rationale of the majority of the working group, we have three primary reasons for our stance on this issue:

1. A two-week deadline does not give students enough of a chance to succeed. By keeping the deadline at six weeks, students are given sufficient chance to truly engage in a subject that they may likely realize they are quite good at. A two week deadline encourages students to take a course less seriously from the onset.
2. We worry that many students would not consider taking a course if they did not have a chance to get a true feel for the course, professor, and material before being forced to choose whether or not to apply the Credit/D/Fail option.
3. Similarly, the Credit/D/Fail option inherently acknowledges the value of grades for students, and tries to remove them as a worry in order to encourage exploration. This is student concern with grades is true now more than ever in the past. In order to realistically acknowledge this, we feel the six-week deadline is a great balance between the student care for grades and the philosophical goal of pure exploration.

Third, regarding the issue of privacy, we again completely agree with the unanimous decision of the working group. Reported cases of student not receiving adequate feedback because professors knew of their choice to use the Credit/D/Fail option are troubling. In addition, many students are dissuaded from exploring new subjects because they worry about disappointing or being judged by a professor. However well- or poorly- founded these worries are, they are a reality that must be considered.

Finally, we wanted to emphasize the student support for the Grade/Credit/Fail option. We see this option as a great way to encourage exploration while still providing an incentive for student engagement throughout the semester. We strongly recommend that this option be considered again in the future.