

Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Constitutional Clarity and Reform

June 19, 2014 4:30 PM

SAC 3.116 (Balcony Room C)

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Roll Call**
 - a. Brian, Eden, Frank, Guy, Faith, Stephanie are in attendance. Vance is attending via Skype. David is observing and providing snacks.
- III. Approval of the Minutes from June 10, 2014**
 - a. Motion to approve the minutes. There is a second. Minutes are emphatically approved.
- IV. Constitutional Reforms**
 - a. Presidential Veto - Brian**
 - i. Brian presents the text for the presidential veto language to be included in article 4. Frank thinks there needs to be a timeframe for the Presidential Veto. The assembly must be notified of the presidential veto within 10 days. There is discussion regarding the timeframe and the appropriate language. We will specify in the internal procedures that the override of the presidential veto will be considered old business at the next meeting of the assembly.
 - ii. David asks for a clarification on what is meant by a 2/3 absolute vote of the assembly. It
 - iii. No objections, the language regarding the presidential veto is approved.
 - b. Apportionment - Stephanie**
 - i. Stephanie explains that not every school or college has departments, some programs are not associated with departments and others are associated with more than one.
 - ii. First issue: Should we define departments as more inclusive than just departments, because departmental representative denotes just department, not field of study.
 - iii. Frank suggests that reapportionment should be up to the discretion of the Membership director, with ratification of 2/3 of quorum of the assembly.
 - iv. Guy suggests that every program or field of study has a graduate coordinator, so could we model apportionment based on where there are coordinators. The rest of the group agrees that this would be messier.
 - v. David notes that the University of Michigan has a much smaller GSA, the benefit of more membership is more democratic representation, but more unwieldy.
 - vi. Frank: we have had discussions in the past about apportionment by college. What if we did college reps by number of students?

- vii. Brian thinks that Frank's idea of leaving apportionment up to the membership director may be wiser.
- viii. There is discussion of specific instances that are difficult to apportion.
- ix. The language for apportionment should be in the by-laws.
 - x. The proposed change would be to allow the Membership director to propose how to reapportion at the end of every year.
 - xi. Brian and Stephanie will go on a canvassing tour in July to glean a greater understanding of the different departments and promote GSA involvement.
 - xii. David: dual degree students, or undergrads who are graduate students may be a concern.
 - xiii. Motion to table this issue until the next meeting. Motion is seconded and approved. Stephanie will work on the language in the meantime.

c. Referendum - Guy

- i. Due to low voter turnout, direct initiative may be dangerous. Guy has provided proposed language for the constitution and the by-laws.
- ii. There is clarification about direct initiative and referendum.
- iii. Vance proposes that referendum include language about a vote in the GSA so that there is a chance for approval without having to wait a year to put an issue on the ballot. Brian clarifies that students, regardless of representation can introduce legislation, so this may not be necessary.
- iv. Vance has a concern with the 'any pending action' language in the proposed change. There is discussion of the possibility of language regarding a people's amendment to the GSA constitution. There is general consensus that this is not needed. 'Any pending action' will be changed to 'Any pending bill or referendum, excluding amendments to governing documents.'
- v. Frank notes that there is no time frame given, so 'president' could refer to the president elect or the incumbent.
- vi. Third paragraph language stays as is.
- vii. Amendment is made to 'Dean of Graduate Studies' so that it now reads "Dean of Students."
- viii. Brian calls for any objections to the amended referendum language. There are no objections. The proposed change is approved.

d. Attracting Participation - Frank

- i. Frank put some language in the By-laws change document to add a section to codify vice chairs for each committee.
- ii. There is also proposed language change in the internal rules. In order an organization or individual student to apply for or receive funding, the organization or student must be represented in the GSA. We will nail down the specific language in order to incentivize participation in GSA.
- iii. Frank's third idea is to make it explicit that resolutions and bills be sponsored by at least one voting member.

V. The Bylaws of the Graduate Student Assembly

a. Edits Begin

- i. We will look through comment by comment by order they are presented in the by-laws.
- ii. BMW1: Brian explains his rationale. No discussion. No objections. Change is approved.
- iii. BMW2: Brian explains rationale. Guy asks a question about the responsibilities of the administrative director. No other discussion. No objections. Change is approved.
- iv. ED1: Eden discusses rationale. There is brief discussion about which name is preferable. We will use Rules and Administration Committee. No objections. Change is approved.
- v. VR1: Vance explains proposed change. There is discussion about the language and the change is amended. No objections. Change is approved.
- vi. BMW3: Brian explains the rationale for the change. There is a discussion about whether or not powers are actually conferred. There is a discussion about changing the outline format and the entire article. Brian proposes another amendment BMW 32 and withdraws this amendment.
- vii. BMW32: Brian proposes to reorganize. No objections. Change is approved.
- viii. BMW4: Brian explains proposed change: "in accordance to the governing documents." No objections. Change is approved.
- ix. BMW5: Brian explains rationale. No objections. Change is approved.
- x. FM2: Frank proposes an amendment to change the order of presidential duties. No objections. Change is approved.
- xi. BMW6: Brian explains rationale. Eden asks for clarification on location. No objections. Change is approved.
- xii. BMW11: Brian explains rationale. No objections. Change is approved.
- xiii. Introduction of David to discuss agencies (brought up by a question in the section regarding financial director duties).
 1. Agencies in the other LSO allow for participation in the student organization with a focus on thematic issues.
 2. If we want to have agencies, how do we go about doing this?
 3. Frank: We could give the president power to appoint the leader of an organization as an ex-officio member of the GSA and we could allow the president to appoint the leader of an organization and have the appointed person build the agency around it. The SG appointment procedure is a mess, so we may want to start with a pilot procedure, and we can codify in the by-laws later.
 4. Frank will write this language for the next meeting.
- xiv. ED2: Eden explains the rationale for the change. Eden amends the proposed changes in accordance with suggestions from the group. No objections. Change is approved.
- xv. ED3 and ED4: Withdrawn.

- xvi. VR6: Vance explains rationale for change. There is discussion about the language. The group suggests an amendment. No objections to the amended change. Change is approved.
- xvii. BMW7: Brian explains change. No objections. Change is approved.
- xviii. VR7 and ED5 are withdrawn, as they are covered in BMW7.
- xix. VR1: Vance explains change to the title. No objections. Change is approved.
- xx. FS1: Faith explains her rationale. There is discussion about overlap in responsibilities. There is an amendment to strike the section. No objections. Change is approved.
- xxi. VR3: Vance explains the proposed change. Frank is concerned about detailing the Invest in Texas language under the duties of executive officers. There is a motion to table VR3 until discussion of committees, it is seconded. Motion passes.
- xxii. There is a brief discussion to plan the time for next meeting. Vance leaves the meeting.
- xxiii. VR8: No objections. Change is approved.
- xxiv. BMW8: Brian explains the proposed change. Frank suggests an amendment that the membership director shall certify election results. No objections. Change is approved.

VI. Select Date for Next meeting

- a. Monday June 30, 2014 from 3:30-6:30.

VII. Assignments for Next Meeting

- a. Frank and Stephanie are writing language as previously discussed.

VIII. Adjourn

- a. Frank moves to adjourn. Seconded. Approved.