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Faculty Moves to Cut Student Voice in Hiring Decisions

On October 22, at the regular faculty meeting, the number of students on the Committee on Vacancies to two, selected in consultation with the Faculty Senate, from four selected by the student body.

The motion originating in the Faculty Senate was introduced as follows: that the membership of the Committee on Vacancies be changed from 1:1. The Senate, in its function as dealing with the balance of instruction in the College. 2. Four students. 3. The Dean of the College, non-voting. to 1:1. The Senate as the Committee responsible for College-wide planning. 2. Any ad-hoc or occasional appointees with appropriate expertise designated by the Senate, non-voting. 3. The Dean of the College, non-voting.

During the spirited discussion that followed, faculty members sympathetic to student rights showed an unwillingness to remove students from the process. Some amendments were proposed in the form of a new point three; 3. The Student Educational Policies Committee in consultation with the Senate will nominate two students who will become voting members of the Committee on Vacancies. The amendment passed 29 to 18, with 6 abstentions, and the new compromise proposal was adopted.

The question remains, however, as to why. Why did the faculty, or elements of the faculty, move to end Bard’s tradition of student participation?

Several faculty members have stated that either they or “others” have felt constrained by student presence. They felt awkward speaking their mind about other faculty members when they had something negative to say. However, many others have maintained that this is exactly why students should be kept on the board, they act, said one, “as a civilizing force.” Still another Professor was even more explicit, accusing the faculty as “back-stabbing” to reduce the faculty they called the culpability of students a “myth” and blamed the problems of the “hijacked and the corruption” of the faculty. Said yet another professor, echoing the thought “given the history of the process the question is not whether students ought to be, but whether faculty ought to be allowed.”

Many faculty members complain that there isn’t much input even with students on the committee. Others emphasized that students rarely showed up at the committee meetings and behaved “with childish irresponsibility” as did others. Said one Professor, “often on the COV, where the students held four of eight places, not a single one would show. Then the four faculty members had to make the decision anyway. Such a practice, continued many, put the college at legal risk.

Several faculty members asserted that they believed that the new process was the way students wanted it anyway, “years ago, the students would holler and scream about everything, today they just don’t want to be bothered.” Many faculty agreed with regret “they’re all getting so conventional,” complained one, “they don’t understand community and democracy.” Once again, others disagreed, one of them calling the new system a “deceit perpetrated by the faculty to maintain the illusion of communal government.” In response, one professor charged that students on the committee were often manipulated by the faculty. By being removed from the committee, therefore, students were being cut off the reach of faculty pressure and politics.

Although few faculty seemed to be willing to go to the extreme of the Professor who said students just don’t care about the school, the faculty did. Many expressed the opinion that students “don’t have the vested interest in the College and its future that the faculty does.” The faculty, observed several, has to live with these decisions for many years, thirty years, the students will be then be long gone.

Convocation Endowments Proposed

The Bard Student Association, in conjunction with the administration, are planning five “convocation endowments” this spring. The student body will be asked to provide a convocation endowment fund for student extracurricular activities and events. Each endowment fund will be earmarked for a different aspect of student activities. The Student Association hopes that the convocation endowment fund will be used to the majority of the money from parents and recent alumni.

The five proposed funds are: a publications endowment, an electronic media endowment, a speaker and lecture endowment, a concert and performance endowment, and a capital improvements endowment. The publications fund is designed to support the magazine currently available for Bard publications. It is hoped that the magazines will be both the difficult of existing publications and encourage new ones. The publications fund is designated to provide additional funds for the always expensive technology used in such events, such as the current hiring radio station (WBC), the recording studio, and the audio co-op. The speaker and lecture fund is designed to help the large number of student groups which rely on high-quality lectures on the campus. These groups have often found themselves unable to pay modest honorariums, and the hope is that the endowment will allow them both to attract better known and highly paid speakers, and to have fuller schedules. The concert and performance fund will no doubt do the same for the groups scheduling artistic events. The last endowment is a capital improvements endowment, which would allow the building of new rooms, including a new dining hall.

New Dorm to rise in Tewksbury Field

The college will construct a new dormitory in Tewksbury Field this spring. Construction on the new facility will begin "as soon as the ground thaws" according to Dean of Students Jim Krider.

The dorm will serve to replace the student housing space which will be lost when Blithewood is converted to house the new Jerome Levy Economic Institute.

The new facility will consist of two different buildings, running parallel to each other and perpendicular to the Tewksbury Road. The larger building, which will be the dormitory, will house five dormitories. The smaller building, which will be the institute, will accommodate the offices of the institute. The two buildings will be connected by a bridge, allowing students to move between the two buildings easily.

