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Constitution & Bylaws Committee Meeting
Minutes
March 5, 2013

Plenary Present: Colin P. Ashley (CPA), Anne Donlon (AD), Eero Laine (EL), Amy Martin (AM), Ben Miller (BM)

Executive Committee Meeting called to order at 11:16am

Steering Committee I. Approval of Agenda

Constitution and Bylaws

AD motions to emend the minutes as follows: move item III.a (seat "death") until after New Business. CPA seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Grants

AD motions to approve these emended minutes. EL seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Health & Wellness

II. Approval of Minutes from February 14, 2013

Media Board

CA recommends two emendations: in item III.a, motion to introduce "a majority" was by BM; in item III.d (page 5), "he is concerned" refers to CM.

Outreach

EL motions to approve with these emendations. CPA seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Student Services

III. Old Business

a. Program Governance Task Force?

EL presents, considers whether this would be its own bylaw or fall under committees. Because it will be comprised largely of DSC members, he leans toward putting it under Bylaw 3 (standing committees and boards, which would become standing committees, boards, and task force). BM recommends task forces, plural, to allow for future development.

BM reminds us that last time there was a question of whether DSC bylaws have the authority to enlist non-DSC members of Structure Committee. EL notes that there need not be a requirement of a forum for a task force. (CA later returns to the question of Structure Comm. members; BM notes that we can at least empower them to be part of the task force, and EL suggests that task force duties overlap with Structure Comm. duties re: program governance.)

EL continues: need and purpose is straightforward - a place to report to - possible nebulous, but some people should be responsible to convene.

The task force would have co-leaders, to dissipate possible repercussions on students. Ideally co-leaders should cover disciplinary clusters.

AM reminds us of a comment from last time that the task force could relieve Executive Committee and reach out beyond Steering. EL responds that the idea is not only to share labor but to spread and increase knowledge, while EC will always be involved in this by nature of their offices. BM suggests that in light of AM's suggestion, we specify leadership as its own section of a proposed bylaw: purpose, membership, leadership. This structure parallels existing standing committees.

AD recommends that members of the task force be ratified at DSCE Plenary, rather than appointed by Steering; BM proposes the compromise that they be ratified (not appointed) by Steering, allowing members to join even after the DSCE meeting in May.

Following discussion, EL motions to approve the following bylaw:

3.7 Governance Task Force

a. Purpose

The Governance Task Force shall review governance documents and policies at the Graduate Center, investigate reported infractions of governance, report to the DSC and the appropriate committees of Graduate Council, and provide mediation, intervention, and advocacy in furthering democracy and democratic processes at the Graduate Center and CUNY.

b. Membership

The members of the Governance Task Force shall consist of the student members of the Graduate Council Committee on Structure, ex-officio, all members of the DSC Executive Committee, ex-officio, and any and all interested members of the DSC, who will be ratified by the DSC Steering Committee. When possible, a diversity of academic clusters and programs should be represented.

c. Leadership

The Governance Task Force shall elect at least two co-leaders from among its members at its first meeting. When possible, at least one co-leader should be a non-member of the DSC Executive Committee.

d. Duties of the Governance Task Force

The duties of the Governance Task Force shall include but not be limited to:

- i. Meeting once each semester to discuss relevant changes, proposals, and issues related to Graduate Center and program level governance; and
- ii. Advocating for increased student representation on all committees throughout the Graduate Center; and

- iii. Investigating, reporting, and resolving infractions of governance reported by students.

CPA seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

- IV. New Business
 - a. Standing Committee to support USS Rep?

Christina Nadler, current USS Rep, had forwarded the following proposal:

3.6. University Student Senate Advisory Committee

a. Purpose

The University Student Senate Advisory Committee shall advise the University Student Senate Delegate on issues of the USS and USS Fees and expenditures.

b. Membership

The voting members of the University Student Senate Advisory Committee shall consist of the USS Delegate ex-officio, and other DSC representatives appointed by the Steering Committee, with no fewer than three and no more than seven members total. The committee shall be chaired by the USS Delegate. Quorum shall consist a majority of the voting members of the committee including the University Student Senate Delegate.

c. Duties of the Student Services Committee

The duties of the University Student Senate Advisory Committee shall include but not be limited to:

- i. Strategizing how to get out of corruption
- ii. Accounting for the use of student activity fee monies.
- iii. Negotiating interaction and involvement in USS policy

3.7. University Faculty Senate Advisory Committee

a. Purpose

The University Faculty Senate Advisory Committee shall advise the DSC and the UFS Liaison on negotiating a permanent voting position at UFS.

