

Grand Valley State University Student Senate

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Thursday, October 26th, 2023

Kirkhof 2263, 4:30pm

Chair: Quinten Proctor

Parliamentarian: Magdalyn Hallead



Minutes

1. **Call To Order**

- a. Roll Call - Part 1

2. **Public Forum**

3. **Workshop**

- a. Representation

- i. Proctor: We are going to tackle the “Representation” Broad Bucket. We want input on how to go forward, refining ideas, and bringing them to the cabinet to work on. Then you all may be able to be part of cabinet meetings for the first few minutes.
- ii. Hallead: After the 2-on-1s, you are all saying GA is too long, so if we do it this way, we will end earlier and the cabinet will start earlier.
- iii. Proctor: What are your thoughts? Last week, when we asked: “What do we want these branches to look like?”, there were a lot of “I don't know”s. So, instead of doing ideas in GA, we will do it ahead of time in the weekly email or at the beginning of cabinet. The idea of the senate representing different colleges, what we were thinking, maybe having proportional representation of each college. What do we think of this idea?
- iv. Johnson IV: I like the idea of representation that way, but I feel we might want to lean in on what the requirements are for a normal student if this is an added requirement.
- v. Hazari: I think we are being too picky about who is on senate and who is deciding. Sometimes you might be sacrificing their level of interest and you might not know if they will be a good senator. You might lose someone who could be a better senator.
- vi. Proctor: There will still be plenty of at-large seats but another set amount of specified seats.
- vii. Martell: An issue may be: “What if they were to change their major?” What would we do and would they lose their position?
- viii. Proctor: That is a very good point. We will have to discuss that further.
- ix. DeVries: How do we make people run for these positions?
- x. Proctor: We can't make people run, they would have to decide themselves, just like our current model.
- xi. Proctor: The future cabinet will also be looking for diverse majors, the idea stemmed from the disproportion of major in previous years.

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- xii. Bartlett: I do agree with everything that has been said. A better thing would be having better training and more inclusion and who we are bringing in senators and it just feels like a lot right now.
- xiii. Bennett: I agree with the major topic. I changed my major myself.
- xiv. Rienas: I support the representation idea. I am an engineering major and I might be the only one on the body. I have had different experiences than many other majors and it's important to have senators who have different experiences.
- xv. Proctor: If we do this we would have to promote more to the other campuses as well.
- xvi. Stang: From a marketing standpoint, reach out to professors at specific colleges more than looking to fill specific seats.
- xvii. Hazari: We have a very diverse group, we can't control who is interested and putting these restrictions is not good.
- xviii. Proctor: We have been very lucky to have a diverse group of applicants, as it hasn't been this way in the past. This would ensure major representation.
- xix. Guzman: When we have a body of 50 students at-large, that does not happen often. I would suggest that you all look at other university student government models. More schools use college representatives and if we were to go towards that route, the faculty are the key to advertising this. They want their seats to be filled and their college to be represented.
- xx. Proctor: When you are talking about student engagement, this will get more attention from all different groups of people.
- xxi. Bates: I don't think it's a bad idea, but the goal is to eventually be up to 50 and breaking it up with the colleges is more of a goal rather than a restriction. If we have some colleges that have more representation than others, oh well.
- xxii. Johnson IV: The idea of what we are doing is about the type of accessibility by campus. We can always be flexible with a more diverse body and we would love and appreciate it if they would talk on behalf of their college.
- xxiii. Bashore: I feel like we need to advertise to the student body. When I originally applied, I didn't know a lot, and it would be useful. If we are going to fill these spots, we really have to have people know who we are and right now I feel like we are just people who need room to grow.
- xxiv. TerHorst: What would we do if someone had two majors?

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- xxv. Guzman: It would be based on what your primary major is in banner.
- xxvi. Rienas: We currently reserve spots for freshmen, this isn't a new idea since we diversify by grade.
- xxvii. Hazari: I think at that point, it's not restricting. The issue is that if we don't fill, it's an empty seat for someone who was a Political Science major that could do well in the senate.
- xxviii. Hallead: In a case where we lose one of those seats, then we would open appointments and we would elect someone or make it an at-large seat. I really can't find a school who doesn't have representation like this when I compare government structures. I think we would be taking a step in the right direction, why start by ground zero when we could start with a leg up.
- xxix. Stang: The professors and faculty would be looking for that spot to be filled so it would not be an issue. They want their colleges to be represented.
- xxx. Burns: If we offer it to more specific areas, more people may want to be more involved since it's not just for Political Science majors.
- xxxi. DeVries: What about minors or honor college?
- xxxii. Proctor: Minors would not count. It would just be for your primary major. We haven't discussed Honors College.
- xxxiii. Terhorst: Divide by student population of the colleges.
- xxxiv. Hallead: We were thinking about doing this proportionally.
- xxxv. Martinez: If a seat becomes an at-large seat that was previously a specific seat, would this be an at-large seat the next year?
- xxxvi. Proctor: It would reset to a reserved seat.
- xxxvii. Bashore: If one college is bigger than the other, it might be an issue.
- xxxviii. Proctor: We can still advertise at colleges to get more.
- xxxix. Martinez: I like these ideas and college populations that change this year. We can vote how many seats they want.
- xl. Guzman: There are schools who have only one seat per college.
- xli. Bartlett: Would they be part of our senate and our committees?
- xlii. Hallead: We will be deciding this, since we are restarting our committee process when we do "Division of Labor".
- xliii. Proctor: I would say we would still get them to represent but we would divide this.

