Cornell University's Student Assembly
Minutes of the February 29th, 2023 Meeting
4:45 pm – 6:30 pm
Memorial Room Willard Straight Hall | Zoom

I. Call to Order
    a. P. Kuehl called the meeting to order at 4:45pm.
        1. *Members Present (26)*: D. Akkiraju, A. Akpan, L. Balestrieri, L. Barrett, A. Barry, F. Berry, S. Chan, R. DeLorenzo, D. Diao, Z. deRham, K. Everett, C. Flournoy, A. Helkowski, N. Hite, C. Kim, P. Kuehl, C. Lederman, F. Meng, Y. Moitra, S. Parikh, C. Platkin, I. Rezaka, S. Son, B. Terhaar, A. Vinson, C. Ting. A. Wang
        2. *Members Absent (3)*: K. Jordan, Y. Moitra, D. Suarez
        3. *Also Present (10)*: D. Almeida, A. Bangura, A. Coleman, E. Kalweit, N. Maggard, A. Mulpuri, J. Swenson, L. Thomas, J. Wallen, J. Zhang

II. Reading of the Land Acknowledgement
    a. P. Kuehl stated the SA's acknowledgment of the Cayuga Nation.

III. Open Microphones
    a. There were no speakers.

IV. Approval of the Minutes
    a. Approval of the February 22 meeting minutes
        1. F. Berry motioned to approve the minutes. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.

V. Consent Calendar
    a. There were no items.

VI. Announcements
    a. Executive Vice President Ting
        1. Expressive Activity Policy – link to University Assembly page for Public Comment
            1. C. Ting urged members to give comments on the Expressive Activity Policy.

VII. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Liaisons

      a. Internal Operations Committee
          1. C. Lederman noted a future meeting where transition planning and more would be discussed.

VIII. Presentations
      a. There were no presentations.

IX. Old Business Calendar
      a. There was no business.

X. Resolutions Calendar
      a. Resolution 59: Updating the Election Rules for Spring 2024
          1. L. Thomas gave an overview on the prepared Elections Calendar, where substantial changes were made compared to previous years. L. Thomas noted changes such as the removal of petitioning in favor of a tabling requirement due to equity considerations.
          2. K. Everett questioned the removal of petitioning and noted that it might be necessary for more important executive roles such as President and Vice President.
          3. C. Thomas stated this decision was made to increase the pool of candidates and encourage engagement with students.
          4. C. Lederman noted that in previous years, the petitioning and nomination process bloats the calendar and adds lots of work, stating support for the removal of petitioning as a step in the right direction.
          5. P. Kuehl stated support for mandatory tabling.
          6. I. Rezaka questioned the specific details of what tabling would entail.
          7. C. Thomas noted concerns with petitioning where people weren't fully being engaged with and stated that the tabling hour requirement would be determined later on.
          8. C. Ting questioned why the petitions limit wasn't simply reduced.
          9. S. Parikh stated that petitioning often focuses on arbitrarily collecting signatures rather than engaging the community and exchanging ideas.
          10. P. Kuehl noted that, since the Elections Committee would be organizing tabling, this system would be more equitable.
          11. A. Akpan questioned where these changes were sourced from in terms of opinions.
          12. C. Thomas stated belief that tabling is a more effective form of community engagement and noted that, while specific people weren't

sourced, the possibility of having petitions signed by friends in groupchats has been a concern for many years.

13. S. Parikh echoed C. Thomas' sentiments and stated belief that tabling is a more meaningful use of time.

14. P. Kuehl gave context into the petitioning process in previous years which utilized an online format.

15. C. Flournoy asked for clarification on the 1250-character limit.

16. C. Thomas confirmed the character limit.

17. D. Diao noted that for him, the process of engaging people for signatures often felt fake. D. Diao stated belief tabling could encourage difficult discourse.

18. S. Parikh noted that election rules can change each election, and that facilitating a change has worth.

19. R. DeLorenzo stated support for focusing on engaging values rather than just ticking checkboxes of busywork.

20. C. Kim stated support for the tabling system but questioned if outreach could be dimmed because tabling focuses on constituents reaching out to nominees rather than otherwise.

21. C. Thomas stated belief that tabling doesn't mean the nominee doesn't initiate conversation.

22. S. Parikh noted that many times people don't know the Student Assembly exists, so tabling can reach those populations which don't run in the same circles and increase Assembly exposure.

