



FROM THE POLITY

For the Improvement of Collegium

Collegium is one of the most wonderful institutions we have on this campus. It is an excellent way to end the semester, getting to hear the beautiful result of the hard work campus musical groups have done, and seeing the wide variety of campus talent, while also gathering one last time as a whole Polity. However, this beautiful moment of community togetherness is often marred by simply having it run too long. Four hours is too much for any performance, even if all the performers are very skilled. With this length, people get antsy, you have large numbers leave the hall before it is finished, and few people stay for the other great campus traditions like caroling.

The good news is that this can be easily remedied. The students running Collegium are good at what they do, and with a few changes, could help remedy the problem of excessive length. While I recognize that actively screening performances for quality is off the table, I would like to propose five easy improvements in the form of rules for performers, which would reduce the number of acts, and thus overall length:

1. No group should be allowed to perform more than one piece.
2. No person may be in more than one solo, duet or trio: we should try to give as many people the chance to perform as possible.
3. Solos should be discouraged. While many of our solo performers are incredibly skilled, Collegium should be a space where campus groups share with the polity, it is not a private recital. A possible exception to this should be poetry and writing.
4. No group should perform with backing tracks: while some of these performances are quite good, the focus of Collegium should be on our campus' artists.
5. The program should be adhered to, and organizers should avoid having new groups added in who were not originally registered.

Hopefully, by adopting some of these recommendations, or other rules, the organizers of Collegium will be able to make the event more enjoyable for us all. If you disagree with me on these recommendations, or have ideas of your own, please write a letter in response, we need more opinion articles!

El'ad Nichols-Kaufman

COLLEGE RELEASES PLANS FOR NEW HOUSING PRICE STRUCTURE

Tiered Housing Price System to go into Effect Fall 2024, Campus Dorms to See Price Increase

Shortly before winter break, an all-campus email was sent out notifying the Polity of a major change to the pricing system for dormitories on Campus. The change was first announced at an earlier Committee on Student Life Forum, but the full details were only sent out on December 7th. This email announced implementation of a system widely used in other institutions of higher education at St. John's, with pricing for each dorm adjusted for the quality of each type of room and the building that they are in.

"Since I've been here for four years, every year, I have received a couple questions, as have my colleagues Ms. Lico and Ms. Waters, from students themselves, as well as parents, about why every room is the same price when clearly some rooms are much newer than others," explained Jen Cline, Coordinator of Student Services. In response to these concerns, the College administration looked into the issue, and decided to implement a new pricing policy, aimed at making sure students pay for the quality they receive. "The difference between some of the dorm rooms and their prices just helps some of the prices be more equitable across campus," continued Cline.

Many students on campus, however, have raised concerns that changing the pricing structure will actually lead to more inequity on campus, with an unhealthy social dynamic developing between students who can afford more expensive, nicer dorms, and those who cannot. Up to this point, the divide in dorm quality has mostly been an underclassman/upperclassman divide, and a change from that to a potentially more economically based divide concerns some. When asked about this, Cline responded that the price differences are not significant enough to cause problems with social dynamics. "I don't think it will make much of a difference than how singles are more expensive than doubles. I've rarely ever seen a student choose a double just to save a couple extra hundred dollars."

The new system divides the dorms into eight tiers: four tiers of singles, three tiers of doubles, and quads. The most expensive dorm rooms will be a special category of singles, which will be in what are now the lofted doubles in Paca-Carroll. These four dorm rooms will be rearranged to allow for a divided living and sleeping space, and will cost \$10,000 per year, or \$5,000 a semester, although Cline noted that the way

the rooms are laid out means that they can be reverted to doubles should any trouble arise, or if there should be demand for them as doubles from students.

The next tier of singles, in Gilliam, Spector, Campbell, Fielding and Pinkney 1, will cost \$8,550 per year, while tier C, in Chase, Pinkney 2-4, and Paca will cost \$8,300. Split doubles in Gilliam and Spector Halls will cost \$7,850, while doubles in Gilliam, Spector, Campbell, Fielding and Pinkney 1 will cost \$7,600. Doubles in Chase, Pinkney 2-4, and Paca will be \$7,450. Quads, which include the Paca loft and new rooms in Campbell, will cost \$7,670. The current price of a single on campus is \$8,054, and the current price of a double is \$7,340, meaning all housing prices will be increased by between \$246 and \$510.

