[**Plenary Minutes - February 20, 2011**](http://sga.blogs.brynmawr.edu/2011/02/23/plenary-minutes-february-20-2011/)

10:30 – Official Start of Plenary

11:58 – Test vote for quorum.

12:44 – Quorum reached.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We’ve reached quorum, so I’ll quickly go over the voting procedure for Plenary, but it is all written in the Plenary packet that you should have gotten when you came in. There are microphones for pro or con statements, and questions. Please make sure you write your name and year on the sheet with the microphone monitor before you speak. We will now move to the first resolution, which is to reaffirm SGA’s constitution.

Yong Jung Cho ’12, Rebecca Sanders ’12, Tina Hu ’12, Mae Carlson ’12, Priya Saxena ’12:*Whereas*, the Self-Governance Association of the Undergraduate School of Bryn Mawr College is the first and oldest system of self-governance in the United States and takes great pride,

*Whereas*, the students of Bryn Mawr College have pledged to work together for the welfare, benefit, and preservation of the community as a whole,

*Whereas*, we recognize that to reach full potential of our community requires a true commitment on the part of each and every individual

*It is hereby resolved that* we, the Members of the Self-Governance Association of the Undergraduate School of Bryn Mawr College present today, the 20th of February, 2011, on behalf of the entire Association, reaffirm our commitment to Self-Governance, the Constitution, and the Honor Code from which it derives its authority.

Yong Jung Cho ’12: This resolution basically says that we will continue to follow the constitution and Honor Code in the upcoming academic school year.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We have 30 seconds for people to make any objections or statements about reaffirmation.

Natalie Zamora ’14: What exactly does reaffirming mean?

Yong Jung Cho ’12: Every spring Plenary we reaffirm our commitment to self-governance to say we believe in the Honor Code, and that faculty and administration can know to trust us on campus. Agreeing to reaffirm self-governance says we want to continue to abide by the constitution and Honor Code.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: 30 seconds have passed, and we will move to approve the resolution.The vote will be by visual ballot and will be either for reaffirming self-governance, against reaffirming, or abstaining.

The Resolution passes

Sophie Papavizas ’11: Our next resolution is presented on behalf of the Honor Board.

Priya Saxena ’12, Susie Kim ’11: *Whereas*, usage of translation websites do not reflect the high levels of comprehension and learning required in Bryn Mawr language courses.

*Whereas*, on-line translating disregards the cultural, socio, psycho, linguistic nature of human communication.

*Whereas*, such limitations forces communication to a set of technical information exchanges.

*Whereas*, this is sometimes not explicitly told by professors or by the Honor Code.

*Whereas*, professors have developed a growing awareness of the use of online translators for class.

*Whereas*, the use of online dictionaries is permitted and encouraged for the development of language vocabulary.

*Whereas*, when translating one word, the online translation function plays the role of a dictionary and is therefore permitted.

*Whereas*, all other online translation functions are against the Honor Code unless explicitly allowed by the professor.

*Whereas*, our Honor Code should be revised with regards to technological advancement and changes in the Bryn Mawr College community.

*Be it resolved*, that the translation function in any website should not be used in any language course unless specifically allowed by the professor.

Susie Kim ’11: This resolution was brought forth by the Deans and members of the language department, to make clear what is acceptable for the use of online translation sites. We wrote it this way to allow for each class to make their own exceptions.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We’ll open the floor for statements.

Cornelia Dalton ’11: Why wouldn’t professors just bring up usage of sites like this on their own in the classroom? Have there been a lot of cases where students are using online translations sites inappropriately?

Susie Kim ’11: We’re hoping this resolution will bring about more conversations.

Ho’sanna Odhner ’13: I know you said specifics would be determined by professors, but can you clarify what this would apply for?

Susie Kim ’11: This would be determined by each class. We kept the resolution vague so that classes can decide on their own about when using an online resource is acceptable or not, and also so that it wouldn’t be too strict.

Amanda Fortner ‘13: It’s pretty obvious when a paper has been put through a translator. Why can’t they just get a bad grade instead of going straight to the Honor Board?