The dormitory will provide an optimum use of seventy-two beds, twenty-four of them in singles and forty-eight in doubles. Since Blithewood has a maximum occupancy of forty-two, the campus will host a net gain of twenty-seven beds. Although sizes vary slightly, the singles will average nine feet by thirteen feet, and the doubles will generally be fourteen feet by thirteen feet. At this time, the administration intends to designate at least three of the dorms for women and the others for men. The institute will also have its own separate spaces.

Each dorm will have its own kitchen and bathroom, and there will be a first floor lounge. When residents enter the building, they will enter into the lounge. The upper floors are reached via an open staircase in the lounge. Two specially designed wheelchair accessible rooms are also located on the first floor. If there are no wheelchair bound residents, these could be used as standard doubles. Each of the upper floors will have three singles with northern exposures and two doubles with southern exposure. The bathrooms will be located on each floor, with the tub/shower (one per floor) will be installed, and an outer bathroom where the double sink vanity will be located. This was done to co-educate occupancies.

The dorm rooms themselves will have built in closets which will feature shelves and drawers as well as coatbars. The rooms will also include built-in bookcases along with the standard dorm furnishings. The dorms will all be air-conditioned to allow for summertime use. The dorms will be equipped throughout with opening casement windows, a feature included as a result of student dissatisfaction with Tewksbury’s large but immobile picture windows. Also, in response to Blithewood’s weaknesses, the walls will be covered in shearrock, in order to avoid the infamous exposed cinderblock. The location of the lounge immediately as you enter the building, was in response to the falling of the Ravine Houses, where the out of the way location of the lounge discouraged its use.

According to the Dean, the buildings are to be done in the post-modernist style, the facades to be of poured concrete, edged into square blocks. The mass of the wall will be off-white, with a three-foot high strip of grey along the bottom. Breaking up the walls will be strips of glass, which will match the window trim. The walls will culminate in curved tops, designed, said Krider, to echo the slopes of the hills visible beyond the buildings to the south-west.
Oh Ye of Little Faith

In a departure from tradition, we are not going to lecture you, or did I say with you about how a campus newspaper ought to be. (Well, not right now anyway.)

If you find the new Observer lacking, fine. We appreciate that you do something about it, don’t just sit back and criticize. We used to sit in the Coffe Shop and the Dining Room and talk about what a great newspaper we would put out if we were doing it. The thing is, we weren’t doing it, and all those great ideas and lofty ambitions are nothing more than cigarette smoke if they only go as far.

The Committee is Vacant

The recent decision of the faculty to dilute the student voice in hiring decisions completes the work begun last year with creation of the “parallel” tenure process. The intention was to reverse the gains made by the students over the years and turn Bard’s faculty evaluation process into a more conventional top-down affair. The campaign has succeeded spectacularly.

The argument made that students “don’t have the long-term investment in the college that faculty members do.” This argument is only partially true. While a student does, in fact, graduate after a few years, it is absurd and unfair. To believe that their stake in the college and its continued success ends at commencement is to believe that the alumni have a serious emotional stake in their Alma Mater cannot, we believe, be seriously underestimated. On a more material level, alumni have a strong interest in maintaining the quality of the education and of the institution, as such matters directly effect the value of their own diploma in a very dollars and cents way. Furthermore, while a tenured professor may (or may not) have made a twenty or thirty year commitment, a junior faculty member may be here for a period shorter than that, and underpaid.

The second major argument made for the removal of students is that faculty members feel threatened by their presence. Why? The question is not whether a faculty member might be reluctant to speak freely before students, but rather, whether anything that they would be hesitant to say could be considered in a tenure/hiring decision. We think not. If a faculty member does not feel that what he says to can withstand public hearing, then they have not done their job properly.
Diagnosis: Marriage

By Michael Damato

February, a month earmarked by the stench of cheap perfumes, tasteless Valentine’s greetings, and dying flowers is once again past us. Only now do the personal columns of the local papers begin to be rid of ads like, “Snooooks love sweetums lots, Waboom!” The actual fragrance you smell is the foul stench of romance.

Many of you will deny my claim and say that romance is carefree, light hearted and good for the soul. But you are just deluding yourselves, because you know as well as I the consequences of romantic involvement. I am not speaking of V.D., AIDS, or any other well publicized affliction. I am referring to a disease which is more dangerous and far more insidious: marriage.

Many people confuse marriage with the end result, which comes complete with flowers, formal wear, imperfections, and an odd relatives you had hoped never to see again. This end result is the terminal part of the disease. Look past the dreaded walk down death row, millions of people fall into a semi-catatonic state that can only be described as “marriage.”