For upperclassmen, the process of selecting rooms will be the same as in previous years, with selection taking place first for Seniors, then Juniors and finally Sophomores, with the order of selection chosen through a lottery. Cline explained that the system for freshmen room assignments will also not be changed drastically. "The prices will be made clear, and if they have a preference, they can do what is already an option, which is to request a specific dorm in the housing questionnaire, which every student fills out to be paired as roommates... That could be how they would request a hall if they wanted one that is less expensive than another." Freshmen will continue to be in Humphreys, Fielding and Paca Halls, while the newly renovated Campbell Hall will primarily be for upperclassmen.

The renovations in Campbell are on track for completion by the beginning of the Summer, with drywall already being installed before winter break. "The rooms will definitely be done by the end of the semester," said Cline. "The rooms are the first priority." The basement area, featuring the Coffeeshop and bookstore, is also important for the project, but the completion of the rooms will be prioritized. With the addition of the rooms in Campbell, and the return of some rooms that are currently triples to their previous status as doubles, there will be a total of 390 beds available on campus, a much higher number than previously, which should allow for more upperclassmen to stay on campus if they choose.

El'ad Nichols-Kaufman

This Week in Seminar

Freshman:

- 1/11: Thucydides: Peloponnesian War, II, 55-78; III, 1-87; IV, 1-74
- 1/15: Thucydides: Peloponnesian War, IV, 75-end; V, 1-26, 84-116; VI

Sophomores:

- 1/11: Dante: Divine Comedy, Inferno XVIII-XXXIV
- 1/15: Dante: Divine Comedy, Purgatorio I-XVIII

Juniors:

- 1/11: George Eliot: Middlemarch
- 1/15: George Eliot: Middlemarch

Seniors:

- Essay writing Period

Friday Night Lecture:

All College Seminar on Spike Lee's Do the Right Thing, Great Hall, 7:30 pm

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday 1/16

- 3:45 pm, Hodson Room: Career Services Wayfinding Workshop

It's a quiet second week back on campus! Look out for next issue for more information on upcoming events in Annapolis as the semester continues to pick up steam.

COWARDS, EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU, ALL
COWARDS: Or: A Better Gadfly

Dearest cowards,

On the street, in the hallways, at parties, people say to me: “Hey I liked your articles in the Gadfly. Have you ever thought about writing on [topic which clearly interests them and not me]?” Any time anything even remotely funny happens in one of my classes, I’ll get a knowing look from someone across the table inevitably followed by: “You should write about that in the Gadfly.” Woe is me! Constantly getting good ideas for articles! (My own fault really: I write three god damn articles for every single issue. It gets to the point where even tutors tease me for using our college newspaper as my own personal playground.) And you know for a fact that I am a megalomaniacal narcissist who loves the attention being solely on me, but my f*cking editors won’t let me write even more articles per issue.

So let me ask something of you, sweet cowards: write for the Gadfly. Don’t do it for the sake of school spirit or civic duty or art. Do it for all the wrong reasons: do it for your own ego (I know half the bitches at this school want to be writers); do it because you’re tired of reading Bennett Scott, Luke

Briner, Bennett Scott, Luker Briner; do it because if you don’t this entire publication will succumb to the inevitable sludge of boring mediocrity that inevitably consumes all such uncontested empires.

Look, I know you’re worried about how long it’ll take (a good article takes thirty minutes drunk and one hour sober, no more) and about not having anything decent to write on, so I’ll make it easy; here’s a baker’s dozen of article ideas that people have pitched around me that someone needs to write:

- 1. An advice column (multiple people have said they will. No one has.)
- 2. An admonishment of the seniors for not getting in relationships.
- 3. A series of out-of-pocket quotes from tutors (a game where you have to match quote to tutor?)
- 4. Actual investigative journalism into the power structures of the college.
- 5. A Joseph Smith-esc series of found tablets telling the real story of the New Program’s founding.