Priya Saxena ’12: Putting your English words into a translation site is considered cheating, and those cases are taken to the Honor Board.

Christina Lisk ’14: Why not just ban online translators all together and have professors put a dictionary on the book list?

Susie Kim ’11: I think the internet is a valuable resource, and we want to allow people to continue to use it.

Priya Saxena ’12: Part of the resolution is to keep the Honor Code up to date with technological advances, which is another reason we still want students to be allowed to use the internet. It gives trust to the students.

Ashton Shaffer ’11: Why is Plenary the appropriate forum for this? Why not just let the language department know about the change?

Susie Kim ’11: Our primary concern is to make sure the conversation happens between students and professors.

Jen Rajchel ’11: The recommendation is suggesting conversation, but the language of the resolution seems negative towards the use of translators.

Priya Saxena ’12: We’re saying that an online translator isn’t permitted when using them for multiple phrases, using it for one word, gives them a dictionary function which would be fine.

Sarah Ames ’14: For other languages it seems like phrases translate differently into English, so it would be kind of unfair to limit the use for looking up phrases as well.

Susie Kim ’11: I think this is a conversation that needs to happen in the classroom.

Natalie Zamora ’14: What about sites that help you conjugate verbs?

Susie Kim ’11: That’s okay, because you’re learning from it, not using it for huge chunks of a single paper.

Emma Gulley ’14: What about translating another language into English?

Susie Kim ’11: It doesn’t matter which language your translating to or from.

Samone Rowe ’14: I’m still a little confused about why this is being presented at Pleanry, will it be put into the Honor Code?

Susie Kim ’11: Yes, it will be added into the Honor code. This resolution isn’t to mandate anything, but really just to encourage discussion.

Adelyn Kishbaugh ’12: Motion to extend question time to the end of the speaking order, which still has 2 people.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We’ll have a visual vote whether to extend the speaking order or not.

Time extended to the end of speaking order.

Amanda Fortner ’13: What about translating colloquialisms?

Priya Saxena ’12: That’s kind of specific, so it would probably be up to the professor again.

Jen Rajchel ’11: I propose an amendment that the end of the resolution be changed to “Be it resolved that the translation function should be part of a classroom dialogue and the parameters of its usage should be collaboratively decided by the professors and the class.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: It’s considered a friendly amendment.

Julia Fahl ’12: Does this amendment take the teeth out of it being a part of the Honor Code? If it’s just a classroom discussion, does it make less of an impact?

Priya Saxena ’12: What we intended was to make clear that people shouldn’t use translation sites to write their essays.

Cornelia Dalton ’11: While I think it’s a good idea to have this discussion, I think it’s already happening in the classroom. Bryn Mawr students should know that we can’t put our essays into translation sites. I don’t think this resolution really clarifies anything.

Jen Bonczar ’11: Point of Information – I think the point of this resolution is that the discussion isn’t happening, and that it is actually a problem on campus. I think the amendment is good because it encourages that professors discuss their expectations.

Natalie Zamora ’14: Also in response to that discussions are already happening I don’t think professors are talking about it that much, so I like the resolution.

Zoe Fox ’14: I’d like to also say that the discussion isn’t happening very much, so I think the discussion needs to happen in the classroom.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We’ll move to a vote by visual ballot, whether or not to approve the resolution.

The Resolution passes.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: Are there any objections to the visual vote? If not, we will move on to the third resolution.

Jennifer Savage ’12, Blair Smith ’12: *Whereas*, it is important for Bryn Mawr students to be able to study and complete work.

*Whereas*, there is a lack of computing and studying spaces available after midnight.

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr students should be given the option of completing work after midnight if it suits their study habits.

*Whereas*, the data taken during the 24 hour library during finals time in Fall 2010 shows that an average of 84 people were in the library at 11pm, 74 people at 12am, 69 people at 1am, 60 people at 2am, and 47 people at 3am.

*Whereas*, quiet study spaces with computer access have been limited since computers were moved from Guild to Canaday.

*Whereas*, members of the library faculty have expressed support for the idea that a quiet study space with computer access should be made available to students until 2am and that it is both possible and feasible to have such a space.

