SGA Minutes: 4/10/2016

I. Attendance

Members Present: Senator Gogineni, Senator Raber, Senator Toy, Senator Sohn, Senator Boyle, Senator Rainey, Senator Parikh, Proxy Edwards (Connor McCormick), Senator Bhakta, Proxy Singh (Stephanie Andrews), Senator Aaron, Proxy Grandas (Kyle Wright), Co-Chair Chang

Members Absent: Senator Chen

II. Acceptance of Minutes

Senator Gogineni: Motion to accept last week’s minutes?

Senator Gogineni: I have some motions to change from Senator Chen. Oratory Coach – (see changes in last week’s minutes)

Under Course Scheduling – it doesn’t give professors an option
Under community council bill – change to “tricky to require attendance – any senator who plays a club sport will not be available at 4:15 meeting time”.

Senator Gogineni: Any other amendments?

Senator Toy: On Page 6 – can we change the wording to have the sentence make more sense.

Senator Sohn: Change the section that says “There have been individual…”

Co-chair Chang: It says Proxy Chang but I was at the meeting.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of accepting those amendments? Everyone. Those changes have been made.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of accepting last week’s minutes? Everyone.

Senator Gogineni: They have been passed. Moving onto announcements.

III. Announcements

President Gratch: My first announcement – the projector isn’t working – when we’re talking about bills let’s use computers. I will send the Proxys the bills so you can participate fully. Other announcements: May 1st there is going to be a workshop led by the PosseFoundation for student leaders regarding cultural competency and inclusion. We are going to require that all the new SGA leaders attend and I think it would behoove the organization and us as individuals if we all went too. There will be more info coming. We
will also do a debrief probably for dinner that night so mark that date for now. Other announcements, Zak has an announcement.

Zak Fisher: Yes, we’re in the midst of election season. We are going to have an election a week after tomorrow: April 18-19th. Tell everyone you know to vote as I’m sure you’re all aware that the Constitution makes it so that you cannot send out emails to your lists starting tomorrow at noon until voting is over. If you want to send out an email you need to clear it by me and Lily Wilson. It’s a little complicated because Lily is running for Junior Senator, so if your email involves that race then send that to me and President Gratch. Again that’s starting tomorrow at noon - one week before voting starts. Cool thanks.

President Gratch: If anyone is interested in Wonnacott commons you should run for Wonnacott Senator because no one is. Or if you have friends in Wonnacott commons. None of the commons races are contested, actually one is. Are you both running for commons council?

Proxy Andrews and Proxy McCormick: Yes.

Senator Senator Boyle: Are those the only uncontested races?

Zak Fisher: The deadline hasn’t passed yet so we’re not sure. The deadline is on Wednesday.

President Gratch: Also we need someone to run for Junior Senator who will be here in the fall. If you know of any Sophomores who will be here, please reach out. The debate will likely be this coming Thursday but more information to come. That’s it in terms of announcements.

Senator Gogineni: There is a master plan committee update.

Chief of Staff Spector: No, we’re moving that to next week.

Proxy McCormick: Senator Edwards sent out a survey to Cook commons first years/Febs to connect with sophomores to explore housing options. She wanted me to mention that other commons can do the same. If you’re a sophomore your room would be available for freshman to see before making housing decisions.

Senator Bhakta: I don’t know what the proper protocol is for this but I’m going to go ahead and resign right now. Not to make it weird but thank you.

President Gratch: Ok, thank you.

Senator Gogineni: Resigning forever?

President Gratch: I think so.
IV. Old Business

Senator Gogineni: Ok, that being said let’s move on to old business. Just a reminder we have the SGA Restructure Bill and the Course Restriction bill and need to vote on both of them tonight. Let’s start with the Course Restriction bill. I won’t be here next week. Because the projector isn’t working I just emailed you guys a new resolution to the bill. I met with the Dean of Curriculum, Suzanne Gurland, on Friday and we talked about how this bill would be received by the administration. Her impression was that using words like “requiring” to write course listings first of all wouldn’t happen. There’s only one thing she can think of that they’ve required professors to do which was sexual harassment training. She provided ideas where we can motivate and encourage professors to do something but shouldn’t require them to do something. We could still use those words if we want to but they might not be received well. I wrote up a different resolution with things that would be feasible and will clear a lot of reservations about how it will be received. It’s something along the lines of that the administration adopt the new way of course listings but not require that professors use them. And to have the administration strongly encourage professor to keep listings up to date and personalize them. The professor would have a place to add details about their own section. One person in the administration will send the date of course catalog changes to the Student EAC who can send it out to students and ask students to tell professors if they think their course descriptions are up to date. The goal is to have a student initiative encouraging professors to change course descriptions. Those are the changes. I would love to hear feedback from you all.

