SGA Minutes
November 16, 2014

I. Attendance

All members present.

II. Acceptance of Minutes

Senator Hussein: Motion to accept the minutes.
Senator Vaughan: Seconded.
All aye.
Minutes accepted.

III. Announcements

President Custer: The first announcement is about the SGA Retreat that Chief of Staff Zhang, Speaker Brady, Treasurer Gratch and I attended yesterday and this morning at Hamilton. Tufts, Connecticut College, Bates, and of course Hamilton were there. It went really well. We compared with them on some big issues like the structure of the SGA. They are all set up very differently, but ours is the most efficient. I won't talk specifics about each of the sessions but feel free to reach out to any of the four of us and we would be happy to talk to you about it. One thing to note is that the other schools are dealing with similar issues. Every school has had an incident of the administration initiating a policy change without consulting the student government beforehand, which resulted in the student body becoming upset afterwards. We are all working on having better communication with the administration. It’s not an issue unique to Middlebury. Other SGAs are dealing with it as well, so we’re trying to talk to them and see how they handle it.

IV. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee Bi-Weekly Report (Treasurer Gratch)

Treasurer Gratch: There isn’t that much new or exciting to report. These are the last of the budgets that we allocated for this year. The deadline was yesterday so we are now only looking at New Money Requests until spring budgeting.

Senator Toy: Why wasn’t Roosevelt Institute’s reply email in this?

Treasurer Gratch: They only wanted discretionary funds, so they didn’t come in for a meeting with us. The Economics Society also only received discretionary because they didn’t show up to their meeting.

Senator Gerstenschlager: Can you go into more detail about the Economics Society? Did you hear back from them?

Treasurer Gratch: They can come in for new money if they want. I haven’t been in touch with them. That’s just the protocol when clubs don’t show up.
Senator Medina: What happened with PCSO?

Treasurer Gratch: The FC Chair reached out to them and encouraged them to set up a meeting with a member of the committee and she hasn’t heard back from them. They can still receive funding but they have some money to start, so hopefully that will work out.

Senator Chang: How much is left in the SAF, if that information can be disclosed?

Treasurer Gratch: There will be more information on that next week when we talk about the cabin. FC Chair Olivia Aborn should be here so I will leave that for her to discuss for various reasons.

Senator Jahan: What is Roosevelt Institute?

Treasurer Gratch: They didn’t come in so I’m not sure.

Senator Vaughan: My understanding is that they are a student branch of an organization that suggests policy changes.

b. Community Council Update (Co-Chair Bogin)

Co-Chair Bogin: I don’t have a ton to say. Last week, we had a visit from some of the members of the group who spoke their requests at the Social Life Forum. It was more of a meeting about a meeting. Not a hugely substantive discussion but we planned a forum at their request to be held on the Sunday after JusTalks in J-Term. It’s a bit out but it gives us some time to plan for what they want to see and how to frame the questions we want to ask. This week, I’m hoping we’ll talk about party host age. I’m still hoping to lower it. Doug Adams will be talking to the Vermont Liquor Inspector to clear up some issues about that. We’ll also be talking about the Feb program and see if there is support for that from the administration. In a few weeks, I hope to have an official vote on the Abstract proposal. Potentially next Monday, but probably December 1st.

Senator Vaughan: Abstract proposal about what?

Co-Chair Bogin: The proposal is about abstracts, it isn’t an abstract proposal. The abstracts are summaries of the Judicial Board hearings and processes. We can talk more about it later. The idea is to increase transparency in the process and getting more people to read and talk about them and ask questions like, “What if this was me?”