*Be it resolved*, that the new hours of Canaday Library will be Sunday 10am-2am,Monday-Thursday 8am-2am, Friday 8am-10pm, Saturday 10am-10pm

Jennifer Savage ’12: Basically we want to extend the hours of Canaday Library on weekdays to 2 am. We’ve talked to administrators, and they are completely in support of the resolution. If it passes, the new hours will start after Spring Break.

Katie Dahl ’11: I’m just asking why this needs to be a resolution if the library has already given its’ support?

Jennifer Savage ’12: Elliott Shore just wanted to make sure that the students were in full support of the new hours.

Roldine Richard ’12: I’m just wondering how this will affect the College’s budget?

Jennifer Savage ’12: We talked to the Library, and they said it’s totally feasible within our current budget.

Joo Park ’11: Will these workers on the new shift be students or outside people?

Jennifer Savage ’12: They’re short on workers now, so they will be hiring more students for these later shifts.

Laura Alexander ’11: Will these new hours place any burden on housekeeping or facilities?

Jennifer Savage ’12: I don’t think there will be any issues for either because housekeeping comes in the morning.

Sarah Fischer ’12: Are you prepared for the increase in requests for the Lantern Van?

Jennifer Savage ’12: We hadn’t really considered that, but we can look into it.

Samone Row ’14: Will the students who work until 2 am be allowed to leave at 2, or will they have to close as well?

Jennifer Savage ’12: As far as I know, they don’t have to close, but if students are signing up for shifts, they can decide whether they want to work that late or not.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: Point of Information – I know Res Life and Student Activities are concerned about student wellbeing on campus, keeping the library open later might just encourage students to study more.

Jennifer Savage ’12: People will study no matter what, so I think it’s good to just give students another option.

Audra Fannon ’11: I’m wondering if you have any information from current workers who might be willing to take these late shifts?

Jennifer Savage ’12: We haven’t really asked them, but the woman in charge of scheduling shifts said it wouldn’t be a problem finding students willing to work.

Cornelia Dalton ’11: Point of Information – anyone can decide if they want to work then. She did get library employees opinions.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We will move to a visual ballot on this resolution.

The third Resolution passes.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: If there are no objections to the visual vote on this resolution, we will move on.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: *Whereas*, it is in the best interests of the students and Bryn Mawr College to secure a grading system which accurately measures study performance in a way which is fair to students and faculty, may such a one be pursued;

*Whereas*, an accurate and fair system instills faith in the mission of our school, security in the hearts of hard-working students, and parity among our peers and academic competitors;

*Whereas*, more and more, grade inflation is a worrisome topic and has been the subject of scholarly criticisms and nationwide news articles which disparage the trend in many private colleges and universities throughout the country;

*Whereas*, grades are intended to communicate valuable information regarding levels of academic performance to students (identifying their strengths - and weaknesses), financial aid officers (allocating funding), graduate schools (making admission decisions), and potential employers (screening job applicants). Grade inflation and grade compression depreciate and undermine the usefulness of grades, as well as the work of students by such devaluation;

*Whereas*, faculty and administration can also appreciate a system which does not promote or stand alongside inflation, allows accuracy through its eradication of deflation, and simultaneously and correctly improves the image of the College;

*Whereas*, an adjusted system may allow for more competitiveness among students and heightened striving for academic achievement once the potential for grade deflation is removed;

*Whereas*, when the potential for, and possible likelihood of, deflation is removed, scholar-morale may rise, resulting in an improvement in overall student well-being;

*Whereas*, a system which allows for grade deflation puts students at a disadvantage when applying for opportunities, whether academic or professional;

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr College is among those colleges and universities exhibiting and struggling with this trend in grading (regarding issues of inflation and compression), and so should this institution be among those reevaluating and adjusting grading policies, in the ongoing process of self-improvement;

*Whereas*, other institutions have moved away from stand-alone grades, and that such numerical awards without contexts frustrate the purposes of distinguishing individual student performances;

*Whereas*, this committee will work alongside, and simultaneous to, the already-established Curriculum Committee, but solely for the purpose of addressing the grading system;

