



Florida International University

SGA Constitutional Revision Committee

MINUTES

SGA Constitutional Revision Committee Meeting

June 15, 2018

IN ATTENDANCE

Jefferson Noël, SGA BBC President

Jose Servin, SGA MMC President

Jonathan Espino, SGA BBC Vice President

John Habib, Arts, Sciences, & Education Senator

Javier Ortiz,

Brandon Aquino,

Larissa Adames, Assistant Director of Campus Life & SGA Advisor (BBC)

Dr. Anthony DeSantis, Assistant VP of Student Affairs

Jose Toscano, Campus Life Director (MMC)

ABSENT

Jerome Scott, Campus Life Coordinator

Dr. Kerrie Montgomery, Campus Life Director (BBC)

Michelle Castro, Assistant Director of Campus Life (MMC)

Iris Elijah, Associate General Counsel

Matilde Gramling, Assistant VP of Student Affairs

Cynthia Jacques, SGA BBC Front Desk Assistant

Alexandra Laroche, SGA BBC Front Desk Assistant

GUESTS

Gerard Albert III

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was held on June 15, 2018 – Locale **WUC 221** on the Biscayne Bay Campus. The meeting was called to order at **8:46am**, approximately, by Assistant VP of Student Affairs **Dr. Anthony DeSantis** who presided over the meeting in its entirety.

WELCOME

Dr. DeSantis...

- Welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how important it is for these meetings to start on time especially considering that everyone has other time commitments
- Informed all members that if they are to take a break or step out, they should make sure that someone has their comments so that the meeting could continue seamlessly.
- Asked the member of the audience to introduce himself to the council, Gerard Albert II.
- Went over the processes and procedures of the meeting and reminded everyone that to vote their needs to be at least six voting members, and a simple majority vote will be used for today's meeting.
- Informed everyone that the minutes from the previous meeting is available in the shared drive.
- Created an outline in the agenda with the extension of reach *ARTICLE V, EXECUTIVE BRANCH*
- Brought to the attention of all the members that a limit should be placed on how long a motion to extend time should last and presented the idea of making a motion as a group for the maximum amount of time one can extend a meeting.

Mr. Noël moved to create a framework for two extensions of five minutes and one extension of ten minutes per meeting.

Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

Dr. DeSantis asked whether we should read the edits then discuss comments or begin with discussing the comments and/or concerns.

It was decided to discuss comments, as it would also help in using the time for the meeting wisely.

Mr. Noël stated that he believes making changes to the constitution is a very important task and will have long-term effects on the students and the student government as well. The students should also have the right to vote for the changes as well as the final approval, because if the members of the SGA Revision Committee all agree to the changes but the student do not also approve then we will be doing them—the students—a great disservice.

Mr. Noël also mentioned that if the students we are representing at FIU do not begin voting for these sorts of changes now then they will be less likely to vote during the upcoming elections and take action in other matters.

Dr. DeSantis stated that he has spoken to Dr. Lunsford—President of Student Affairs—about this as well and will be taken into consideration and is making sure that we are taking the right steps.

PREAMBLE

The preamble of the Constitution was reviewed.

Mr. Sirven moved to approve the *Preamble* of the constitution.

Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

ARTICLE I: AUTHORITY

Section I. Establishment of Power

Mr. Sirven proposed to change “is” to “was” in the first line under *I. Establishment of Power*.

Members of the committee discussed if the first sentence of Section I should be changed from “SGA *is* established through the power...” to “SGA *was* established through the power..” brought to the attention by Jose Servin.

After discussion, it was decided it should remain as “*is*”

Mr. Noël commented on whether or not “SGA” should be in parentheses or if it is self-evident, that SGA stands for Student Government Association.

Dr. DeSantis clarified that because that is explained in the preamble it can be left as “SGA”

Ms. Adames explained that the previous constitution named “*ARTICLE I*” as “*AUTHORITY*”, and asked to clarify whether or not it will change or remain as it was.

It was clarified that authority will be the subtitle of “*ARTICLE I*” for more consistency.

Ms. Adames brought up the fact that in the constitution it states that the student government senate was founded in 1973, but our logos it says 1974 and asked why there is a difference in years.

Dr. DeSantis stated that he will add that to the list of things that need to be clarified.

Mr. Ortiz moved to continue to *Section II. Jurisdiction*.