V. Old Business

a. Increasing Access to Printers Update (Senator Hussein and Speaker Brady)

Speaker Brady: Last time we talked about this, there was a positive outlook from the Senate and we were interested in spending money from the SAF to make this happen. I haven’t been able to get a bill written up with the conference and time constraints, but I will have that next time. Senator Hussein has been doing great work on this.
Senator Hussein: I have been having discussions, but they don’t happen with much speed. We went back to IT and spoke with them and they said they are no longer willing to provide release stations. The end result of many discussions is that we will have a pilot program for J-Term with one new printer and release station on campus. I did the research and there are only two locations with printers that allow 24-hour access: the Chateau and Sunderland. Surprisingly, Chateau is the highest usage printer on campus and Sunderland is the lowest. The plan is to move the one from Sunderland to a new position. We are discussing the location, but we are thinking the La Force study space. It is next to Ross Dining Hall so people eating can print something out before or after they eat. It’s accessible but it requires a key card so not just anybody can use it. That part of campus also has fewer printers than the part closer to the Library.

Senator de Toledo: Will there not be a printer in Sunderland anymore?

Senator Hussein: There are two printers in Sunderland. Only one will be moved.

Senator Vaughan: My only concern is that Ross is a super quiet study space. In the Chateau, people would come into print and it was frustrating and distracting. Will this affect the ability for people to study?

Senator Hussein: Motion for straw poll on if you would be in favor of having a printer in La Force.

President Custer: Seconded.

All aye.

Motion passes.

Straw poll: Would you be in favor of having a printer in La Force?

15-1-1

Senator Hussein: I would love to hear your comments, questions, and suggestions.

Senator Vaughan: I think that the Ross building is a great place, but isn’t there a closet that isn't being used to put the printer in? That room is awesome for studying and knowing how much this printer will be used, it will be hard for people to work in that room.

Senator Sanders: I panicked and voted no because Senator Vaughan's point resonated with me. It is such a quiet study room. I suggested Hillcrest, but I would like another location within Ross.

Senator Hussein: Hillcrest isn't an option because it is locked in the weekends and we want this printer to be as accessible to students as possible. I would be open to looking at specific locations in Ross. We just need enough space for the printer and the release station and there has to be power and Ethernet. It's a challenge because we need to have the necessary infrastructure. Any suggestions?

Senator Sanders: What about the basement of Ross?

Senator Vaughan: There are some closets down there.
President Custer: There is a printer in the Ross Commons Office. It wouldn't make a lot of sense to have one in the Commons Office and one right outside of the Commons Office. That's just something to consider. There is also a lounge across from the La Force study space that isn't used as frequently.

Senator Fisher: As Ross Senator, this peaks my interest. Ross is a magical, wonderful place but not a simple place. There are nooks and crannies and secrets all throughout the building. In all seriousness though, there are several awesome quiet beautiful places to study. I take Senator Vaughan's concerns seriously. There needs to be ample quiet space that won't be burdened, but I am not too concerned about that space having more traffic when there are other great places to go. My constituents have expressed to me that we should get a damn printer in Ross and I'm very happy this is happening.

Senator Jahan: There is a lounge across from the La Force Library that isn’t used very often.

Senator Vaughan: That La Force study space is the one that is most accessible to non-Ross people. Maybe people will be more willing to go to other nook areas to study, but for those who don’t live in Ross and don’t feel comfortable going to those other places, it is a great place to study and I don’t want it compromised.

Senator Hussein: Location aside, the next issue is the student worker to supervise the new printer. There was a preliminary acceptance of using SGA funds to fund this student worker. For the pilot program, at first they said we would need to have a student worker. We finally managed to have them accept that since it’s the exact same printer, only in a different location, that the current student workers and high school students who fill paper and toners can maintain their work on that printer. The good news is that we don’t have to pay for the pilot program and hopefully they will be considering new printers and release stations in their annual budget.

Speaker Brady: It’s a start. Senator Hussein has done a lot of work. Good on you. My question is, when writing up the bill, do you want me to take a more aggressive stance? That we are willing to pay for printers and we want the change to happen quicker if this is a success in La Force? Do we still want an increase in the number of printers quickly or does the Senate want to take a slower path that won’t incur as many costs?

Senator Vaughan: I think we should be aggressive, but make sure they know that we don’t want to sustain the costs. We want to pass them off over time.