Everyone has seen the symptoms. Almost everyone knows someone afflicted with this disease. Recall when you last called your friend Roy to invite him to a beer bash and wet T-shirt night. Roy, a previously healthy, active young man would normally jump at the opportunity to wallow in his own vomit for the sake of “male bonding.” However, he turns you down because his girlfriend Opelha needs him to help her with her needlepoint. Opelha, on the other hand, turned down an offer from the girls to attend the fabulous Mel Gib- son/Tom Cruise film festival and aerobics workout, explaining that she had to help Roy wash his collection of dirty sweatsocks. Roy and Opelha, although not joined in holy wedlock, are quite clearly married.

Millions of people fall victim to marriage each year, yet the AMA, the FDA, and all other public health agencies have turned a blind eye to this epidemic. It is probably a conspiracy engineered by church groups and catering services. With the high risk season of spring mov- ing in on us, I present, for the public in- terest, the following warning signs associated with marriage.

1. Loss of Appetite: This is one of the early symptoms of the disease, wherein the victim will suspend their normal diet of frozen pizza and macaroni and cheese to have candlelit cacerolades with his or her snookums. At this stage the disease can be treated, but if left alone it can proceed to other symptoms, such as...

2. Premature Aging: The victim will cast off youthful and vigorous activities (such as frisbee playing and vodka chugging contests) in favor of such retiring activities like playing Trivial Pursuit, (strip version notwithstanding), walking around the campus, or sitting in front of the Tube, as long as the conversation is done by his. This is a gradual process; the male victim may first throw out his Motley Crue and Judd Print albums in favor of the Pretenders, or The Carpenter, because Opelha “turned him on to it, besides, Christyne Hynde not only rocks, she’s a wonderful mother.”

In the terminal stages the victim may be listening to Windham Hill, Lawrence Welk, or even Susan Vega.

3. Personality Changes: Often expressed as “He (She) hasn’t been the same since they started going out.” Previously vibrant and lively individuals are reduced to unemotional mildness, especially when given a deadly mean- ingful look from their significant other. Un znaleźć sobie jakość the hazards of dirty laundry left sit- ting for 3 weeks. Even habitually organized people will be expressing the virtue behind “wringing it” when assigning.

4. Creeping Domesticity: Unnatural affection for kitchenware and home furnis- hings. In some cases this may include the sale of practical guns, knives, and Def Leopard CDs for the sake of a new kitchen appliance. Instead of discussing important issues, such as that cute girl (guy) in your seminar, talk is reduced to comments about interior decorating. (“Do you think we should get a rug that’s easier to clean?”)

5. Faddiness of Childhood: This in- cludes a general interest in and increas- ed tolerance of small children, rather than treating them like whining lumps of dirt and fat. A typical example is not pulling out an imaginary shotgun in a stranger when a small child that should have been left home starts to howl. In- stead one hears, “Aww, the poor little thing.” In extreme cases the victim may even cancel their subscription to Playboy or Cosmopolitan in favor of Parenting magazine.

6. Antisocial Behavior: Avoiding large gatherings of drunk people who are slamming, to spend more “quali- ty time” with the significant other.

7. Contestedness: A chronic symp- tom associated with the latter stages of the relationship, after the initial excite- ment wears off. The victim is no longer agitated about nuclear war, the state of the economy, or whether Dave and Maddy will ever get it on, because they are now content with their life. Their personal and sexual needs are fulfilled and regulated. They know where it’s going to happen, how long it will last, and not to say “that’s it” when it’s over. They become mellow and glassy eyed, with a faint, but constant, smile that annoys all of us who remain unmarried.

Note: If you feel you can say “no" about this subject has plagued lately because 3 couples I know have been diagnosed. For unmarried people the situation is being likened to being the designated driver, sure its not as much fun as you think is getting drunk, you want to also. When other people throw up on you, and you are drunk too, you care from much. Remember: Head the warning signs, and keep watching the skies!

Observer Classifieds

Classified Policy: How to place an Observer classified:

1) Think of something to say.

2) Write it down (try to keep it less than 30 words).

3) Send it to “Classifieds,” Box 123.

“CLIP THIS” coupon
Red Cross CPE classes teach you how to save lives. Call 660-498-3512 and sign up for your class today! American Red Cross
We ought to have a sports section, we thought.

Although many may find it difficult to believe, Bard has a large and relatively robust athletic program. It fields a variety of varsity teams that play extensive schedules and, surprise, some of them even win! You didn’t know that did you? Of course not, almost no one does, that’s why we’ve decided to include this primer for Bard athletics, as a community service.

