

Meeting of the General Assembly

1 March 2017

Daggett Lounge, Thorne Hall

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
 - a. Missing: Tessa Westfall, Henry Breidar, Maggie Rose, Paloma Tisaire
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Public Comment Time - none
- V. Introduction of Guests
- VI. Old Business
- VII. Reports of Committees
 - a. Student Affairs—*Benjamin Painter '19*
 - b. Student Organizations Oversight Committee—*Kelsey Scarlett '17*
 - c. Academic Affairs—*Evelyn Sanches Gonzalez '17*
 - d. Facilities & Sustainability—*Caroline Rutan '19*
 - e. Student Activities Funding Committee—*Irfan Alam '18*
 - f. Executive Committee—*Harriet Fisher '17 / Reed Fernandez '17*
 - i. Ad Hoc Committees Update
 1. Kate: Committee talked to Marina Apo - discussed doing an event similar to “What Matters Series?” but instead the event is on why it is difficult to talk about class with Professor Eric Nelson and Professor Casselberry. Ural: these two different professors provide two very different views. Some professors thought the

conversation wasn't necessary, while others did - this creates a great discussion.

2. Clara Belitz: Concerns about "Beyond the Façade" event:
reservations about event putting pressure on individuals speaking for an entire group or generalizing for a certain idea. Some people will be more likely to participate others; it's important to not reduce individuals to anything. Some people are always speaking up and participating in these events, so having more people that usually wouldn't to participate should be encouraged.
 - a. Harriet: Planning on having discussion on this event when Ian here and then vote one whether BSG should move forward with this event.
 - b. Victoria says it's good for the assembly to discuss concerns before deciding to vote

ii. Proposal to Vote

1. Proposal 141541 – "Beyond the Facade" – Ian's event
 - a. Reed: Voting on this, if yes, they can continue, if no, they just take it back to editing the event, and how it would run.
 - b. Harriet: repeats what Clara said - Centralizing people to an identity. Victoria: She said that there are certain people who will be drawn to this space, probably not many minorities. And then there are certain people who always

feel called upon to speak out on issues of identity. How can this event address those issues?

- i. Ian: What changed: scrapped the literature from it – taking away objectification (book, library). Similar general concept. Main goal is to give as much agency to the person volunteering to speak about their story. They get to choose where and for how long they talk.
- ii. Irfan: Example of title/label, “single mother?”. Ian: Has slides with examples of labels; will be in Quinby house helped made.
- iii. Irfan: Give an example of a title and questions. Ian: Police man, questions on experience of being a police man. Irfan: who creates title and questions? Ian: the volunteer. The volunteer has full agency. There are public, semi-public, and private spaces – volunteers choose. Staff brings participants to where the volunteers are.
- iv. Bens: ways to address the critique of reducing people to one identity? Quincy: say you have 8 volunteers, and each has 3 titles, so that different aspects of the person can be expressed – not reduced to one.

v. Reed: a lot of hesitation comes from racial identity
– can one person can speak for such a big category.

Ian: Disclaimer that one person isn't speaking for a whole group. Nate: Disclaimer won't stop generalizing behavior. Irfan: Picking from labels is a weird thing to do, but the actual experience of listening to a story from someone of this identity is still great.

vi. Beatrice: "Beyond the Façade" implies that you will get an understanding of a whole group from one person's story and not acknowledge the individual story. Example: black single mother's experience, instead of understanding her individual story, you think you understand that whole demographic.

Possibly changing name?

vii. Kate: Instead of label, putting a small bio, pic, and name of volunteer. Victoria: This works, because you might still have a preconception of what this person will talk about, but when you actually have a conversation, that might change.

viii. Ural: If that happens, the fundamental idea is changed. You're trying to find out how a particular part of their identity has impacted their life. Nate:

People coming from privilege trying to understand marginalize community is the issue. Beatrice: making title “going beyond 7 secs”; the title needs to change. Victoria: by tweaking it in the ways that were discussed, it wouldn’t change the fundamental idea, it could make it great.

- ix. Irfan: Ian, how do you feel about the Kate’s idea of the bio? Ian: You want to make the volunteer comfortable, it’s also an opportunity for someone to come in to talk about something they want to talk about. In light of feedback, maybe scrap and start over?
- x. Kelsey: You can have something as effective (using herself as an example), I can just say Kelsey and my picture, and you’re still going to have preconceptions. From the conversation, you can change those preconceptions and initial biases.
- xi. Riley: An issue was about an individual talking about a larger group. You’re aiming to put that person back into a box and through conversation, you realize more of what goes beyond example.