Senator Raber: When you said professors have never been required – do you mean that the SGA has never required them to do something?

Senator Gogineni: Not necessarily. Any trainings that they have had to do – things that have had to do with their curriculum. Essentially course descriptions aren’t changed unless they’re required to be changed.

Senator Raber: We should listen to the advice given to you but I think it’s crazy that we can’t tell them that it has to be required. I feel like professors are just as reasonable as the next person and I think that because the problem would be what if they just don’t do this.

President Gratch: I like the changes – I’m totally in favor of the bill as it stands. Something I have learned – it’s silly that we can’t require it but I think it’s just a pragmatic way of going about it that will give the bill a stronger chance of succeeding.

Senator Toy: I like the bill. If you think about the AAL reform and how long that took. All the faculty needed to agree to get anything passed. I would make a friendly amendment to change the first sentence to “that they adopt a system”.

Senator Gogineni: To respond to that I agree we should be able to use words like “require” but what sold me was that us using words like “require” wouldn’t really make a
change and would make them resentful and make them want to do it even less than they
do already. I don’t want to have this bill not pass because people say professors won’t do it.

Senator Sohn: Motion to vote.

Senator Toy: Seconded.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of voting: (everyone). Ok we’re voting on it.

All those in favor of the bill: Everyone (Senator Gogineni, Senator Raber, Senator
Toy, Senator Sohn, Senator Boyle, Senator Rainey, Senator Parikh, Proxy Edwards, Senator Bhakta, Proxy Singh, Senator Aaron, Proxy Grandas,
Co-Chair Chang)
All those opposed: 0 votes

All those abstaining: 0 votes
The bill has passed, great thank you!

Moving on to the SGA Restructure bill.

President Gratch: Does everyone have a copy of it up? I’m debating whether I should
draw a diagram on the board about it. Do people feel like they understand the structure?
(Diagram on Board) Divided into “Now” and “Future”: Now: President, Chief of Staff,
SCOC. Underneath that Senators and Cabinet. Future: President – Vice President, SCOC.
Underneath that Senate made up of Commons Representatives, Class Presidents and
Executive board.

President Gratch: What this is suggesting is that we collapse the divide that exists
between the Senate and Cabinet into one unit being the Student Senate. Within Senate
there are three primary groups – Commons reps (one per commons), class presidents
(take away the 2 senators/class and replace with 1 class president), and then the executive
board (basically the cabinet – elected by the entire student body). The treasurer, for
example, would be elected by the student body. A few would be presidential staff that
would be appointed by the president – those require specific skill sets like Director of
Technology. I’m changing the Chief of Staff to Director of Operations which would be
appointed by the President. What the current Chief of Staff does is replaced by Vice
President. I’m flexible on that point. But my idea is to have it elected with the President
like running on a joint ticket – you would run together. That’s the barebones structure.
Do people have questions? I can go into my rationale but this is a working document and
if there are changes I’m more than open to discussing them. I need multiple perspectives.
I will start by saying my rationale and then opening it up to other ideas unless
you’re completely opposed in which case I’d love to hear why now. Ok, main rationale
behind the bill. 1. Communication – one of my goals was increasing
communication between the Cabinet and Senate and increasing the frequency of when
Cabinet meets. The second goal was reached: we meet every-other week. It is extremely
hard to communicate what’s being worked on between cabinet and senate. If everyone in the SGA doesn’t know what the SGA is working on how can the student body know? Maybe that’s not essential but it seems like an essential point to me. 2. Accountability – I feel incredibly accountable to the student body. I was voted for and I feel accountable and part of that is that I was elected by the entire student body. Changing the Cabinet from appointed positions to elected positions will make them more accountable. I think with Senators there is a problem with accountability as well becausethere are 2 – one sophomore senator can not do something and let the other one send out emails for example. What both communication and accountability will do is will make SGA more efficient and effective. There are other pros and cons but I will leave it at that.

Senator Rainey: I want to say thank you for bringing the bill to the Senate. I have a few reservations – calling it class senators to class president – I think that confuses the student body especially during elections. Two: I think that I like the aspect of having two class senators. I have appreciated working with Senator Parikh side-by-side. We have strengths and weaknesses and we balance each other out. Whether that’s putting out ideas etc. the collaboration between us has been key to the bills I have brought here and the ideas Senator Parikh has brought to the First Year Committee. I’m not completely sold because I see the accountability factor. I would like to see more connection with SCOC especially seeing how some bills have gone through like the energy drinks etc. that we did not know about. I don’t see how we’re keeping the senate whose responsible for communicating to the student body while SCOC is not officially part of SGA.