Bard fields ten intercollegiate teams. They are, for men, soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and cross-country; for women, softball, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and cross-country. In addition there is an extensive intramural program in volleyball, basketball, flag football and, of course, softball. By this time next year a new gym (enclose me, athletic facility) should be open, complete with swimming pool, opening-up possibilities that were only remotely underated of. It was not always the case. Seven or eight years ago there was only tennis, basketball, soccer and cross-country. Bard was an independent, not affiliated with any national organizations. Then, enter Joel Thomson, hero of the piece. To make a long and dull story short, Bard is now a member of the Central Atlantic College Conference, National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, District 31. There are two exceptions to this rule. The first is men’s volleyball, which is not a NAIA sport. In this sport, Bard plays in the Hudson Valley Division of the Eastern Collegiate Volleyball League. The other exception is men’s basketball, which is not competitive in league play right now, and plays an independent schedule.

The level of student interest has been rising steadily over the last several years according to Thomson and Assistant Athletic Director Carla Davis. "The freshman are much more athletically inclined not just in Varsity, but in intramurals" said Ms. Davis. Freshmen made up the majority of this years intramural volleyball players. Almost 100 students participated in the volleyball program this year. A response Ms. Davis found outstanding.

Mr. Thomson said that further intramurals were planned, including a new floor hockey program and possibly, an intramural tennis program. "If the students show us a need in an area, we will make it work," said Davis. This general rule applies to varsity sports as well as intramurals. New sports currently being planned include men’s lacrosse and women’s soccer.

This spring construction will begin on the new Charles P. Stevenson Gymnasium. The new facility will include, among other things, a swimming pool. Mr. Thomson hopes that this will allow the college to create intercollegiate swimming and diving teams and maybe even an intramural water polo program. Thomson also hopes that the new facility will enable the college to launch a varsity squash team.

The Bard Observer
Editor-in-Chief
Cormac Flynn
Managing Editor
Michael Donato

Established 1895

Those who promised and did not deliver, we have mercilessly decided not to list them. This time:
Thanks to Dan Brokky, Dan Hillman, David Montebello, Peter Stone

SPECIAL THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO JUNE JANUS

Site plans for new dormitories and faculty housing.

New Dorm: the lessons went unlearned

By Cormac Flynn

There is sometimes an irony to the cycles of history. For the last quarter-century, Tewksbury Hall has been vilified by the Bard Community as a crime against the architectural environment. Sitting alone and aloof, Tewksbury seemed out of place and jar ring. It was looked on alternately as evidence of the soft-headedness of "Old Bard" and the insidiousness of "New Bard." When it was announced that a new dormitory would be built in the vicinity of the infamous Tewks, things began to look up. We were promised a building that would put Tewks into some kind of context. A pattern that would tone down its glaring non-conformity and integrate it into the rest of the campus. Well, no doubt Tewksbury will be more readily accepted now, in fact, compared to its new neighbors, it will probably be be found handsome and dignified.

Theoretically, the new buildings are supposed to take their cues from Stone Row, the casual observer, however, could be forgiven for thinking them from Disneyland. The breaking of the buildings up into row houses, as requested by both the administration and the Tenants’ Union, is inappropriate and delightful. It should help to induce exactly the sort of informal and collegial atmosphere wanted. The interior layout is adequate, if uncreative. It is when we move outside that the trouble begins. Engaging in the most frivolous facadism, the architects, the firm of James Stuart Polshek and Partners, have given us a pair of buildings that not only don’t work with the neighboring Tewks, but in fact repeat its mistakes on an even grander scale. The facades are masses of poured off white concrete, smooth but for small incisions which run vertically and horizontally, cutting the face into a continuous graph. The off-white is accentuated only by small bands where the graph squares will be colored green, to match the green window and door frames. At the top of the buildings, the facades end in curved cornices, which are notched like cornices in the chippendale fashion, an effect curr rently in vogue in the architectural world.

The overall effect of all this is, in a word, disaster. Rather than Stone Row or Tewksbury, the buildings look most of all like the mutated offspring of a Shop Rite on the one side and a New York City subway station on the other. The result of this combination of mock modernism and cheap post-modernist gimmicks is a building with no integrity, either with its own interior or with the campus around it. The convex cur ved cornices are said to echo the hills visible beyond the buildings to the south west. The fact that the buildings themselves will eradicate these views, and, in any event such views only exist in winter when the trees are de-foliated, seems to bother the Polshek firm not at all.

Many on the campus find Tewksbury, and the white-brick school of the International Style it represents to be banal and cold. It seems all the more menacing by virtue of its standoffishness and of the contrast it offers to the more humanistic architecture of the rest of the campus. Nevertheless, the building remains an excellent example of the modernist movement (circa 1960) and has real architectural integrity. If the post-modernists are to leave a mon ument in Annadale, it will have to be Cathy Simon’s sensitive designs for the new Ohlin building. Or perhaps some as of yet unnamed library or theatre architect. It is clear however that the New Dorm’s main functions will be to provide new grit for the campus joke-ani lls and upset the stomachs of passing motorists, and, ironically, end the long exile of Tewksbury Hall.

Elevations for the new dormitories.