Senator Fisher: They are never going to take the printers away, so I don’t know how an aggressive stance can harm us. To Senator Vaughan, as someone who has lived in Ross for three years, it is interesting and important to me that some places in Ross are more accessible than others. It is a surprise to me and I will try to make that better, but the printer should go where it should, and I already made my arguments about that.

Senator Vaughan: I just don’t feel comfortable going to the nooks where people live in Ross, you know?

Senator Fisher: No I don’t know, because I’ve always lived in Ross.
Senator Gerstenschlager: Motion to close discussion and move on.
Senator Hussein: Seconded.
All aye.
Motion passes.

b. Bylaws Amendment: The Creation of a Standing Honor Code Committee (F2014-SB10) (Co-Chair Bogin)

Co-Chair Bogin: There isn’t much different in this from last week, just some stylistic changes. I made one change, in red, about Senator Fisher’s point from last week. It is important to promote the Honor Code if they like it and I think that can be an important part of this committee, but there can be tension between evaluating and promoting. If they evaluate the Honor Code and think it’s bad, then they can promote it in a different way or promote their changes or not promote it. I just didn’t want to delete the word entirely.

Chief of Staff Zhang: The Overhaul will incorporate this is if we pass it.

   Senator Jahan: Motion to close debate on F2014-SB10 and vote.
   Senator Gerstenschlager: Seconded.
   Ayes: President Custer, Senator Jahan, Senator Gerstenschlager, Senator Gogineni, Senator Sanders, Senator Toy, Senator Judy, Senator Sohn, Senator Brook, Senator Vaughan, Senator Hussein, Senator Chang, Senator Fisher, Senator de Toledo, Co-Chair Bogin, Speaker Brady
   Nays: None.
   Abstentions: Senator Medina
   16-0-1
   Motion passes.

   Vote on F2014-SB10.
   Ayes: President Custer, Senator Jahan, Senator Gerstenschlager, Senator Gogineni, Senator Sanders, Senator Toy, Senator Medina, Senator Judy, Senator Sohn, Senator Brook, Senator Vaughan, Senator Chang, Senator Fisher, Senator de Toledo, Co-Chair Bogin, Speaker Brady
   Nays: None.
   Abstentions: Senator Hussein
   16-0-1
   F2014-SB10 passes.

c. Bylaws Amendment: Procedural and Stylistic Overhaul of SGA Bylaws (F2014-SB11) (Director of Membership Nick Warren)

Nick Warren: I changed a few small things. The first is that under the Awards Committee membership section, it was erroneously added that at least four students would be on the committee. It will be four students and the SGA President and they will be appointed by the SGA President and Director of Membership, which is consistent with other committees. We also deleted the requirement that the committee is comprised of juniors and seniors because that has
not been the practice and it doesn’t make sense. Under the Finance Committee and Constitution Committee’s membership section there was a requirement that the membership was comprised of all four classes. That isn’t consistent with other committees and doesn’t follow the current practice of the Finance Committee, so we removed that. Under the actual awards section, it is vague as to what the faculty member gets. They get a research grant. It was written that the President had to present a check to the recipients, which gets fuzzy in the case of the research grant, but the president will still give them a certificate. We also adjusted the timing of the awards reception. It had to be in April previously, but that was changed to before the conclusion of spring classes.

President Custer: Motion to close debate and vote on F2014-SB11.
Senator Gerstenschlager: Seconded.
All aye.
Motion passes.

Vote on F2014-SB11
All aye.
F2014-SB11 passes.

d. Student Life Survey Update (Chief of Staff Zhang)

Chief of Staff Zhang: Hopefully you all got a chance to look at this briefly at least. Right now there are 73 questions in total. It seems like a lot, but it is fewer than the first draft last time. We are aiming for it to take 15 minutes to complete. I’m just going to go through the survey and look at each section and talk about the questions I added, modified, and eliminated. The first thing to know is that everything is anonymous and the prize drawing is severed from the survey itself.

Demographics: The demographics section is the same but we added the questions, “Are you a member of a social house?” and “Do you own a car?” because it will be interesting to look at divisions on those lines later on questions of parking and social life.