Senator Gogineni: I like the idea of the bill, I like the philosophy. My reservation is the number of people in one meeting at a time. I love the commons Senators but I don’t really see a need for that. We have reps from each class and I think that is enough since the commons system is a system that only really serves freshman and sophomores. So I would propose we get rid of commons Senators and there would be fewer people in the room.

President Gratch: I just want to make clear that this would be voted on to go into effect in the next election. I’ve thought about that and decided to leave it in the bill but I’m open to that.

Senator Aaron: Thank you for the bill. I want to voice my support especially with the part of having two Senators. Senator Grandas and I couldn’t work better together but sometimes I don’t know if people are going to him etc. The same divide that we have with community council is essentially what we have between us – sometimes I don’t know if I can send an email right now or if I need to run it by him. It doesn’t make sense to me to have two Senators.

Senator Sohn: Thank you again, this is a huge bill. One is a friendly amendment to section B subpart 1 sub D: the eligibility of voters but it talks about them running so I think some of the words need to be changed. It’s on page 8. And regarding that I was wondering do students who won’t be herein the fall semester still be able to vote for a fall junior senator?
President Gratch: Yes.

Senator Sohn: For commons representatives the signatures went down to 25 and those for class president rose. I was wondering why that difference exists between commons reps and class presidents?

President Gratch: Right now it’s 25 for both. I don’t feel strongly about this. I was thinking that since the representation is channeled from two senators to one, the number of people that Senator represents is double. That’s why I justified doubling the number of signatures - because you are representing more people but we can move it to 25.

Senator Sohn: I was actually wondering if the commons could be brought to 50. In terms of the voting pool it’s pretty much the same and I think that lowering it for commons reps would hinder candidates from going forward.

Co-Chair Chang: I totally get the rationale behind making it proportional to the size of the student body but I think it sends a message as to who is more important. I think if exec. reps are in the same space and can all be senators I think they should be the same. I also don’t know if getting signatures is the most important stage in running. So I think exec. rep boards could also be 50.

President Gratch: The only reason I’m hesitant of moving 25 to 50 is that it would discourage people from running. Can we take a straw poll?

Senator Gogineni: All in favor of 25 signatures across the board? 2 votes
All those in favor of 50 signatures? 5 votes
All those in favor of how it stands? 4 votes
So I guess 50 for all positions takes the largest number of votes.

Senator Sohn: We can come back to it.

Senator Boyle: So I think it’s a great bill but my only problem is confusing voters. The section where it talks about the cabinet people being elected - I can imagine that people have complete knowledge of the positions. I could also see for the voter you would have all of these positions to vote for and, if anyone has elected for their town’s election, you just checked off a box because it’s your party etc. You make these weird judgments in that moment so I think that it could be a problem. That being said people could have really clear platforms and students could know what they want to vote for but I could see it becoming a popularity thing.

Senator Parikh: For the most part it’s a great idea. Two issues I completely agree with Senator Rainey: I think for us who care about SGA it’s easy to make that distinction. They’ll say president when the mean senator etc. The second thing is for the most part it makes sense to have one class senator but I think that the exec. board is all
sophomore, junior, and seniors and now there’s only one first year in the senate. So maybe for first years we should have two class presidents?

Senator Raber: Just to respond to that. I think the freshman point is really important. I think the presidents name is a good change. My biggest issue is what Senator Gogineni talked about with numbers: Right now we’re at 13 and it would bring it up to 22. That’s a pretty big jump and having a discussion that would include as many voices as possible might become problematic. You could have one rep for all commons and I know that the commons need to go to intercommons council that could merge. The other comment was about the treasurer being an elected position and what does the FC think about this. I might be wrong but the head of FC is now the treasurer of SGA right? Does it say here that a prerequisite to be the treasurer is to be on the Finance Committee?

President Gratch: There is a prerequisite in the bill that the treasurer needs one experience of FC work. And my assumption is that the treasurer would continue to be the head of the FC. They can internally decide to be the FC head as well. The other things that were said: interms of the name I’m sticking with class presidents because for me that’s part of the accountability issue. If you’re the sophomore class president, I think I’m going to feel more accountability with the title President than with the title Senator. That’s part of it, perhaps it’s confusing but it’s what a lot of other schools do. I think people will get the hang of it – and is not a reason not to pursue this bill. I think it’s a really good point about first years. What do people think about briefly having two first year senators?

Senator Toy: I like the idea especially because of representation and the first year committee is a big job to have by yourself especially coming in. Definitely two first year senators.

Senator Boyle: Hypothetically the Feb senator could be a first year senator?

President Gratch: Yes.