- xii. Victoria: the fact that we have titles and labels of identities can be problematic; perpetuate stereotypes and labels.
- xiii. Joe: is a possible goal cultural enrichment? Meeting with this one person, beyond the label. Its attempt is to get one-on-one conversations. Does this really push people to have that? It seems too structured and polished. Is it worth potential trouble and backlash – instead encourage stepping out of your comfort zone and interact with town members. Is it worth all the trouble? Ian: Do you think people actually have those conversations? Joe: They should – will they always just go back to the human library to have these interactions.

1. Henry: the people coming to this event will be the same people who would regularly talk to community members. Maybe we should advertise this wider.
2. Victoria: agrees with Joe's concerns – this project is trying to go beyond the façade, but why do they need a platform to approach these people. It is less enriching using a platform that labels people instead of

engaging people you wouldn't regularly talk to. Also, after the project, these meaningful interactions probably wouldn't continue.

3. Spencer: This is an opportunity to get those conversations started. Quincy: Agrees, people will have opinions, and we can improve from these critiques. Issue with assaulting people with questions on their personal lives.
4. Erin: That's what we've been trying to do with the class thing; if you go to a talk that you didn't expect, you might learn. I think it being forced isn't bad thing.
5. Jack: People are choosing to be there. When you go to a racial talk or workshop, you're aware that the person isn't talking for all those people of that identity. That shouldn't be a concern for this event.
6. Ben: Idea behind this is great - facilitating conversations between people on difficult topics. You should be flexible with the label issue.

7. Irfan: in response to Joe's comment – I have never had a conversation with a Maine neighbor or a Paralympian. The concept will stay the same despite whether you change it from labeling to bios.
8. Jacob R: There's a lot of controversy on this topic, we should refrain from voting for now.
9. Ian: Wants to get someone else in charge – has a single vision for how this would look.
Victoria: You would like to get someone to be in charge of the whole thing? Evelyn:
You are the face of this project, just take the criticism from here and improve.
10. Joe: Does this event have to happen? Leah: I can get on top of the committee to make this happen. Harriet: We can create an ad hoc committee. Harriet: ad hoc committee will meet with multicultural coalition to run the idea.
11. Harriet: **voting**
 - a. Jacob calls for secret ballot

- b. Vote 1 – (Yes) Leah and her are spearheading the committee – rethinking the plan.
- c. Vote 2 - (Yes) give Green light to the plan..
- d. Vote 3 – Scrap the whole idea
- e. Results: Opposed: 9; Yes:14; Abstained: 1
- f. Result two: Amended: 21; Not amended 2; Abstaining 1
- g. **Moving forward with ad hoc committee to amend the project.**

2. Green Living Pledge

- a. Ben: Him and Evelyn creating a green living commitment pledge after meeting with director of sustainability. We, as leaders on campus (BSG members), should all commit to this pledge. Ben reads proposal. Ben: Two week rule. Carly: Suspend two week rule. Jo: opposes. Ben: vote to reduce to one week. Passes.
 - i. Evelyn: think about how we can do something from the discussions of invited guests to meetings.
- iii. Reed: Not going forward with survey. The At-Large will get a survey to Bowdoin students, there's already a committee on off-campus. Reeder:

off-campus housing for the future. Irfan also part of committee. Irfan:
talked to Scanlon, there is another survey being created about housing.

Use At-Large Reps as focus group.

- iv. Harriet: Before Spring Break, tampon baskets will be set up. All supplies have arrived.
- v. Harriet: Picnic tables are coming – gelato event w/ BSG
- vi. Harriet: If you want to create an event, use BSG representatives as resource to make them happen.
- vii. Harriet: BSG Elections are coming up. If you want to grab coffee w/ current reps, contact them.

VIII. Reports of Members

- a. Class Councils - none
 - i. 2020:
 - ii. 2019:
 - iii. 2018:
 - iv. 2017:
- b. Multicultural Coalition
- c. Inter-House Council
- d. Entertainment Board
- e. McKeen Center
- f. At-Large Representatives

IX. Report of the President

X. Announcements

XI. Adjournment