b. Membership

The voting members of the University Faculty Senate Advisory Committee shall consist of the University Faculty Senate Liaison, ex-officio, and other DSC representatives appointed by the Steering Committee, with no fewer than three and no more than seven members total. The committee shall be chaired by the University Faculty Senate Liaison. Quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the committee, including the University Faculty Senate Liaison.

c. Duties of the University Faculty Senate Advisory Committee

The duties of the University Faculty Senate Advisory Committee shall include but not be limited to:

- i. assisting the UFS Liaison in advocating for a seat on the UFS
- ii. making recommendations for how to representing DSO interest at UFS

BM notes that the latter of these two proposed bylaws will be tabled indefinitely, as the current UFS Liaison is not interested in pursuing it. The former bylaw would make permanent an existing ad-hoc committee.

Much discussion ensues toward a USS Standing Committee bylaw. Highlights: CPA suggests striking "corruption," because we don't want a perverse incentive to sustain the committee by maintaining corruption to fight. EL suggests accounting for the use of USS student activity fees; CPA notes that this is impossible if they don't keep records. Ultimately, CPA motions to approve the following bylaw:

3.6 University Student Senate Advisory Committee

a. Purpose

The University Student Senate Advisory Committee shall advise the University Student Senate Delegate on issues of the USS and USS Fees and expenditures.

b. Membership

The voting members of the University Student Senate Advisory Committee shall consist of the USS Delegate ex-officio, and other DSC representatives appointed by the Steering Committee, with no fewer than three and no more than seven members total. The committee shall be chaired by the USS Delegate. Quorum shall consist a majority of the voting members of the committee including the University Student Senate Delegate.

c. Duties of the University Student Senate Advisory Committee

The duties of the University Student Senate Advisory Committee shall include but not be limited to:

- i. Developing and implementing strategies to increase transparency and accountability in USS;
- ii. When possible, accounting for the use of USS student activity fee monies;
- iii. Advising the USS Delegate on matters of interaction and involvement in USS; and
- iv. Drafting resolutions, reports, and governance regarding the above for consideration by the USS and, where appropriate, the DSC.

b. Bylaw 3.2 – Grants Committee procedures

Jen Tang, the present Officer for Funding, had emailed proposed changes to the bylaw. BM notes that the website version was not up to date and some changes had already been made.

CPA focuses first on a requested change to start-up grant amounts, from one-fifth to one-third the maximum DSC grant award (currently \$150, moving up to \$250 or \$300). He explains that the type of events suitable to start-up grants tend to need more. He notes that the review process for start-up grants only involves 3 people, so it is sometimes contentious.

BM seems to recall that the bylaw had been recently changed from one-third down to one-fifth, perhaps 2 years ago. He is unable to find evidence for this, however, and rescinds the suggestion.

EL notes that with one-third, the amount granted nears a chartered org's allocation. CA replies that the Grants committee usually receives only 4-5 start-up applications per year; the hope is that an increased award would increase the number of applications.

Discussion shifts to procedure, which JT had hoped to make more transparent. BM recommends splitting the large paragraph toward that end. One important procedural change being discussed is that applications with a score of 1 could undergo expedited approval. EL notes that this procedure eliminates the second part of review of regular applications, which have one vote for approval and a second for the amount; he asks what problem this change would address. CA explains that it addresses applications for events that would happen prior to the next Grant application deadline. EL asks if this may be addressed through better information and counseling. BM suggests changing "expedited approval" to "expedited review."

AM shares information from her program.

EL asks if review could be handled electronically by the whole committee, rather than by the start-up review subset of the committee. BM notes that all review used to be electronic, but it was changed due to low participation.

Discussion of specific language continues. Highlights: the committee may or may not grant expedited review of revisions, and must specify in the minutes conditions for revision; the expedited review subset may or may not grant approval. Ultimately, AM motions to pass the following changes to Bylaw 3.2.c:

3.2. Grants Committee

c. Meetings

The Grants Committee shall convene before the fall semester to determine its meeting dates, ~~the default recipient of Start-Up Grant applications~~, its public notice list, and the maximum award amount for the year, which shall not exceed 5% of the annual budget allocation, except in extraordinary circumstances as described below. **At the same meeting, the Grants Committee shall appoint one member to join the Officer for Funding and the Co-Chair for Business in conducting expedited review.** The Grants Committee shall meet during first weeks of October, November, December, February and April. The Officer for Funding shall send the agenda, draft minutes of the previous meeting, and completed regular applications to all committee members at least seven calendar days before each meeting. Quorum shall consist of one more than half of the voting members of the committee, including the Co-Chair for Business and the Officer for Funding.