Academic Life: There are three new questions about MiddCourses relative to other sources. This should help us gain some insight on how many people are using it. We do get a number from Teddy but it will be interesting to see this as well and how it compares to other sources. I modified the question about AAL so that it clarified the categories to match what is in the handbook. I didn’t eliminate any questions in this section but I did add several at the end about the academic calendar. Senator Chang wanted to incorporate something about switching to another model. I didn’t want ask if they wanted to switch because that might make it seem for or against the current system, so I did what I did with the AAL question and asked them if they were satisfied with the current model. The rest of the questions are about President Custer’s project for extending Thanksgiving Break, which might be some of the most important data we get from this survey. We want to know if people skip class for Thanksgiving, when they leave, whether or not Professors cancel class, and if they would support extending break. The last question is from Senator Hussein about what majors and academic programs we don’t have that students want to see. Senator Hussein wanted the question to be about Linguistics specifically but I think it will be helpful to have other ideas.

Health and Wellness: No questions were added. I modified the question about sexual assault resources. Before it was more passive: asking if they thought adequate resources exist.
Now it’s more active: asking if they think the College administration is providing adequate resources.

The Middlebury Community: This deals with the controversial issues on campus. Affirmative action isn’t as much in the limelight as it was two years ago, but I am still interested in seeing the results on that again. I did reword it a little bit but the options are tough to list because there are more moving pieces than whether or not you support it. Senator Toy suggested incorporating a question on how well you understand the Financial Aid system so I included that as a scale from 1 to 5 from understanding not at all to very well. There are questions about the Honor Code next and we want them to be broader and see if the Honor Code is in general a good thing to have in the eyes of the student body. Last time, the question asked which things were violations of the Honor Code. Co-Chair Bogin has talked a lot about expanding the Honor Code, so I added question 7 to deal with that. Senator Vaughan and I met to talk about the SRI questions. They were phrased terribly in the last survey. I took Senator Vaughan’s question more or less word for word and put it in here. I just took out the word transparency because whenever you ask about transparency, it is hard to phrase it objectively. Who would be against transparency?

Senator Vaughan: If everyone is for it, then why don’t we have it?

Chief of Staff Zhang: There are good reasons to not have transparency.

Senator Vaughan: Then the people who understand the issue will understand that and might not support transparency.

Chief of Staff Zhang: Most of the people who understand the issue would say that there should be more transparency. There could be a third choice if they don’t know enough about it and that could make it more objective. I am open to including something in the survey about that. Let’s talk afterwards. I did eliminate a question about need blind admissions, which is hard to make objective, and it isn’t relevant to anything we are working on now.

Social Life: I added a question about how students think that social life has changed and a question about the relationship with Public Safety. I changed the wording on question 5 but the essence is the same. I eliminated a question about students being able to join a social house in their second semester because that issue was dealt with and you can now join a social house in your second semester. President Arnowitz wanted to revitalize the Grille so he asked a question about that, which I took out because it isn’t relevant to this year. There was also a question about Midd Rides, which I know Senator Gogineni is working on. Let’s talk after because I’m not sure what you’re working on.

Dining and Food: I rephrased a question about being satisfied with the current system to ask about the switch to the swipe system. Question 4 was modified from “locally sustainable” to more “real” food, because that is where that topic has shifted to in the last couple of years.

College Communications and Infrastructure: I combined the housing and communication sections to create this one. I added a question about LaundryView and a question about whether or not you own a bike on campus. Most things we do with bikes have anecdotal evidence about who owns bikes so it will be nice to get hard data since there are a lot of projects involving bikes. I modified the printer question: I went through the minutes and added all of the locations that were suggested and people can choose up to three.
Student Government Association: This section is vastly different than it was two years ago. Last time, it was only about where we wanted to see the SGA spending money. Now the conversation is more about how the student body perceives the SGA and how we can be better connected. The first 6 questions roughly get at those things. I phrased it in the context of approval. I don’t think that rating our job performance is something that has ever been asked of the student body in a survey like this. I included the SGA President and SCOCC specifically because of their stature on campus and the way they were elected to get at the accountability issue. Our reform group is asking a couple questions that are very straightforward and maybe over simplified.