- 6. Dear Incels of the College.
- 7. A meta-Johnnie typology (every semester we get typologies/taxonomies of Johnnies: why not a taxonomy of taxonomies?)
- 8. A declaration of the rights of students (anyone should be able to get up to the board during any class. Even during Spinoza seminars. Fight me on it.)
- 9. A dialogue between Socrates and Bad Bunny.
- 10. Interviews with SJC legends like the PubSafe staff and the Dining Hall workers.
- 11. The Classiflieds (Classifieds with an SJC twist).
- 12. A stream of consciousness story from the POV of a middle entering an SJC Waltz for the first time.
- 13. An analysis of which St. John we are named after.

I have a dozen more article ideas of my own which you can come accost me for in person. Just write one, cowards. Cause I may be your one but I do not want to be your only. *B.S.*

THE YELLOW
COFFEE SHOP

I have been sitting in the coffee shop for a few hours now. I am not sure how many, but I am alone. It is a rare treat to get the whole place to myself, but I am starting to get a little nervous. Though I really have no reason to be. It is nice to be in the coffee shop alone. With it being so dark and wet outside, and I am fairly sure I caught a cold on the way home from break, it is nice to be somewhere quiet and warm. The lighting is very warm here. A comforting amber, not really fluorescent at all. I think it has something to do with the new paint job. All the previously white and sterile walls are now a soft yellow color. It is soothing. I like looking at it. Yet, the more I look at it, the more nervous I feel. The light casts these odd shadows on the wall now. Especially around the fireplace. If I let my eyes focus on one place for too long it almost seems like the bricks are moving. Swirling around into hypnotic whorls. The white of the baseboards seems like it is bleeding up into the walls, and the chalk dust on the floor is flowing about as if blown by an unfelt wind. I have been sitting in the coffee shop for many hours now. The walls feel like they are pressing in, and out. Undulating like the stomach of some great beast. The light is still playing tricks on my eyes. The shadows are moving across the lemony walls, they almost look like human figures. I think that they might be. I’m almost sure of it actually. There is someone in the yellow walls of the coffee shop. They are trying to get out, to escape the canary-colored bars of their prison. I approach the wall. Scrabbling at the paint with my fingers, I need to release them. The light keeps shifting and I keep scratching. I break through the paint, a layer of drywall, I push past the studs of McDowell. I emerge out of the darkness into the light on the other side of the yellow yellow walls. I am sitting in the coffee shop.

A.M.

A LITTLE NEW
YEAR’S SONNET

Like snowflakes falling light upon the ground,
the year in silent rolling passes o’er,
turning over days without a sound
and, sighing, turning hours all the more.

Like drops which drip with sopping coat of rain,
the times with weight of ages slip in rule
and puddle bigly in successive train
and under bearded shadows rise to pool.

Like sunlit leaves how off the bough descend
in bright mosaic when the fire is fierce,

the ticks and sequent tocks of clocks suspend
the brazen bells that morn and even pierce—

The thrush and wren together sing their round
like snowflakes falling light upon the ground.

Tarik Mahmud

Aphorism of the Week:

Ashes are the best fertilizer for new plants.

Are corpses the best fertilizer for new men?

ABOUT THE ST.
JOHN’S
COLLEGIAN

The St. John’s Collegian is the weekly newspaper of St. John’s College Annapolis. We work to bring quick and timely coverage of important events going on, to help develop a more informed student body. If you’re searching for more in-depth investigations and reporting, as well as essays, art and culture, check out the Gadfly, our affiliated publication, which is published once every three weeks.

Want to submit an article? We always need more writers, whether for opinion or reporting! Submissions for news articles should be between 400-600 words, while opinion should be kept short at 350 words. Just email eanicholskaufman@sjc.edu with your article, and we will work to get it in print! Longer form articles and more in-depth exploration of ideas should go to the Gadfly, which accepts submissions at lbriner@sjc.edu.

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