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr College has hosted the details of this grading system for over three decades and this system, like any other, should be revisited periodically in order to confirm whether adjustments are necessary or the present process remains sufficient and desirable;

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr strives to develop an excellence and superior competence in scholarship in the range of studies which a liberal arts education makes available, and a system which so allows grade deflation prevents the College from displaying its graduates in an accurate light;

*Therefore be it resolved that* Bryn Mawr College allow the establishment and promulgation of a committee of Faculty and Students to study Grade Allocation at the College and to report its findings to a designated authoritative body periodically and to propose and recommend a Truth In Grading Policy to be adopted thereby.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: This is a proposal to form a committee to look at the current grading system. I’ve interviewed a lot of different departments on campus, to discuss possible changes and I got support from everyone I met with. From what I learned, it seems like the current system might be outdated, this is not a universal system that we use. From Student Activities, they wonder what rounding grades down does to student mental health. We also want to be more attractive to grad schools. I got support from all the professors I spoke to, and the Registrar has gotten complaints from professors who want more grade flexibility.

Joey Yockey ’13: I’m wondering if you talked to any grad schools or employers? Because it seems like we’ve kept our grading integrity by not giving out the 3.5. Our GPAs might be lower, but schools know that it’s truly a 3.3, and not an inflated GPA.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: The issue comes up, when a student receives a 3.4, and gets a grade rounded down, which is kind of unfair. I’ve spoken to alum, and many of them include statements with their grad school applications saying that their grades might not be accurately reflected.

Joey Yockey ’13: You said the findings would be presented to an authority, who would that be?

Miranda Hansen-Hunt ’11: Point of Information – that would be presented to the Curriculum Committee.

Emily Strong ’13: How did the grading system get this way?

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: This system has been in place since the mid 70s. It was decided on because previously we used a really outdated system that was on a 0-100 scale.

Julia Fahl ’12: I have an amendment proposing that we remove that statement “*Whereas*, an adjusted system may allow for more competitiveness among students and heightened striving for academic achievement once the potential for grade deflation is removed” I think this statement is against the honor code. I think we try to discourage competitiveness.

Aki Snyder ’11, Miranda Hansen-Hunt ’11: Point of Information – we just want everyone to know, that if this resolution passes, it won’t be addressed this year. Just something to keep in mind. The grading system won’t change next year.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: This new committee would work with you, the Curriculum Committee.

Ashley Hahn ’14: In regard to the amendment, I think the competition statement is geared towards grad schools, and not amongst ourselves.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: The amendment is unfriendly. We will discuss and vote on this amendment, before going back to the original resolution. Are there any statements about this amendment?

Emily Strong ’14: I think with this amendment, I would have voted for it, and now I don’t think I will.

Alexandra Spear ’13: It’s not just the competition with others but with ourselves. I think it’s implied that you’re competing with yourself.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We’re visually voting on the amendment proposed by Julia Fahl. The amendment passes, and we will strike that section of the resolution. We will now go back to the resolution.

Mary Zaborskis ’12: The section that says “*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr College is among those colleges and universities exhibiting and struggling with this trend in grading (regarding issues of inflation and compression), and so should this institution be among those reevaluating and adjusting grading policies, in the ongoing process of self-improvement;” where is this evidence coming from? How does a statement from the Student Activities office really compel us to make this committee? What does stress really have to do with inflation?

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: This is mostly feedback from administrators, professors and deans. I interviewed a lot of different departments, just to get any feedback that I could.

Sarah Theobald ’12: Point of Information – in terms of data, Bryn Mawr is consistently rated as not being affected by grade inflation.

Ariel Furman ’13: Could we switch from a 4.0 scale to a letter grade system?

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: That would be something the committee would discuss. I’m not really here to propose a particular system.

Adeyln Kishbaugh ’12: Motion to extend time to end of speaking order.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: The speaking order time has been extended.

Jen Bonczar ’11: Point of Information – I think these questions about what intentions are for this committee are kind of pointless, because that’s what the committee would decide.