Additional Section: This section remains the same. They are just open-ended optional questions. Quite a lot of people wrote long answers to these questions two years ago.

Senator Jahan: Why was the need blind question removed?

Chief of Staff Zhang: I don’t think that need blind admissions aren’t going anywhere anytime soon, so I don’t know why we would want to ask that.

Senator Jahan: There are Senators who are interested in the fact that international students are not need blind. I think it is worthwhile to have it in there.

Chief of Staff Zhang: International students have always not been need blind and I think there is an incorrect assumption that it has not always been this way. I am not sure what would change in the short term. There are also proportionally more international students on financial aid than domestic students. From a substantive point of view, I am unsure of what the value of this question would be.

Senator Toy: When Senator Chang and I were meeting with Financial Aid, they told us that they can’t say that they aren’t need blind because the last students to get accepted are not need blind. Initially though, from what I understand, they don’t look at the need of the international students in the first few rounds.

Senator Jahan: For the printer question, should we add La Force to it?

Chief of Staff Zhang: Ross Complex is already on here but there is no harm in adding one more.

Senator Toy: We could also have an option to add your own.

Senator Jahan: Under the SGA section, for the SCOCC, it just asks you what you think of the chair and not about their job performance. We might want to fix that

Co-Chair Bogin: I think that President Custer is going to get some false positives on the Thanksgiving Break questions if you don’t say what the trade off will be. Everyone is for extending break but there will be more reservations when they realize that we have to add the days on somewhere else.

Chief of Staff Zhang: That gets at how hard it is to ask an unbiased question. How do you define ESG or something else without priming your audience to answer one way or another? There are
also quite a few people not in favor of extending break. There could be a question about where you want the extra days to be added if you support extending the break.

President Custer: To the Co-Chair’s point, that makes sense and it would change a lot. If we said that we couldn’t have a Fall Break but have a longer Thanksgiving instead, people probably wouldn’t support that. This question is geared towards if they would support it on principle. The data would go towards a student referendum depending on the results. The SGA approval rating has never been done before but I think it is a really important section especially since there was a low turn out in terms of number of people running and people not voting in the elections. There is a lack of accountability. It is kind of nerve-racking to get your job performance rated but I think it is important. I think that we should add in a question before the approval rating questions asking if you know who the SGA President and SCOCC are. I know that this will increase the number of questions, but it would be good to also ask if they know who their Class Year and Commons Senators are. You get to be the Senator for 25% of time we are here and there isn’t really a way to hold any of us accountable for that. This is a great way for the community to hold us accountable and tell us if we are doing a good job of communicating. Every democracy has this in some shape or form. I also support including the need blind question.

Chief of Staff Zhang: Do you think that including the third option wouldn’t get at the awareness part?

President Custer: It merges in whether you don’t have an opinion on the President or whether you don’t know who they are. You can know who they are and not care. I think those are two separate issues but one follows from the other. First ask if they know who they are and then if so, what do you think of their job performance? It would be great to have that for each elected position. Do you know who they are and if so, do you approve?

Senator Hussein: I have a question for you, Chief of Staff Zhang, about the third question about how many reviews you have written. If I recall correctly, we can get these statistics. Could this potentially be a question to cut out?

Chief of Staff Zhang: I would be on board with that. I don’t know if Teddy Knox has data about this semester yet, but that’s not an awfully important question.

Senator Hussein: To go back to the last question in the Academic Life section, I like how we made it more open-ended. The reason I wanted something specifically about linguistics is because, after talking to some professors, if we can get numbers on student favor towards this major, they can make a bigger push towards the Linguistics Major. It is happening anyways, but this would be able to help. If there were data, there could be a Resolution that could contribute positively to their cause. It’s just a suggestion.

