



FROM THE POLITY

Students in Support of Khafiz Kerimov

In the wake of Mr. Kerimov not being reappointed as a tutor, there has been an outpouring of student voices expressing dismay at this decision. Not only have students gone directly to administrative officials and faculty, but there has also been a great amount of conversation within the student body about Mr. Kerimov's case and the reappointment process in general. This kind of collective activism is something I've not seen in my time at St. John's. Despite being a community based in large part on thoughtful engagement with texts and each other, I find that important issues are often not sufficiently addressed. I've before thought of this as a general apathy. We're just too tired from studying to care about anything else! However, this time students spoke up.

A letter expressing disappointment with the Instruction Committee's (IC) decision was signed by over 220 students and alumni from both the Annapolis and Santa Fe campuses. The chairs of the SCI, the student committee concerned with matters of instruction, co-authored a letter imploring the IC to reconsider their decision. Students presented the Dean with personal narratives of how Mr. Kerimov profoundly impacted them. And last Tuesday, the Delegate Council passed a resolution recommending that the IC reappoint Mr. Kerimov. The DC's action is momentous as resolutions are rarely put forth. These are formidable efforts all initiated by students to reflect on an issue that pertains directly to our education and what we want that education to look like even after we graduate.

This is not just about Mr. Kerimov. It is about our say as students in our education, and how we trust the faculty and administration to uphold academic excellence and adequately value those members of the polity who are rightfully esteemed by us. Reappointment decisions are private by nature and, frankly, I don't care to know all the intricacies of the IC's decision. It is enough for me to believe that Mr. Kerimov is a great tutor and an integral member of the community, and that because of this everything should be done to keep him St. John's. I encourage students to continue discussing this issue with each other, faculty, and the administration. It must be made firmly known that we are invested in the excellence of St. John's and are willing to act for the sake of its preservation.

Emma Cunningham-Bradshaw

ADMISSIONS UPDATE: LOOKING FORWARD TO THE CLASS OF '29

Discussion Based Application's First Year Proves Successful, Annapolis On Track to Meet Enrollment Goals

The Regular decision deadline for applications to St. John's College passed this January, and the admissions process is in full swing, with Early Action and Early Decision applicants having been notified of their admission on December 1st, and Regular Decision applicants learning of their admission on the day of publication. Rolling admissions, which continue until the summer and account for about a third of the College's applicants, will begin on February 15th.

"Our goals this year are the same as they were last year. In Annapolis, we aim to admit 140-150 people, while in Santa Fe, we'd like to have a little bit more than a hundred students. We don't know if we're going to meet those goals yet," explained Ben Baum, Vice President for Admissions. "We have roughly 1,000 students who have applied, college wide, so far. We anticipate maybe another 500 between now and August. That's one of the reasons we don't know whether or not we'll meet all our goals, because we don't know how many people will apply between now and then. 1,000 students sounds like a lot, for an institution the size of St. John's, but it's a much more complicated story."

Part of the complication comes from the relatively small portion of admitted students who choose to enroll. "With our goals, 140-150 in Annapolis, and 100 in Santa Fe, we'll probably admit somewhere around 700-800 students. The reason for that is that not every student who we admit comes. Roughly 30% of the students we admit enroll," said Baum. "30% may sound like a high number, but it is one of the best of our peers."

Additionally, a limited applicant pool constrains the College's admissions possibilities, especially on the Santa Fe campus, which has historically struggled to meet enrollment goals. Baum explained that "Last year, Santa Fe fell a little short, I think we had 92 students... The reason for that is that we did not have enough applications. That's a challenge for St. John's on both campuses.... The breakdown of [applications] skews towards Annapolis. 2/3rd of applicants apply to Annapolis, and only 1/3rd apply to Santa Fe. As a result, it's harder to meet the headcount goals in Santa Fe... The reasons for that are probably a matter of geography to a certain extent. There are very few liberal arts colleges in the Southwest, and the population of New Mexico is much smaller than that of the area

around Annapolis." Some demographic trends are also shifting. This year has seen a decrease in international student applications, with an increase in domestic students.