Kati Zaylor ’11: I’m wondering why not make sure that professors adhere to the system we have now? Why are professors even considering other grades in between 3.3 or 3.7 if those are our only options?

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: Because sometimes the averages don’t match up if there are only two grades in the semester, like a 3.7 and a 3.3, which would average out to a 3.5.

Christina Lisk ’14: What happens for double majors, if the 3.5 is added?

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: This resolution isn’t advocating that we definitely add the 3.5 to our grading system.

Sadie Mahmoud ’13: Who would have the final say about any changes?

Miranda Hansen-Hunt ’11: Point of Information – it would be Curriculum Committee that would make the final decision.

Kayla Bondi ’14: How would you handle transition to a new system?

Courtney Pinkerton ’11: The committee would ultimately decide. Options could be just grandfathering in the system with new classes or a change to everyone at the same time.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We now have 7 minutes for pro and con statements.

Emma Wisnewski-Barker ’11: I am pro this resolution because there is clearly a lot of discussion around the issue. Since this is only proposing a committee, I think it would be good to look into.

Natalie Zamora ’14: I often have questions about what my grades might mean, so I think the committee would be helpful to answer my questions.

Sarah Henkind ’13: I think this is a really good idea, because I think sometimes our grades don’t always reflect our work.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: Just to reiterate that this resolution is for a committee to be formed, and doesn’t condone inflation, deflation or compression of grades. It is just in pursuit of accuracy. There was someone who brought up that we don’t have a problem with inflation, but there are still some problems with deflation. This committee is being formed because the Curriculum Committee is really busy with other things, but we will work together.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We will move to a visual vote.

The Resolution passes. We will move to our last resolution if there are no objections.

Emily Kirchner ’12: *Whereas*, Bryn Mawr College prides itself on respecting all students

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr student employment practices currently provide little oversight to pay rates on campus, resulting in pay inequality

*Whereas*, student employees are crucial for daily operations in most Bryn Mawr College offices and departments and especially in Dining Services

*Whereas*, Bryn Mawr College Dining Services (BMCDS) hires students without regard to previous food service experience or expertise, like many other employers on campus

*Whereas*, students working for Dining Services are subject to the most severe pay inequality on campus

*Whereas*, pay inequality degrades the BMCDS program and BMCDS student employees

*Whereas*, pay inequality exacerbates existing class issues and threatens the Bryn Mawr College community

*Be it resolved*, the student body recommends to the administration that student employment oversight should be a priority in the restructuring of Student Services, with the ultimate goal that all campus jobs which do not require previous experience or expertise receive the same introductory pay rate

Emily Kirchner ’12: I became interested in this issue after seeing the pay inequality on campus. I’m the head supervisor of Haffner, and make the same as a friend of mine, who just started working in Special Collections. I’ve talked to a lot of people and they are all in agreement that oversight is a problem.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We will move to discussion.

Adrienne Webb ’11: I was wondering if you asked financial aid how this would affect work study packages?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I didn’t talk to financial aid.

Audra Fannon ’11: If you have to have experience for a job, your intro pay rate will not be affected?

Emily Kirchner ’12: Right.

Sarah Henkind ’13: Is this only for Dining Services or all other departments too?

Emily Kirchner ’12: It aims to recommend changes for all departments. There is currently no one regulating equal pay for equal work.

Laura Alexander ’11: What exactly is oversight?

Emily Kirchner ’12: Right now there needs to be someone looking at posted jobs to make sure everything matches in terms of pay rates and experience required.

Natalie Zamora ’14: Does this mean supervisors will get equal pay to regular workers?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I would consider supervisor positions to require experience.

Audrey Cravotta ’13: Would Dining Services get a pay increase or would other jobs decrease?

Emily Kirchner ’12: Obviously it’s not feasible to give everyone raises or cuts. The change wouldn’t happen immediately, and would happen over a period of time. Both Jerry Berenson and Lisa Zernicke have acknowledged that this is a problem with the way students are currently paid.

Alesha Polles ’11: Would responsibilities be factored in as well as expertise?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I would say that all jobs on campus have responsibility.

