

## Newcomer/Stefan 2016 Presidential Platform

This platform documents some of our general philosophies and ideas behind what we want to establish at Vanderbilt through our presidency.

### a. Respect

- a. All student's ideas should be respected, regardless of their age, race, social status, or background in general. All students should have access to resources where they feel like they can thrive and succeed. All students should not only have access to these opportunities, but feel comfortable expressing themselves as well.
- b. As younger candidates, Dan and I will be more personable to younger students. We will personally make an effort to spend time on Commons weekly, making ourselves available to freshman.
- c. We can promise you that we will listen to all students' ideas. If they believe that they can make an impact on campus, we will absolutely give those ideas a chance. We are not claiming we will just accept every idea thrown at us, however we will listen to each student and give them a chance, no matter who they are. A student's past should not dictate how much we respect them as people.
- d. Implement a program where students who are more familiar with American culture can volunteer to shadow International students, or even other students who do not feel extremely comfortable socializing here. This would allow those students who sometimes have trouble socializing and feel like they are not knowledgeable of a lot of cultural ideals, to establish a close relationship with someone who is knowledgeable about those things; this would allow those

students to feel comfortable and assimilate quicker into the culture here. Current students would sign up to mentor these students (we personally would both sign up for this program) who do want to assimilate quicker into the culture here, and act like brotherly figures to these students, showing them the ropes of American culture, and make them feel more comfortable.

- e. Fairness to all students in registration for classes – All students should have equal opportunity to enroll in the classes they desire. Each student is able to pick one class that they absolutely need for a major requirement, pre-requisite, minor requirement, etc. before the lottery system. But after that, the lottery system should be 100% randomized to all students in regards to the entire registration process.
- f. Diversity – Once again, all students should be respected regardless of their background. All students should feel as if not only they have the resources and tools to succeed here, but also feel comfortable and enjoy their college experiences as well. College is not only about educational success. There should be organizations available for all students, and all of those organizations should be respected and have a voice. Students should not be shut down because of race, or any characteristic relating to one's background on that matter.
- g. If I am elected, I am personally allowed to elect 13 members in the VSG Cabinet. I can assure you that I do not want these positions to all come from the same friend group. I will give any student a chance to prove to not only me, but Vanderbilt as a whole, that they would do a good job in that specific position. I

want people who share the same ideas as me on inclusivity. Also, this does not mean I will not appoint students who are involved in VSG currently, as there are lots of genuine and great people in VSG, just not in all cases. In fact, I would prefer to appoint a few people who are currently in VSG.



b. Personal Accountability

- a. Pretty much all students here, with a few exceptions, are adults. If a student commits an infraction, they should be held accountable to their own actions, not one else. For example, if an organization holds an event, and an outsider to that organization comes to that event and commits an infraction, they should be held accountable, not the entire organization. Accountability should be held to individuals, not to entire organizations.
- b. De-magnify the “guilt by association” standards that are sometimes put forth here – students should not be punished for merely witnessing an infraction being

committed (within reason). I personally believe that students should not be encouraged to always turn to others to resolve their problems. The parties who committed the infraction should be held accountable, not the bystanders. I would work with Student Accountability to try and implement this philosophy into their ideas. In terms of the immunity rule, I think that is a great rule that should be kept



in place.

- c. Alcohol allowed at fraternity and sorority houses for those students that are of age. Alcohol is legal for all members of the United States at age 21, and legal at younger ages in many other countries as well. Therefore, if a student is 21, they

should not be punished for drinking. Even if you disapprove of it, they should still not be punished for this.

c. Transparency/Consistency

- a. All rules and regulations should be specific and direct, not vague and ambiguous, so sanctions can be more consistent. A student who is seen by an RA in a room where an unopened beer is seen on a desk, should not receive the same punishment as a student hospitalized from being too intoxicated and acting belligerent.
- b. All students should be held to the same standards. If a student commits a minor infraction and you hold them accountable to that, all students must be held accountable, for the sake of consistency. If this means loosening up certain regulations in order to ensure that this happens, that is perfectly fine. Vanderbilt should have a laissez-faire attitude in certain aspects. However, things like sexual assault, hate crimes, and abuse should be taken seriously. Things like underage drinking and lifestyle choices should not be taken as seriously. Merely, students should be educated on the potential consequences of their lifestyle choices, rather than being punished just for choosing to live their life a certain way. All students should be shown the same respect, and that goes for punishments as well.



- c. Free Speech – all students should be able to say what they want to say, according to the First Amendment. Even if you disapprove of something that someone says, they should not be disciplined for speaking their mind.

d. Overall Happiness of the Students

- a. Tour around Nashville restaurants and partner with business owners and get them on board to start accepting Commodore Cash and Meal Money. This would improve not only their business, but Vanderbilt students as well, as many students do not always want to go to restaurants that are not on the card.

- b. Allow students should have more of a say in the food options offered on campus in general. For example, students should be able to vote on what types of foods they want to be offered at Commons, Rand, Munchie Mart, etc. We saw how a student was able to get Munchie Mart to start selling avocados. More ideas like this should be allowed on campus. Essentially, students should have more of a say in what they eat.