Senator Gogineni: Does that change your decision?

President Gratch: I think there’s a weird thing from a representational stand point – then it would have to be two senators for each class.

Senator Parikh: It would suck to be the only first year and it would be really disproportionate. Because the e-board is still all upperclassman. Sopropotionally having two senators for each class would still be weird.

Co-Chair Chang: I think two freshman senators would be great. Coming in they would be more confident. I think power dynamics – they’re not going to overpower all the other people at the table. I also have a friendly amendment – can we change SOCOC to CC? People don’t know what it stands for and CC is really easy to remember.
President Gratch: Yea I don’t see why not. Adding a clause that all mentions of SCOC will be repealed and replaced with CC.

Doug Adams: You need to run that through CC. There’s another step you need to take but I don’t think there will be an issue.

President Gratch: Can we take a straw poll on the freshman senator issue?

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of two first year senators and the rest one senator? 10 votes
All those in favor of two of all years: 1 vote
All those in favor of how it stands now: 1 vote

President Gratch: So it’s a friendly amendment.

Senator Rainey: Straw poll on changing name of class president to class senator?
Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of Senators staying: 5 votes
All those in favor of Senators being called Class Presidents: 7 votes
All those abstaining: 1 vote

Senator Gogineni: Ok so it remains as class presidents.

Senator Toy: I don’t like class presidents. It doesn’t sound right. I also think that we should either get rid of commons reps or make class and commons both reps and senators because the way it’s worked now there is a huge power dynamic—president and COS and everyone essentially equal. With this bill it would be exec board, President and SCOC and then everyone else. That’s an issue I have overall. I think it would be nice to keep class and commons equal or get rid of commons. Representatives would be a better word than senator but I’m not too particular about that. I just don’t like class presidents.

Senator Rainey: I would like to second that. I have one point: I’d like to keep one representative to limit the numbers of speakers. We could have one voice for the commons representative but also mandate that that position have a committee that represents an appointed group of all commons members. Especially if it’s a sophomore to have representation of all 5 commons when they’re tied to housing in one. Maybe we could have that member appoint a representative from each commons?

President Gratch: I mean that would be the Intercommons Council.

Doug Adams: A point for this. There are no sitting commons representatives just proxies right now. Before eliminating them I think they need to be in the room.

Proxy Andrews: I think it would be difficult because of how ICC works. It doesn’t have the best attendance and it’s difficult to know what is going on in the SGA. Senator Singh as the commons senator goes to individual commons meetings and you can’t do that with one person.
Senator Raber: About the power dynamics between the exec. board and class presidents. Could you explain that more? I felt the opposite.

Senator Toy: The way I look at it being a representative of the entire school you have more say because you are representing more people. There are only two people here who represent the whole school. The way the signatures are set up and the duties of them make them seem like they are more important than class reps etc. I’m worried about a president working with the exec board. Because is the exec. board accountable to the president? The way that this is working I’m nervous – this is a lot to vote on tonight and I think it would damage the efficiency of the Senate. The way things are set up bothers me.

Senator Raber: So although I understand they would be reps of the whole school it’s not an us versus them. They’re not all running on one ticket. I think that maybe this is because we don’t have that now. Just because we all have one vote I don’t think there would be an issue of a power dynamic. The president has just as much say as we do.

Senator Parikh: In terms of the Co-Chair to CC change: I think it might be a little confusing when people are voting – maybe we can use SCC or just Co-chair?

Co-Chair Chang: I choose Co-Chair. My first thing is that on page two, part D where it says CC members are appointed annually: they are appointed annually but there are some appointed during J-term and spring and there is no ratification process. So maybe switching the language a little bit is necessary. Then on page 3 where it talks about who fills the CC position: right now it says if I were to resign the Vice president would replace me. I think it would be best for the CC to decide internally and they could decide for themselves who they would want to be the new Co-Chair.

President Gratch: I agree. Can we verify what language should be used?

Chang: CC members are appointed – it doesn’t really matter when they are appointed. They are appointed.

Doug Adams: I think there has been some confusion this year. The way it’s supposed to work is the SGA puts out the request for students to apply and the Co-chair has the final say but the process is supposed to run through the SGA and the ratification occurs through the SGA. So that the SGA comes back to it. So it should either be done that way or the constitution should be changed to a different way.

Co-Chair Chang: I think in terms of ratification. If the Co-chair has ultimate say and senate chooses not to ratify there’s this clash of power.

Doug Adams: So the Co-chair has the ability to select candidates and the Senate has the ability to appoint. If it’s rejected, then we would go back and submit another name. I’ve never seen it happen but that’s how it would theoretically work.
Co-Chair Chang: I don’t think we’ve ratified CC members.