Chief of Staff Zhang: The only reason I am hesitant about that is that it is something that is of interest to a very small group of people, whereas most of these questions pertain to a large number of people if not the whole campus. I wonder if we can brainstorm other ways to get that data.
Senator Chang: I am in a Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies course and if we want to make this more progressive, we should be saying they instead of he/she. I also think that for the questions about financial aid, it would be useful to know if someone is on financial aid.

Chief of Staff Zhang: That is included in the demographics section.

Senator Chang: I am also interested in the visual arts being funded and supported and whether or not we think that they are adequately supported. I am not sure if that belongs in this survey, but I would love feedback on that. Also, someone mentioned that there was work being done about bikes and I think that’s great and I’m interested to know if there is a new project.

Chief of Staff Zhang: I don’t know if there are any current projects, but it has been a big issue the past few years with the bike rentals and the fix-it station.

Senator Chang: I don’t know how I would answer the SGA questions. I would like a scale instead of a yes or no. If it’s hard to answer the questions, it will be less likely for everyone to do the survey. President Custer, where are we on Thanksgiving in regards to talking to the faculty about that? Also, do we have an end goal in terms of the number of questions?

President Custer: I have yet to reach out to the faculty about extending Thanksgiving break. I am planning on speaking with Dean Lloyd this week about asking faculty to take attendance on Monday and Tuesday and give that information to me. We will get information in this survey, but I think that the faculty can help us get the data as well. In terms of if they are for it, I want to see first if students are for it. I can say that most people think it’s a good idea to extend but that is completely anecdotal. If we go to the faculty based on anecdotal evidence, they will think it is a waste of their time. I want some real data before I approach them. They will want to see the numbers if people are leaving early. If a lot of people are leaving, there will be more support for extending break.

Chief of Staff Zhang: We were thinking around 75 questions. The first draft of the survey from two years ago was around 80 questions. I think we will have me or someone in this room do this survey before we make it live so we can see how long it takes and we might end up cutting one or two questions based on that.

Doug Adams: Susan Baldridge in Institutional Research will read through this for you to look for bias. She likes doing that and is very helpful. She can help phrase those questions you are struggling with. Also, just a caution about rewording questions: you lose the longitudinal data if you change them too much.

Senator de Toledo: Would it be possible to add a question about Career Services? I know that people are anecdotally unsatisfied with it.

Chief of Staff Zhang: I like that. There isn’t anything about that in here yet.

Senator Fisher: I also think that the need blind admissions question is valuable. Also in the eleventh question about Thanksgiving, it would make sense to add “or later” under section f so that everyone is included.
Chief of Staff Zhang: Thank you everyone. I will incorporate your suggestions, or at least those that I think should be incorporated. I am going to run this by Institutional Research for review and will be sending specific questions to certain organizations to see what they think. I will send the question about divestment and ESG to SRI. My hope is that we will send this out for the last two weeks of J-Term, which is the same time frame as two years ago. We have until the middle of January to finalize this and I continue to welcome feedback. We are also going to get great prizes because that’s how we got half the campus to participate last time. We are aiming for a similar goal to get half, if not more, of the campus to take the survey.

Senator Toy: Under the section where you say whether or not you agree with your Class and Commons Senators, you should have a question that has them write down who their Senators are so we know if they actually know who we are. Also, approve and disapprove is really black and white and it would be nice to have a scale.

Senator de Toledo: Motion to end discussion and move on.
Senator Hussein: Seconded.
All aye.
Motion passes.

VI. New Business

a. Secondhand Smoke Prevention Initiative (Speaker Brady)

Speaker Brady: Several students have complained to me this semester about how they live next to a door or they just walk outside of Proctor and they get smoke blown in their face. Secondhand smoke is really harmful and they feel like they shouldn’t have to deal with it at Middlebury. I did the research and there is a policy that you cannot smoke within 25 feet of any entrance with high frequency of traffic. There should be signs but there is a serious lack of them and there are also ashtrays right next to entrances. There is no enforcement by Public Safety and no outline for how they should enforce it. Students aren’t asking anyone to smoke further away from entrances. I want this to change. This is under the purview of Community Council. This bill just affirms that the SGA thinks that they should address this.