Another major change to the college's admissions process this year is the implementation of the Discussion Based application, an alternative application which replaces the requirement for an essay or letters of recommendation with an interview with an admissions counselor, an interview with a tutor, and participation in a seminar.

"We launched it in August, explained Baum. "It was an idea that originated in an officers retreat... we were talking about how while our application covers many great things about St. John's, it doesn't cover the discussion centered nature of what we actually do here, and so we asked ourselves to figure out a way we could include that. So we came up with the Discussion Based Application."

So far, 134 students have applied through this process, which has no equivalent in any other school in the country. Baum noted great strength in these applicants. "They are, no question, some of the strongest applications we've received. What we think that students saw this as an opportunity to do something different that would be maybe more exciting or maybe comfortable for them in the admissions process for students who already know that St. John's is where they want to be."

Matthew Holtzman, a tutor who has been participating in some of the tutor conversations, and is also a member of the admissions committee, explained what the interviews look like. "Usually, I try to get a sense of why the student is attracted to the College in the first place, what the student's impressions of the College were so far. If they attended a seminar, what was the seminar like, and if they had anything they wanted to say in the seminar... usually, that's a good sign: if the student had something they wanted to say."

Beyond this interview, the student may either join a Saturday seminar, or participate in Summer Academy to fulfil the seminar requirement. Once this and the shorter written portion of the application are completed, the student is notified (*Cont. on page 2*)

This Week in Seminar

Freshman:

- 2/1: Plato: Sophist, beginning-242B
- 2/5: Plato: Sophist, 242C-end

Sophomores:

- 2/1: Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologiae (see official list for selections)
- 2/5: Christian Creeds, Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologiae (see official list for selections)

Juniors:

- 2/1: Kant: Critique of Pure Reason (see official list for selections)
- 1/22: Kant: Critique of Pure Reason (see official list for selections)

Seniors:

- 2/1: Essay writing Period
- 2/5: Melville: Benito Cereno

Friday Night Lecture:

No Lecture due to long weekend

Upcoming Events:

Thursday 2/1

- 9:45 pm, outside the planetarium: long weekend bonfire

Saturday 2/3

- Midnight*, Studio Theater: Senior Sh*t Show

Tuesday 2/6

- 3:45 pm, Hodson Conference Room: Pathways fellowship information session

* For all the pedants out there who insist this should be marked as midnight 2/4, note that the AP style guide says midnight "is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning."

THEOLOGICAL DEBATE:

On the Most Essential Question

Learned members of the polity,

Corruption comes upon our holy community from all sides, through wickedness and sin, forcing our minds toward 'practical' matters of politics, graduation, and actually treating our employees well. I fear that the entire matter of this Godly institution is being lost. Must I remind you, good doctors of this our most holy church, what we are here for? What is the study of chemistry, mathematics, physics, ethics, theology, literature for? You spit in the eye of God when you say it is for human matters. I address you in your darkness: do you not remember our question? What is erudition for? There is only one question worth answering, for it contains the very nature of The Most High:

How many angels could fit upon the head of a pin?

We must use every piece of knowledge we have in our great canon to give the satisfactory answer of St. John. So let me begin:

Proposition: More than one angel may fit upon the head of a pin.

Proof: Apollonius will remind us (Conics, Book I) that a conic may be produced by the rotation of a line at some angle. This, clearly, means that a conic, of which the head of a pin is one sort, is a thing with faces, for the line may stop at any point and we call this a face from whence it began. Now, as we are reminded in the Ezekiel 10:12: "And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had." Clearly, an eye is a thing for a face, two to one, as in the proportion of Man and God. Now clearly the head of a pin is a thing with faces and an angel is a thing with eyes. Thus, because the head of a pin has multiple faces, an angel must be able to place at least part of its surface to each of these faces. Therefore, it is entirely clear, an angel may balance by its two eyes upon one of the many conic faces, leaving the others to its brethren. The rest is obvious from here. QED.