President Gratch: We did last year.

Senator Sohn: Straw poll?

President Gratch: Do you think the way you did it this year worked?

Co-Chair Chang: Then you would know the names of everyone. I’m wondering why it didn’t happen this year. If it’s too big a step. It’s not a big thing to me.

Senator Toy: The names should go through the SGA.

President Gratch: Let’s leave it and if we change our minds we can. I want to change what you said about the vice president. What do you want that wording to be?

Co-Chair Chang: “In the event that CC cannot continue vice president will assume” replace with “CC will select a student member to replace SCOC”. I think leaving it open – Katie would be uncomfortable choosing one student.

President Gratch: Ok, it’s in.

Senator Boyle: Question: so the voting body, would the exec. board be there?
President Gratch: Yes, they are.

Senator Boyle: So they’re specialists in treasury or academic affairs but are also able to vote on what senators are voting on? If we’re going for a larger more general body wouldn’t we just want more people representing the bill. It’s weird having two people represent the same thing but it’s hard for one senator to get in tune with 600 people. I think its important to keep.

President Gratch: The reason for why I disagree is that I’m not thinking about the Midd SGA as a real government entity. But I get the weirdness with the specialization voting for general matters but to me the current system isn’t really working. It’s not failing but I think it’s really tricky for everything we would want to have happen to happen. It goes back to communication. Having all the people in oneroom making all the decision together feels more natural for such a small community. I don’t feel weird because I’m picturing the current cabinet – they’re juststudents too. They may have special interests but we do too. Also I want to reiterate that voting on this doesn’t make it happen. It lets the student body decide if they want this restructure. I like that we’re going through and fixing things but I want to underscore that if this does get approved by us – then the studentscan make that choice.

Senator Gogineni: In terms of what Senator Toy said: I felt like the director is such an arbitrary positon – I didn’t think of them as having more powerthanthe class presidents. I’m ok with commons reps but the directors being voted on by the entire student body – I
feel the same way about Director of Communications, Athletic Affairs and Environmental Affairs. Those are not directors that need to be in there – I don’t think that is someone that needs to be voted on. I don’t think those are three positions that need to be in senate.

President Gratch: I went back and forth with Director of Communications – I’m open to changing that. The reason I decided to include it is that position is about SGA transparency and it would be an interesting one to have an election and a campaign for. I think it’s important but again I’m ok with it being changed. It is an important, big position. Numbers wise I think it makes sense. Director of Environmental affairs and Athletic Affairs I think is a little arbitrary – why take those out and not others?

Senator Gogineni: I think they effect more specific people on campus. Even within the job description – it serves as a liaison between environmental groups and the senate. In terms of health and wellness I see all students can vote on but I don’t see the same for the other two.

President Gratch: For me it makes sense to keep the presidential staff operational positions like middcourses, voting, communications etc. appointed. Whereas environmental affairs and athletic affairs are issue specific. One as issues and one as operations.

Senator Gogineni: I propose for all three positions but you can pick and choose.

Senator Raber: I would disagree on that. The same could be said about diversity and inclusion etc. We’re all representing different groups. About the presidential staff – are they going to be in meetings?

President Gratch: No they’re not. They just meet with the president. It’s things I or Carolyn or Abby or Hannah or Zak does.

Senator Sohn: I had a question for the director of voting. In your experience with elections – would expanding the amount of positions that students can vote for effect the election process at all?

Zak: I don’t think so, I can tell you perhaps better in a week and two. I can say our new election process makes it all faster. I don’t anticipate it making my position noticeably more difficult.

Senator Rainey: My concern is with specialization positions mainly – a lot of these positions you talked about one person having voting positions and they’re interests will be the same as ours and if that is the case I don’t see the point of having specialized individuals coming here. I think we should just expand the amount of class presidents we have. Two: I think that with the specialization where do we stop? I think there are a lot of affairs: director of arts, separating diversity and inclusion (they’re not the same thing). Who are we as reps to determine what needs a director and what doesn’t? Lastly I would
motion to table this vote – As it was mentioned earlier we don’t have any commons senators and they are essential to voting and we did get this bill a little bit close to now. We have not had time to flush it out and with additional time we can make it better. Stressing the time. I would like to table this bill after we are done with discussion.

President Gratch: The director positons already exist. This has been in the constitution for a long time. I agree there could be new ones but this is not changing really anything. The problem is none of us know what we are doing because they are not in the room. We are just merging not creating new positons. I don’t think they bring the same perspective because we all have our own unique perspectives. It’s not like we’re bringing in a non-student. I don’t understand the comment about more class presidents because this bill is about reducing the number of people and combining things. Timing – if we don’t vote on it tonight it’s not really going to go anywhere. I will say I presented the idea well over a month ago. If we don’t vote on it now, then we would have one day to publicize if before the elections.