Senator Toy: Can we format this so it is more consistent with everything else? I also don’t like the last sentence. I think we should leave it up to them.

Co-Chair Bogin: Community Council isn’t an enforcement body. We can’t enforce anything so that last sentence doesn’t work. You can ask that they recommend something and discuss it, but we don’t work like the SGA does. We don’t always have resolutions. As SCOCC, I am happy to do this. I think it’s great and if anyone else has ideas about this or any ideas for Community Council, you can pass a bill but you can also come talk to me.

Senator Gerstenschlager: I was walking into the library the other day and I got smoke blown in my face, so thank you for doing this.
Speaker Brady: Retweet.

Senator Hussein: This might be a silly question because I’m not a native English speaker, but I’m wondering about the use of should versus can or could in the Resolved section. I want to make a Friendly Amendment to include “can” or “could” instead of “should.”

Chief of Staff Zhang: I think we should take out “should,” but I’m also not a native English speaker.

Senator Jahan: If you take it out, it has the same meaning as “should.”

Speaker Brady: I am good with taking it out or if someone wants to make a Formal Amendment, that’s okay too.

President Custer: Just to respond to what the Co-Chair mentioned about bringing things up with him. It definitely sends a stronger message to vote on it and send it to be presented to Community Council. The Co-Chair can bring something up, but if we want Community Council to do something, the best strategy is to pass a Resolution.

Senator Fisher: I don’t identify as a smoker and I don’t approve of the emotional and psychological atrocities that big tobacco companies commit towards children and other innocent people on a daily basis. If that is the policy, which it is, then maybe there is a reason that Public Safety isn’t enforcing it for some logistical reasons. It might just be total blatant negligence or they just don’t know the policy. I am also hesitant about this, because those who smoke are just as much a part of the community as those they affect negatively. I don’t want this to be mean spirited and I want it to separate the act of smoking from those who smoke.

Speaker Brady: Do you have any concrete recommendations on how to do that?

Senator Fisher: No.

Senator Brook: I don’t identify as a smoker or encourage smoking but during the winter, the only places that provide shelter are by the door. They won’t want to be out smoking in the snow. There is a need for a place to smoke. I have no idea how you would attack that, but it is important to look at.

Speaker Brady: I am not willing to include that in this bill. It encourages smoking, or at least that’s how I view it, so I am not going to actively pursue that, but I get that that will happen. If the smokers are really passionate about shelter, they can form a group and look into getting a shelter away from doorways.

Senator de Toledo: I want to preface this by saying that underneath the window to my room is a bench that is used for smoking. To address Senator Fisher’s point, I know that you don’t want to single people out, but there is a concrete harm being done to other people. This wouldn’t be a complete ban on smoking. You can still smoke in designated areas, but we need to consider the people who are being harmed and inconvenienced. My room smells like smoke most of the time,
which is really unfortunate. I think we need to defer to the people who are being harmed instead of being sensitive to those who are smoking and causing the harm.

Senator Jahan: I want to make a Friendly Amendment to review that last possibility. As a non-smoker, I don’t think it’s a bad idea and I don’t want to encourage smoking. Everything was fine, but that last line about banning smoking was unsettling to me and I think it pushes some people away.

Speaker Brady does not accept Senator Jahan’s Friendly Amendment.

Speaker Brady: I want to include that and I talked to Advisor Adams about it. A lot of schools have done it and I want Community Council to talk about it even if they don’t want to pursue it. Even if the general population reading it might find it aggressive, it should be brought up and considered. I am planning on writing an op ed about why students need to get involved in this and why the smoking bans should be upheld. This is a community rule and everyone should be active in it.

Senator Toy: I want to either strike or reword that last line.

Speaker Brady: I kind of wanted a recommendation to be completed by the end of J-Term.