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- xliv. Hallead: Clarification, an at-large seat is what you all are currently.
- xlv. Rienas: The elected school major seats could be a surplus but if they don't get filled then they don't matter. If we can get representatives then we don't have to restrict that.
- xlvi. Proctor: I would like to start to wrap up this conversation.
- xlvii. Johnson IV: The university professors are the partners rather than students. It highlights those voices from those schools.
- xlviii. Johnson IV: I think transfer students could be highlighted as well.
- xliv. Quist: I think it would be very great to have affinity groups, if I had someone who is there for housing, it would make less work for Vice Presidents.
 - I. Bashore: Would the honors college be included?
 - ii. Johnson IV: We need to understand international students and changing our structure could cause confusion.
 - lii. Proctor: Try and ignore the committee aspect, until we will get into "Division of Labor".
 - liii. Bashore: This is a lot for us to manage and support each other. We need a strong structure before we dive into this.
 - liv. Quist: We could have an issue with a senator who only is interested in their affinity groups and that may go against our values.
 - lv. Lawson: If we have a spot for international students, we would have to open a spot for so many more people.
 - lvi. Devries: We have a lot of international students, how do we choose what country represents them?
 - lvii. Hazari: We are keeping a lot of reserved seats. Also, I wanna say that we have a lot of people but I don't want to have too many people.
 - lviii. Proctor: If we did colleges, it would be proportional but for affinity groups it would be one person.
 - lix. Rienas: To piggyback off of VP Hazari, could this be a reserved seat or could it just be heavily encouraged.
 - lx. Johnson IV: What we are defending is supporting the regular student, when was the last time we had an athlete? If we open up the body, we have these things. But if they contribute the same amount, that's more important.
 - lxi. DeVries: The honors college isn't a major.
 - lxii. Proctor: So maybe just one seat since they represent a lot of majors?

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- lxiii. Stang: Would the honors college seat double dip if they also represent their college?
- lxiv. James: While we are talking about the honors college, we have a lot of these international students. A representative from the International Student Council would be a great option to have on the senate. One thing is working together with Padnos International.
- lxv. Bates: The honors college has their own student council and I don't think they should be an affinity group at all.
- lxvi. Guzman: As we are talking about voting seats and that there is fairness in the point is elevating voices and there are other ways rather than just holding seats for specific affinity groups.
- lxvii. Proctor: We are moving onto elections, do we want to have the President voted by all students? We would trust who is running is actually qualified, do we think this is a good idea?
- lxviii. Hazari: This is a good idea, I think we have done a good job deciding who is fit. If they pick their senators then they still have an input so far, in general we have picked someone who has done the job. I don't think the result would be any different.
- lxix. Hallead: Something we have come up with: to get on the ballot, you would have to have served in the senate for 15 academic weeks in a cabinet position so they would have to pick from already qualified candidates.
- lxx. Lawson: Can the Student Senate body vote who is on the ballot and the students vote who wins?
- lxxi. Hallead: I think that if this is an issue, there will be interest since it's going to become an easier job through our restructuring process.
- lxxii. Johnson IV: The election goes however well we engage with the campus. I like what Lawson said where senators decide who is on the ballot and who is ideal for this position. It is a popularity contest, there should be an electoral college who would make this more structured.
- lxxiii. Bates: I think that the issue here is that this will turn it into a popularity contest. It needs to start as how they will represent you in these ways. Homecoming Royalty has a great process. Half of the score goes by interview and half is by votes. Something that is hybrid.
- lxxiv. Hallead: My only concern is who would be interviewing? What's to say that we wouldn't make it a popularity contest.

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- lxxv. Proctor: No matter how we do it, it will be in some way a popularity contest.
- lxxvi. Bashore: What if we have faculty help decide?
- lxxvii. Proctor: It is the STUDENT Senate, so we would want students to decide.
- lxxviii. Guzman: We want a more sophisticated way to have someone decide. We can have everyone do a video or have a resume and let students make more of an informed decision.
- lxxix. Proctor: Last topic, we will keep this brief. If anyone has a strong opposition to saving spots for freshmen in the fall?

4. Adjournment

- a. Roll Call - Part 2
- b. Call for Announcements
 - i. Hazari: Bonding is in the Senate Office, also please log your hours. I am getting worried. They are due tomorrow!
 - ii. Proctor: Your stipend is tied to this!
 - iii. Hallead: My meeting with Philomena Mantella today, we just got her to know more about our process. We are going to do a promotional video with her about elections and State of the Student Body. She is really onboard about what we are doing. Also fill out my form I sent out in the slack.
 - iv. Proctor: First off, I would like to know who is graduating, two senators okay. UAS is meeting virtually tomorrow, anyone is welcome to come to the student senate office at 3 pm tomorrow online. You wouldn't have to stay the whole time.
 - v. Quist: If you are interested in running for CAC VP let me know sooner than later.
 - vi. Proctor: You all have been waiting for me to say you are all almost Out of the Woods.
- c. Senate adjourns at 5:40PM