Zak: I was looking at the constitutional language and the referendum would have to be in a month. There’s no way to have referendums - you need 2/3rds of student body to vote and 2/3rds of that to vote yes. I think it would be hard to get people to vote on that during the election. That’s really high historically but it would be even harder outside of the election.

Senator Rainey: I want to make it clear that I’m not advocating for the increase of class senators, it’s more of an analogy. The issue of bringing in more people to SGA – it creates more voices in the room. If we’re going to add however many directors we’re adding – we need time to think about this. We should ask students what they would want specialized and I think that would make the bill better and ultimately more useful. I hope you understand where we’re coming from – we should ask the people who will be voting for this board of directors for who they want to have as directors. I understand we need to get this out publically but quite honestly I think it would be a mistake to propose this without having included the voices of commons reps. I would rather have them in the room and have their personal perspectives in the room. I think that would lead to a better bill than if it was voted on now.

Senator Toy: Timing – I do resent the fact that it was sent a couple hours ago. It’s one thing to have an idea here and a bill now. I would say please don’t vote on this. It’s a huge amount of change for one night. If the problem is communication between the board and senators, why can’t we mandate that they have a meeting once a week? Here people could talk about what they have done this week or the last two weeks but that’s not what Senate is about. Maybe we should have a separate meeting for that. It could be two hours long but you sign up for what you sign up for. Maybe think about that. I really don’t want to vote on this right now. Presenting this to the student body – it’s a lot of info and would not help how people view the SGA.
Senator Sohn: I have a question: so we as senators and commons reps know what it’s like to be a rep but we don’t know what it’s like to be on the cabinet board, or exec board. You just had a cabinet meeting, did you talk about this bill with them?

President Gratch: We didn’t talk about it tonight we talked about it a month ago. Everyone was for it and knew we were talking about it tonight and were welcome to come here if they wanted. A few people said they don’t think their position should be elected but should be appointed. There were two people who said it might change who is actually in the positions, change the kinds of people in cabinet positions. I asked them do you think you would run to be in your position? There were two people who said no. I thought that was something to consider.

Senator Boyle: I think that when we’re talking about the director positions, that if we’re coming from a communication point I don’t know what the measured response is to give them voting power. They could be there and tapped on to present their ideas when there’s a relevant bill being proposed. People will know what these positions are but I think when we’re talking about class presidents – people have this dedication and need to follow through- but if I wanted voting privilege I could vote for these director positons. Kind of know what you’re talking about but have a voting voice in a less contested positon than class president. I think its hard to have 22 people speaking.

Senator Raber: That was my mistake, it’s actually not 22. Its 5 more than right now so 17 people.

President Gratch: 16-17. There are supposed to be 17 here right now.

Senator Boyle: I guess I find it hard to wrap my head around. The elected board voting on general matters is hard for me to say yes to tonight.

Senator Gogineni: Given the interest of time I’m going to ask we consider three things. Either we are making big changes to accommodate people’s ideas. We can vote on it now or we can table it. We need to take the initiative to start making those changes or decide to table it till next week.

Senator Toy: Motion to table.

Senator Rainey: Seconded.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of tabling discussion: 3 votes
All those opposed: 5 votes
All those abstaining: 4 votes

Senator Gogineni: It has not been tabled.

President Gratch: I don’t want people to feel we are rushed even though I regret that I brought this up a month ago and it seems like people didn’t really give this much thought.
I guess there’s a way to vote on it next week but I don’t want to say that and then us have the same conversation next week. What are people feeling they will do from now until next Sunday to make tabling it worth it?

Senator Rainey: I haven’t emailed the wording to our constituencies but I have been having word discussions with people and at Commons council meetings. I could email the wording out and attach a survey to see what the sentiment is.

Senator Raber: Although it was sent out today we did speak about it a month ago it was published in the newspaper etc. We are voting on letting the students vote. We could send out a survey but it’s the same thing as letting them vote on it. So I don’t see the value in having this discussion next week for that reason. Going back to what we were talking about I think that it was my mistake with the numbers thing and that is no longer an issue. I don’t see any issues giving director positons voting rights.

Senator Parikh: Going back to those numbers how you get 17 because are there commons reps or not? So there are 5 commons reps plus 6 senators plus nine directors plus 3 (president, vice and CC). I got to 23 and right now we’re at 17 so it’s adding 6 people.

President Gratch: It would be adding 6 people and it’s a somewhat legitimate concern I guess I don’t have a huge problem with it.