Such is only the beginning of a great learning which might be executed by our community. The rest is left to the polity to dispute in these selfsame pages.

The Learned Doctor, Bennettus Scotticus

DC BUDGETING UPDATE

The Delegate Council Budgeting submission closed on January 19th this semester, with budget hearings beginning shortly before that in order to accommodate clubs like Waltz and Reality who planned to host events early in the year. In total, the Delegate Council has \$45,000 in its bank account, and aims to allocate all of it this semester. However, clubs initially submitted \$51,860 worth of budget proposals, not including thousands of dollars in late budgets. So far, as of the meeting on January 30th, the Delegate Council has allocated \$29,994 dollars to clubs, as follows:

- Reality: \$6,210
- Waltz: \$4,760
- KWP: \$3,430
- Futsal: \$2,310
- Jiujitsu: \$2,190
- Pangea: \$1,955
- Chorus: \$1,646
- Shammai: \$1,006
- Catholic Student Fellowship: \$775
- Board Game Club: \$724
- JSPN: \$700
- Video Game Club: \$610
- Folk Life: \$500
- 3D Printing: \$497
- Drone Club: \$475
- Alexander Hamilton Society: \$450
- Orthodox Christian Fellowship: \$450
- Purls of Wisdom: \$312
- Chess: \$221
- Baking: \$213
- TEA: \$166
- Swim: \$160
- Law Club: \$134

Polo club's budget was not approved.

AND THE DISHES RUN BACK WITH THE SPOON

The polity is not known for having an abundance of small mouths among its members but there is one thing many agree on: the soup spoons of the dining hall as of late are far too large. Luckily, as some may have noticed, the beloved teaspoon has recently made a reappearance. How long will they remain? It is difficult to tell. Their appearance is likely due to a top-heavy ecosystem wherein the dominant predators (soup spoons) have out-populated their own food supply (teaspoons) resulting in ecological collapse and a widespread die-off among predators. But with a lack of predators, the prey begin to come back and fill the empty ecological niche they once occupied.

It remains to be seen whether there will be a further evolution of the genus cochlear and if, with a lack of predators, there is an overpopulation that threatens keystone species such as the fork.

Caleb Briggs, Amateur Cutlerist

Editor's Note:

I'd like to thank the Polity for responding to my cry for help in the last issue by sending in a wave of articles. Thank you all for making this paper possible!

I would also like to announce a plan for an upcoming issue of the Collegian on the 22nd. As the BVG will be meeting that week, I would like to dedicate that issue to four essays, of about 600 words each, on the issues students feel are important for the College and for the BVG to act on. If you have an idea for an essay of this type, please write to me! Submissions would be due on the 19th.

Admissions, Cont. from pg. 1

within two weeks of the admission decision.

Despite the different process, the applications are treated the same as regular applications. "What will happen is that I will submit my notes, and those will become part of the application," explained Holtzman. Instead of reading an essay, the person reading the application will read my impressions of the student. When I've been on the other side of that, reading somebody's notes, usually hat tells me the same sorts of things that an essay would tell me. I'm getting the same kind of information, just filtered through the eyes of one of my colleagues, which is helpful in the sense that I don't have to do the same kind of deciphering."

Holtzman also noted that this process is not too different from the existing one: "I don't think the discussion based application marks a radical change from the way we do things anyway, but it seems like a very appropriate substantive change. It is something different, and appropriate for us."

Both Baum and Holtzman indicated that the process so far had been very successful, and that they were optimistic that it will continue for years to come. "I think we can bring people into the college who can grow in their writing, who might just express themselves better in conversation," said Baum.

El'ad Nichols-Kaufman

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 400 words. A longer, journalistic piece may be up to 1,200 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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Pensee of the Week

Some built high towers, some became nobility, and some injected needles. But they all desired highness.

