

Date: 10 Sept 2015

Time: 21.00PM-22.00PM

Venue: Kewalram Chanrai Room

Note-Taker: Dave

Presiding Officer: Tee

Attendance: Dave, Tee, Adila, Anandita, Avery, Qi Siang, Swarnima, Tamara, Jay, Sara, Subhas

Absent: Isabel (with apologies), Fatima, Matthew

Agenda:

Feedback mechanism (10 minutes including discussion)

Publicity and student participation strategy (10 minutes including discussion)

Student Government members to provide view on the Constitution (5 minutes)

Discussion on the Constitution; decision on process used for review (25 minutes)

Suggested amendment: RCAC elections (5 minutes)

AOB (5 minutes)

Summary:

Agenda	Discussion Points	Action
Feedback mechanism	<p>Overview</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Swarnima: Good idea to have informal channels, but we also have a master form. This will have five options<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Addition</li><li>b. Amendments</li><li>c. Deletion</li><li>d. General Suggestions</li><li>e. Strike-all</li></ol></li><li>2. Jay: I suggest changing “Strike-all” to “create entirely new constitution.”</li><li>3. Adila: When students come up to you in person you should try and refer them to the feedback form</li></ol>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Tee: What do you think about adding some pointers on what to include? For example a suggested title and requesting specific actions. We should also add a statement that says that the committee can try to redraft a clause in its spirit, if the specifics are unclear.</li> <li>5. Qi Siang: Could change it to “suggestion/amendment”</li> </ol>	
Publicity and student participation strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tamara: In order to not bombard people, we are suggesting a poster in the lift and weekly facebook posts, after every meeting. Only advertise with more posters for specific events, otherwise people may get sick of hearing about it.</li> <li>2. Tee: I would suggest having a page on the Student Government website.</li> <li>3. Tamara: We could then post this link into any posts.</li> </ol>	<b>Dave</b> to create website page on student gov website for constitution review
Student Government members to provide view on the Constitution	<p>Brief history</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Controversy resulted in two committees being set up and disbanded, but now we finally have a constitution.</li> </ol> <p>Discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tee: One area of contradiction could be student organisation</li> <li>2. Jay: I am here to say what is wrong with things. There are three levels that the committee can look at: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Principles</li> <li>b. Implementation</li> <li>c. Consistency and Form</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Jay: It is perfectly legitimate to attack the constitution on any of these grounds and I’ll go through them <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Principles <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Should the student government play its current role? (transcend class, oversight etc.)</li> <li>ii. Should it play a broader role?</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. The broad wording of the constitution suggests the government has more powers than it realistically wields.</li> <li>iv. Mandate could be too broad, or too shallow.</li> <li>v. There are some other bigger principled issues (do we need a student government etc.) but those are too big</li> <li>vi. Student government decisions should be overturnable by the student body</li> <li>b. Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. No hierarchy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Objection: egalitarian doesn't allow for efficiency</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. Relying on 2 main factors for choosing people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Should we be looking at different groups?</li> <li>2. Should we do away with representation?</li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Constituencies for election but no constituency specific duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Objection applies equally to election</li> <li>2. Why do we elect on these constituencies</li> <li>3. Could be less, could be more</li> </ul> </li> <li>iv. Small (11 members) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Small may hamper efficiency by being too big</li> <li>2. Small may be too few, may lead to overworking</li> <li>3. Jay declares conflict that he thinks the government is too small</li> </ul> </li> <li>v. Student Government is given the ability to run itself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the government need formalised rules?</li> <li>2. The current constitution has a slight middle ground</li> </ul> </li> <li>vi. Direct Democracy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In its implementation, some have argued that there was no mandate for this, others have said there was a mandate for a neutered version of it.</li> <li>2. We need to discuss how we would implement this</li> <li>c. Consistency and Form       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Class structure           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do we elect people next year?</li> <li>2. Contradictions               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Student Government has fixed some of these</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Current system not specify smaller things like study abroad, mental illness etc.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Past amendments           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Many amendments on different subjects. From definitions to large structural changes.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
<p>Discussion on the Constitution</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tee: let's go down article by article and see there are any suggestions</li> <li>2. Anandita: The constitution should have a preamble       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Qi Siang: We could use this preamble to outline values of the student government</li> <li>b. Jay Objection: preamble may mean that the student government will assign values to the student government, when it could be more of a legal document</li> <li>c. Tee: worth noting that we may end up producing an honour code</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

d. Dave: worth noting that this conversation will be held separately and is still early days, so it is perhaps worth holding off on that till there is more clarity on the issue

3. Tee: No article of definitions

4. Motion to extend meeting to 10:40. Seconded and sustained.

5. Subhas: What do we do about conflicts of interests that last beyond one year. Conflict, he is planning to run in senior year.

a. Tee: we have checks and balances from petitions and voting etc. but it seemed unreasonable to do a lifetime ban on running for the committee.

6. Motion to extend meeting to 11:00. Seconded and sustained.

7. Tee: we should consider striking-all the constitution, as that would drastically affect the process. We can still use the the current one as reference.

8. Jay: If you don't vote to strike-all then you will have to vote on each amendment. You may also have to amend it in the accordance with the values of the constitution

9. Qi Siang: Should we postpone it? -Not seconded

10. Jay: this revolves around how we view this process

a. Argument in favour: we should reevaluate the structure of the government from the ground up, from a fundamental level

b. Argument against: this constitution was ratified with heavy student support, so we need to preserve the spirit of the constitution

	<p>11. Avery: everytime we came across an entire section of the structure we had large issues, and there are few things more basic than this. Subhas and Swarnima seconds this.</p> <p>12. Swarnima: the student government needs to reevaluate its role now</p> <p>13. Qi Siang: is ok with either approach. There should be some balance to ensure we don't deviate too much</p> <p>14. Subhas: a lot of people may have ratified the constitution blindly, so we should worry about writing the best constitution as we can, not necessarily on some of the specifics</p> <p>15. Tamara: we also need to think about this in a long-term perspective. Last time, we thought very short-term, didn't think about RCs</p> <p>16. Tee: adequate discussion</p> <p>17. Jay moves; seconded. Motion: <u>I move to strike the entirety of the constitution and replace it with a constitution drafted by this committee, which will draw upon the current constitution when and if necessary.</u></p> <p>18. Qi Siang moves to vote for the above by acclamation; seconded, and passed. <b>Motion passed unanimously</b>, with default abstention by the Devil's Advocate. Constitution is scrapped.</p>	
Process for review	<p>1. Tee: motion to postpone to this to the next meeting.</p> <p>2. Motion is seconded and sustained</p>	

Agenda for our next meeting:

- Process for Review
- Suggested amendment: RCAC elections (5 minutes)
- AOB (5 minutes)

Reminders/ Updates