Senator Gogineni: The logistics of voting. We’re giving the students an opportunity to vote on this. Is it possible to vote on having a vice president? It’s a smaller decision to make than implementing all of these changes. So that students can vote on different sections at a time?

President Gratch: The reason why it is tricky is that amending the constitution is really hard. It took me hours and hours to do this multiple times. I get what you are saying but just changing Vice President is going to make it pretty complicated to change.

Senator Grandas: I would like to disagree with the analogy that the survey is akin to voting. A survey would be able to have student say opinion and we could change things but voting is a yes or no answer and we risk nothing being passed. So I think a survey would serve a useful function.

Senator Rainey: I agree. I would like to hear the opinion of the speaker. What would a shift from 17 to 23 do in terms of your job? Do you have specific reservations from 17 to 23? Right now I am kind of mixed and having your opinion would be helpful. And then I would like to motion to vote.

Senator Gogineni: Currently it’s hard to maintain a room of 17 and I think that the biggest problem we’ve faced is how to balance different voice in the room. That’s already difficult and adding 6 people with specific interests on bills may make that worse. Allowing people voted in to fulfill a specific task to vote on anything. A balance of voice on certain issues is already hard and adding more people would make that more difficult.
Senator Rainey: Motion to vote.

Senator Boyle: Seconded.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of voting on the bill right now: 2 votes
All those opposed: 9 votes
All those abstaining: 2 votes

Senator Rainey: I have a question to the Senate then: what do we want to do?

Co-Chair Chang: What happens to the committees that the e-board people are running?

President Gratch: They still exist.

Co-Chair Chang: Let me know if this isn’t where you would make a change but when I was running off campus they wouldn’t let me have an e-signature thing. Maybe we could have a change saying that accommodations will be made for people running off campus. Certain people are more likely to take time off and it was a really hard battle for me so if this was a place to make this change that would be great.

President Gratch: I don’t see any issue in making that explicit. I think that is fine. That is also the bylaws amendment which is less pressing than amending the constitutional amendment. Because we can vote on the bylaws amendment later. We’re going to have to change the bylaws if we’re going to change the constitutional amendment.

Co-Chair Chang: Going back to the presidents versus senators question. I’m against the word president. To me the word president carries the ego and less accountability. Senator has more accountability. People are going to be more likely to be a public servant with the wording senator. I’m still in favor or making the number of signatures to run the same. I’m into making them 25 so that almost anyone can run. Sometimes I use the number of signatures to justify the position. If I were to come into the room as an e-board member – I had more signatures so I’m more important but the reality is everyone has one vote. Just because you represent more people doesn’t mean that you’re necessarily more important.

Senator Gogineni: Would you like to suggest that as a friendly amendment?

Co-Chair Chang: I would like to propose the language to not be president and make a friendly amendment to have all signatures be 25.

President Gratch: I don’t accept the president language change. What’s the justification for the President and CC to be 200?

Co-Chair Chang: I think they run the space that we’re in. You get to determine when we do things, you can choose staff members. When I think president I think staff, but for the
rest of us in the room they don’t have anyone underneath them and they don’t get to make anything happen right away. I think the word senator really captures it because they are supposed to write legislation.

President Gratch: Friendly amendment: yes, or no? I’m going to say no to the president change. Signatures? What about everyone getting 35? If it was 25 – you could go to one class. You need to demonstrate that you can put a little effort into being elected. What if all three were 40 signatures.

Senator Gogineni: Ok 40 signatures for each. Do you want to propose class presidents?

Co-Chair Chang: It’s confusing. I hear e-board, commons reps, and presidents who clearly have more say. I think it would be helpful to have the first two words different and then the last one all senators or all something else.

Senator Sohn: But we didn’t have representative.

Co-Chair Chang: This is looking at the bigger pictures– how to all names work in unison?

Senator Rainey: I think language is very important. There is really a distinction between senator and president of the SGA. You meet weakly with the school’s president and meet regularly with staff that have specialties. And you have much more privileges in terms of making sure we are highlighting things differently. It makes things inconsistent. From board of directors to directors. Calling each other president would get confusing. You’ve been persistent in wanting that change in the bill but I think it could really improve the bill and make it easier to pitch to students, easier to understand. if we changed the wording. I think we should think as simple as possible. Just for your bill sake we should make it as streamlined as possible.

Senator Rainey: Motion to vote on that. Do people have specific feelings about this issue?

Senator Toy: I think this might not sound as good but I think if everyone was representative it would solve my issue of the power dynamics and make it more easy to understand what people are voting for. It doesn’t quite translate over well, I get that, but I think it would help with that issue.