CPA seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

EL motions to approve the following change to Bylaw 3.2.f:

3.2. Grants Committee

f. Start-Up Grants

Applications requesting less than or equal to ~~one-fifth~~ **one-third** of the maximum award amount, and having no other sources of funding, shall be eligible for expedited review as follows. Applications bearing the signatures of approval of the Co-Chair for Business, the Officer for Funding, and one other voting member of the Grants Committee as determined in 3.2.c shall authorize the

Co-Chair for Business to disburse funds. In the event that such approval is not obtained, the application may undergo regular review at the request of the principal investigator(s) at the next meeting of the committee, unless the final meeting of the fiscal year has already passed. The Officer for Funding shall report new start-up grant awards at the following meeting of the committee. The total amount of such awards shall not exceed 20% of the annual budget of the Grants Committee.

AM seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

CPA motions to make the following changes to Bylaws 3.2.d and 3.2.e:

3.2. Grants Committee

d. Regular Applications

Applications for grants shall be reviewed on a regular basis with a submission deadline of ~~two weeks~~ **the third Friday of September, October, November, January, and March** before each scheduled meeting and a possibility for revision in the interim as requested by the Officer for Funding. Applications shall include but not be limited to:

- i. the name of the project for which funds are requested;
- ii. the name, affiliation, and contact information of each principal investigator;
- iii. a description of the project, including a statement of how students are involved in organizing and participating in the grant activities; the significant educational, recreational, or professional benefit for students; and an estimate of the number of students involved; and
- iv. a line-item budget specifying all expenditures associated with the grant activities, including expenses, unit costs, quantities, total costs, and funding sources, including external sources, with a clear indication of which items will be paid with DSC funds.

Grant-funded activities may not take place before the first committee meeting at which the application is discussed, with the exception of the October meeting at which any events since July 1 of that year may be considered. No monies shall be spent on alcohol. Requests for awards exceeding the maximum amount may be requested in extraordinary circumstances to be described in the application itself.

e. Review of Regular Applications

Applications received before each deadline shall be discussed at the first scheduled meeting following that deadline-, **as follows:**

- i.** Any member may request additional information from principal investigators present. Motions to award funding shall be divided between the decision to fund and, if approved, the amount of funding. Any voting member may motion to award an application an unspecified amount of funds. If the motion is seconded, the application will be voted upon using a ratings system with three options: reject, which shall have a score of zero points; revise and resubmit, which shall have a score of one point; and approve, which shall have a score of two points. The ratings of the voting members shall be averaged to determine the result, with scores above or equal to one half of one point rounded up to the nearest whole number.
- ii.** During that meeting, no further motions may be made on applications receiving a rounded score of zero ~~or one~~, except to recall or rescind the original vote.
- iii.** **An application receiving a score of one may be considered for expedited review by the Officer for Funding, the Co-Chair for Business, and the voting member of the Grants Committee who reviews Start-up Grants, provided that the Committee grants their authority for expedited review at the time the application is given a score of one, with conditions for approval clearly recorded in the minutes.**
- iv.** Any voting member may motion to allocate an application with a rounded score of two any award amount. The award amount may be approved by a simple majority vote, except cases above the maximum award amount, which may be approved by a two-thirds majority vote.

EL seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

BM suggests we address constitutional changes to USS position, III.3.4. After brief discussion, BM motions to approve the following constitutional change:

III.3.4. University Student Senate Delegate

The duties of the University Student Senate (hereafter, "USS") Delegate shall include but not be limited to:

- a. representing the interests of the DSO at USS meetings; ~~and~~
- b. reporting to the DSC relevant activities of USS; and
- c. chairing the University Student Senate Advisory Committee.

CPA seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

CPA motions to make the following change to III.3.5 of the Constitution:

III.3.5. University Faculty Senate Liaison

The duties of the University Faculty Senate (hereafter, "UFS") Liaison shall include but not be limited to:

- a. attempting to express the interests of the DSO at UFS meetings and, if he or she is a UFS Senator, representing the interests of the DSO at UFS meetings insofar as they do not conflict with the interests of his or her constituency; and
- b. reporting to the DSC relevant activities of UFS; ~~and~~
- c. ~~servicing as the USS Alternate in the event that the USS Delegate cannot attend any meeting, including meetings of USS and Graduate Council.~~

AM seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

- III. Old Business
 - b. Clarification, perhaps through bylaws, to Constitution V.3 and III.2.3 – seat “death” and replacements due to vacancy – together with Bylaw 7.1: Academic Appeals Officers

BM tables this item until next meeting.

- V. Announcements
No announcements.
- VI. Adjournment
EL motions to adjourn. CPA seconds. The motion passes unanimously and the meeting closes at 12:49pm.