Senator Toy: Also, while a lot of people are against smoking, there are still people who smoke here. I feel weird saying that we will abolish tobacco on campus. People just won’t follow that because they are addicted and it is part of their life. Banning it from residential areas is okay, but abolishment is not the way to go.

Speaker Brady: Do you not want it to even be discussed?

Senator Toy: It can be discussed. I’m just stating my opinion.

Senator Hussein: It may be wise to include numbers in the whereas clause without a normative clause. If it is just about the information, it doesn’t have to be about what we should or could do.

Speaker Brady: I want to hear other opinions about this. I want to get this passed tonight. I like it in the bottom section, but if the general consensus is to move it up, I would be willing to do that.

Speaker Brady: Motion to have a straw poll on: Are you in favor of moving the information up to the Whereas section, keeping it where it is in the Resolved section, or completely getting rid of it?

Senator Chang: Seconded.

All aye.

Motion passes

Straw Poll: Are you in favor of moving the information up to the Whereas section, keeping it where it is in the Resolved section, or completely getting rid of it?

Whereas section: 11

Resolved section: 5
Taking it out: 1

Speaker Brady: Okay, I am okay with moving it up.

President Custer: In terms of what a Resolution should do, if we pass it like this, the Community Council has no obligation to talk about this or do anything. Given that they aren’t an action-oriented body, they can just discuss this and say what they think on it.

Doug Adams: The original smoking policy actually came from Community Council. They are more of a discussion group but they have policy-making abilities and can make recommendations to the President.

Speaker Brady: I had originally spoken to Advisor Adams about where to go with this. The reason it is going to Community Council is that it doesn’t just affect the students and since Community Council has dealt with this before, it is in their power to do it again. The enforcement of this policy affects the whole community.

Senator Jahan: I think the movement of that statement changes the whole essence of the bill. Now they will just discuss abolishing tobacco instead of considering it as a possibility for Middlebury. Now I’m not sure what the goal is of this bill.

Speaker Brady: The goal was to have those three ideas discussed and the ways in which those policies could be enforced. I agree with you, but I want to get this passed and hopefully Co-Chair Bogin will still bring it up and it can be a part of the conversation.

Co-Chair Bogin: I would like to make a Friendly Amendment to change “begin new methods of enforcement” to “recommend a course of action”. I know that you want action but I want to leave it more vague than that. About President Custer’s points, the SGA should recommend things to Community Council and there is power behind an SGA Resolution. However, the main reason that I am here is so that I can bring things to Community Council that come from the Senate which are more appropriate for Community Council. One of the reasons that the SGA President is on Community Council is so that he can do the same and bring ideas from Community Council back to the SGA Senate. While I am happy to talk about all of this, part of this discussion has just been me as a fly on the wall. I don’t mind it, it’s kind of fun. I just want you to know that I am very open to discussing all of the things in the Whereas section and I don’t think they even all need to be in the bill. Anything that you want brought up, you can just tell me. It doesn’t need to be resolved.

Speaker Brady accepts Co-Chair Bogin’s Friendly Amendment.

President Custer: If we want the Community Council to make a recommendation, I can speak as the SGA President and Co-Chair Bogin can speak as the Co-Chair of Community Council, but passing a resolution in the Senate is the only way for us to really say to the rest of Community Council that the Student Government thinks this.

Senator de Toledo: Motion to close debate and vote on F2014-SB12.
President Custer: Seconded.
All aye.
Motion passes.

Vote on F2014-SB12.
Ayes: President Custer, Senator Jahan, Senator Gerstenschlager, Senator Gogineni, Senator Sanders, Senator Toy, Senator Medina, Senator Judy, Senator Sohn, Senator Brook, Senator Vaughan, Senator Hussein, Senator Chang, Senator de Toledo, Speaker Brady
Nays: Senator Fisher
Abstentions: Co-Chair Bogin
15-1-1
F2014-SB12 passes.

VII. Adjournment

Senator Jahan: Motion to adjourn.
Senator Gerstenschlager: Seconded.
All aye.
Meeting adjourned.