Senator Parikh: I think some of the drive to get things away from senator but I think we need to differentiate between directors. What if we rename senate to parliament and exec. members are ministers?
Senator Sohn: I agree with Senator Toy. The way the US government is run it’s two senators per state. I like the way Senator Toy stated it with representatives.

Senator Rainey: I would like to propose representatives. I like changing commons reps and class rep as well and leaving director of staff because they have a committee to direct.

President Gratch: Senator Parikh, I didn’t mean to laugh it’s a cool idea. I think you make a good point that it’s to differentiate from the current system. For me representative feels powerless. I think there is a point here about a power dynamic between directors and representatives but am not sure if it’s a bad thing. At the end of the day everyone has one vote. I guess I’m more in favor of senator than representative because senator works more neatly: in my head everyone in that bottom three is a member of the Student Senate. If you start saying senators and executive board members but to me that is convoluted. You could say members of the Student Senate and it encompasses all three groups. I think it’s confusing to have senators and exec. boards because then it divides it into two groups. I’m wondering how people are feeling about the bill this issue aside.

Senator Boyle: I like most of it.

Senator Gogineni: Just in terms of changes I feel like if you want this bill to vote on it, the fewest changes possible makes sense. Keeping things the way they are right now keeping things from students having to deliberate on them. I think just “senator” is good for commons reps and class presidents and exec board should just be “director”.

President Gratch: I guess that’s fine if it’s the majority opinion.

Co-Chair Chang: If we passed it could we make changes to exact names after?

Senator Gogineni: No.

Co-Chair Chang: Can I recommend that you send out a diagram to the student body?

Senator Aaron: One thing we could do is keep it President and when we’re in here we can call each other representative. Outside of the Senate you say the person’s first name if you’re talking about them. If this is something you want to change with individual directors, we can do it and in the future that’s something you or someone else could tackle if desired.

Senator Parikh: The big point is to merge the senate and the cabinet. What if instead of electing an exec. board we elect representatives and then those positions are divided out afterwards?

President Gratch: It’s an interesting idea but I think I’m opposed to it primarily because then the campaign becomes about actual issues. I’m running for director of academic
affairs because textbooks should be more affordable etc. And the student body has more say in that year as to changes happening.

Senator Boyle: I propose that the exec. board be revoked of their voting privileges and that they have speaking power. They are a resource to use if we are discussing relevant positons.

President Gratch: Then there are only 12 voting members. Inevitable thereare maybe two missing so then you’re only at 6 people for a majority.

Senator Boyle: Alternatively, you could have a different session with class senators and presidents and then a general session with the exec. board.

President Gratch: And you don’t think that’s convoluted?

Senator Boyle: It is convoluted. I’m defeating my own point. I think it would be cool to see what the room has to say.

President Gratch: I’m really uncomfortable having 6 people making a decision – that’s just 6 people voting yes.

Senator Rainey: Please could you go over why its so important to be called president. Is SGA about power or is it about representing students? I don’t feel like for me being called president would make me more passionate about serving my constituencies. The people who want it for the power, ego etc. should then not be serving in the SGA.

Senator Gogineni: Ok it is 9 PM. I want to say that instead of gaining peoples ideas in the room people need to start making amendments. Why don’t we have amendments to the bill since people can technically leave.

Senator Toy: People will leave and then we won’t be able to vote.

Senator Sohn: Motion to change all three titles to senators.

Senator Rainey: Seconded.

President Gratch: No. Let’s vote on it.

Senator Gogineni: Voting on the amendment to change class president to senators and representatives to senators.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor? 10 votes
All those opposed: 1 vote
All those abstaining: 2 votes

It has been passed.
Can we change the signatory amount to equal 40?

Senator Boyle: Do you want to vote on voting for the exec. board to have full speaking privileges?

Senator Toy: Mandate that the exec. board comes to all senate meetings.

Senator Gogineni: Senator Boyle do you accept Senator Toy’s amendment to your amendment?

Senator Boyle: I accept but if President Gratch pulls the bill we should just vote on the bill.

Motion to vote

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of voting right now: 10 votes
All those opposed: 1 vote
All those abstaining: 2 votes

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of passing the bill? 6 votes (President Gratch, Senator Raber, Senator Sohn, Senator Aaron, Proxy Andrews, Co-Chair Chang)
All those opposed: 6 votes (Senator Toy, Senator Boyle, Senator Rainey, Senator Parikh, Senator Grandas, Senator Gogineni)
All those abstaining: 1 vote (Proxy McCormick).

Senator Gogineni: The bill has not passed.

V. Adjournment

Senator Gogineni: Meeting adjourned. Meeting end 9:05 PM.