Kammy Wattanodom ’12: Is working in the dining halls a prerequisite for other jobs on campus?

Sarah Theobald ’12: Point of Information – freshmen who qualify for work study must work in Dining Services for 8 hours a week before getting a waiver to apply for other jobs. A sophomore who just wants a job can get one anywhere.

Allegra Fletcher ’12: Can you explain how working in Dining Services further exacerbates class issues?

Emily Kirchner ’12: It’s not specifically that working in Dining Services that exacerbates class issues, I think it’s pay inequality.

Courtney Pinkerton ’12: Would only experience level be relevant in getting a job?

Emily Kirchner ’12: If the job doesn’t require previous expertise, I think the pay should be the same.

Roldine Richard ’12: Point of Information – the way pay rates work is that freshmen start at an introductory rate and get a 10 cent increase for every following year. Supervisors are level 2 employees and head supervisors are level 3. Other departments depend on training and other knowledge.

Jennifer Lopatin ’13: What ideas do you have for administration? What are you recommending?

Sarah Theobald ’12: Motion to extend time to the end of the speaking order.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: Time is extended to end of speaking order.

Emily Kirchner ’12: There is an idea for a position to oversee this, but it’s not in the budget, or we could have HR look at it.

Sarah Schnellbacher ’13: Have you considered the competitiveness for certain jobs? Like working in the library requires an interview.

Emily Kirchner ’12: That wasn’t a concern when I was writing the resolution.

Sarah Theobald ’12: Point of Information – we work in Dining Services at Wyndham and there is a bit of competitiveness in getting job there.

Jen Bonczar ’11: What exactly do you mean by class issues? What are you trying to rectify, a social issue or pay equality?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I think it’s a social issue. I think inequality on campus does degrade the work students do in the dining halls.

Jen Bonczar ’11: Have you heard that students felt discriminated against or disrespected, and what kind of discrimination do they face?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I am disrespected because I don’t think it’s fair.

Roldine Richard ’12: Point of Information – the reason there’s a disparity in pay is that, Dining Services industry rates are comparable to outside industry rates, and some departments have more money to pay students. It’s been hard to even increase the pay by 10 cents.

Anna Gadzinski ’11: I have a question about the last part of your resolution, I’m curious about the transition. Would the freshman and sophomore pay rates be the same with no raise between years?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I see your concern, and I think that would be part of the discussion.

Lee McClennon ’14: It seems like wages are higher in some jobs to attract students to work.Will pay changes affect the way we employ students?

Emily Kirchner ’12: I don’t think it will.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We will now take pro or con statements.

Marissa Jackson ’14: I work in the dining halls three days a week, and it’s like my first real job, which gives me a sense of independence. I think Dining Services jobs are very integral to our campus. I’m really in favor of this resolution.

Sarah Kelley ’11: I have a quote unquote cushy job and get paid 8.50 an hour for very little work. I think this resolution is great because it lets departments know where the inequalities are.

Sam Salazar ’11: I’ve been working in Dining Services for 4 years. I love Haffner, but I feel like it’s kind of unfair that we can kind of run the dining halls ourselves, but get paid really little.

Freda Li ’14: I make $8 an hour, and I know that people who work elsewhere, and work less who earn more and the maximum you can work in Erdman is 7 hours, which is less than a lot of other people.

Kendra Kelly ’13: I support this resolution and as a freshman I worked in the dining hall and library, and I got paid 40 cents more in the library than in the dining hall, but the library was difficult work too, in a different way than the dining hall.

Sarah Henkind ’13: I’m for this resolution, but the only thing I have problem with is the social class thing. I don’t talk about grades or what I make.

Isel Otero-Vera ’12: I think it’s very important to talk about class because when we go into the real world, class will be an issue.

Samone Brown ’14: I think there needs to be more discussion about this, because it seems like no one wants to talk about it.

Emily Kirchner ’12: I just want to say thanks for those who support this resolution, and it’s not about disrespecting anyone, it’s about making things more fair.

Sophie Papavizas ’11: We will now move to a vote on this resolution.

The Resolution passes.

3:14 – Plenary over