Mr. Sirven seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

Section II. Jurisdiction

Mr. Aquino moved to continue to *Section III. Sovereignty*.

Mr. Espino seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

Section III. Sovereignty

Mr. Noël explained that there should be more checks for the Vice President for Student Affairs to have the power to alter the constitution outside the means for amendment—which is stated on the last life of this section—and gave his suggestions of how he believes that process should go.

Mr. Toscano explained that this may contradict the statutes of the Sunshine State, and after discussing suggested for this section to be tabled to the next meeting so that Iris Elijah can give us more information on that.

Dr. DeSantis also stated that this could be revisited and will ask Ms. Elijah to review this section and will also make sure that every member receives it. From there we will decide what is best for this section.

Mr. Espino moved to table *Article 1, Section III. Sovereignty* to the next SGA Constitutional Revision Meeting.

Mr. Noël seconded the motion.

By an unanimous vote the motion was passed.

ARTICLE II: STUDENT RIGHTS

Dr. DeSantis confirmed that the votes will be done not by section but after the article. Therefore, no motions need to be made to continue to other sections.

Mr. Noël proposed to make an addition to *Section 3 Rights B* under *Article II* so that if students disagree on constitutional changes, they have the right and ability to create a petition and if they acquire an amount of signatures, the senate could consider and vote for these changes.

After discussing, it was decided to add that right after number 5 upon review.

Mr. Sirven proposed to change “writs of certiorari”—within number 3 of subheading A (*under Section 3 Rights*)—to “official complaints” so that the wording is easier to understand for students. Ms. Adames proposed creating an appendix or a “definitions” page at the end of the statutes for any wording that students may not be familiar with to avoid confusion on what is considered an “official” complaint or any other terminology.

Mr. Noël moved to create an appendix or a “definitions” page at the end of the constitution.

Javier Ortiz seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

Mr. Sirven moved to change “*writs of certiorari*”—used in number 3 under subheading *A* of *Section 3 Rights* (within *ARTICLE II. STUDENT RIGHTS*)—to “*official complaints*”

Mr. Noël seconded the motion

By a majority vote of 7/1/0, the motion was passed

Dr. DeSantis stated that he is taking notes based upon what is being discussed in the online document so that everyone is informed, any changes made will be done on the official document.

Mr. Sirven stated that within number 5 of *Section 3 Rights, B* it requires at least 1000 signatures for a petition but it at this time would not be a good representation of the student body.

Ms. Adames suggested using a percentage so that if the enrollment number fluctuates it will also change along with it.

Mr. Habib requested a point of personal privilege at 9:45am

Dr. DeSantis granted the point of personal privilege

Mr. Ortiz moved to approve *ARTICLE II. STUDENT RIGHTS* with the comments presented and move to *ARTICLE III. ORGANIZATION*.

Mr. Espino seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

ARTICLE III. ORGANIZATION

Dr. DeSantis brought up the concern of how the terms “*registered students*” and “*students*” are defined and used throughout the constitution specifically found under *Section 1 Student Body*. After discussion, Dr. DeSantis stated that he will clarify the definition of the terms “*registered students*” and “*students*” to ensure that all students are represented, and ensure consistency throughout the constitution. This information will be shared with the council and changes will be made upon clarification.

Mr. Noël proposed adding the governing bodies in the constitution, and creating a uwide council that will act as a forum for campus specific initiatives or concerns and explained who, he believes, should be involved. After discussion, Dr. DeSantis clarified that both university wide and campus specific initiatives should be addressed but it does not need to be added under this specific article.

Mr. Sirven moved to approve *ARTICLE III ORGANIZATION* with the pending definition of registered students.

Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

By a unanimous vote the motion was passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. DeSantis...

- Asked the council to meet prior to the next SGA Constitutional Revision Committee Meeting and discuss how we can create one student government association while considering all concerns and/or issues of each campus; ensuring that at least one advisor is present.
- Stated that after discussing the council will then present what they have concluded to him ahead of time. This way it will make it easier to get past the legislative branch and the rest of the constitution smoothly.

Mr. Toscano added that since the SGA retreat is coming up soon, the council can meet sometime within the meeting to discuss this. That way they will be able to discuss the details in person.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ortiz moved to adjourn the meeting at **10:35am**.

Mr. Espino seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at **10:35am**.