23. S. Chan questioned how the management of the tabling requirement would occur.

24. C. Thomas stated Elections Committee members would setup and put away the table.

25. A. Barry gave further perspective on what tabling could be like.

26. A. Wang questioned if tabling and petitioning could co-exist.

27. C. Thomas stated belief that this system would be difficult to facilitate logistically.

28. S. Parikh noted that verifying petitioning adds work and stated that tabling shifts the incentive of what campaigning looks like.

29. C. Lederman highlighted the volume of petitions that need to be verified in a short period by the Office of the Assemblies and Elections Committee.

30. J. Swenson stated support for tabling but questioned the specific voter turnout goal and strategies for achieving this.

31. S. Parikh stated that while there aren't specific numbers in mind, lowering the barrier of entry to increase the number of candidates leads to increased voter turnout.

32. K. Everett stated belief in merit of tabling alongside petitioning to further engage community.

33. An Elections Committee member acknowledged questions of equity alongside tabling and stated that rules to dictate what tabling would look like would be put in the place. The member acknowledged concerns of oversaturation, but that due to the nature of the brief campaign period there will always be oversaturation and that tabling positions would be optimized.

34. S. Parikh stated support for oversaturation in increasing Student Assembly visibility.

35. P. Kuehl stated that some Assemblies have never had petitioning systems. P. Kuehl cautioned that during petitioning, campaigning is against the rules.

36. Z. deRham questioned how tabling positioning and such would be coordinated.

37. S. Parikh stated that tables would be coordinated corresponding to the specific school members would be running for.

38. C. Flournoy questioned if tabling would fully replace the need for petitioning, and if so, asked for further clarification on the tabling system itself.

39. An Elections Committee member stated that petitioning would be removed entirely, and that details would be developed over time with input from other members to ensure engagement and equity.

40. S. Parikh highlighted that petitioning has existed as a barrier to entry, and that tabling is a barrier to entry that is inclusive rather than exclusive.

41. C. Flournoy stated hope that this tabling system be further fleshed out.

42. S. Parikh clarified some details on how table slots would be assigned.

43. P. Kuehl noted that election rules can be amended and questioned if the Elections Committee could share a more fleshed out tabling requirement in upcoming meetings.

44. I. Rezaka stated concerns with tabling, noting lack of tabling positions for certain schools such as AAP and ILR. I. Rezaka stated that some people wouldn't engage people while tabling and stated support for a lowered petition requirement while tabling. I. Rezaka motioned to amend line 187 to state "requirements including tabling with petitions".

45. K. Everett motioned to amend the amendment to state "requirements including tabling and petitions with the condition that petition requirements 100 and over be reduced by 50%".
46. P. Kuehl noted that petition requirements don't currently exist yet.
47. S. Parikh highlighted that removing petitioning is supposed to be about reducing barriers to entry and noted issues with disqualification due to signatures.
48. I. Rezaka stated that tabling is also a barrier and noted the importance of having a metric to ensure engagement during tabling.
49. A. Barry highlighted that petitioning is being removed for logistic reasons as well, noting that during petitioning candidates cannot campaign, shortening the period where candidates can campaign.
50. I. Rezaka stated that many will take the opportunity to be lazy without the need to petition.
51. C. Thomas highlighted that tabling is what someone makes of it, same as petitioning.
52. C. Lederman highlighted that it is no longer reasonably feasible to implement a petitioning system. C. Lederman motioned to close debate on the amendment. The motion **passed**.
53. The motion to approve the amendment **failed**.
54. I. Rezaka questioned why the Calendar was introduced at a time when petitioning was no longer feasible.
55. C. Thomas highlighted that the Calendar has been discussed for weeks.
56. S. Parikh acknowledged concerns but highlighted that it is during the Election candidates are filtered out based on dedication.
57. C. Ting pushed back against the notion that petitioning has not been proven valuable and acknowledged concerns with so hastily abolishing petitioning.
58. An Elections Committee member noted that petitioning has existed for so long while engagement has decreased and highlighted the need to try something new to try and fix this decrease.
59. J. Swenson stated that discourse has gotten caught in the details. J. Swenson highlighted the importance of contested races.
60. A. Wang proposed a compromise where those who have been spoken with during tabling sign the paper.
61. An Elections Committee member highlighted that tabling hasn't yet been flushed out, with A. Wang's proposal an example of what certain tabling details would look like.

62. N. Hite stated lack of understanding how tabling and petitioning are different. N. Hite proposed lowering the petition requirements.
63. S. Parikh stated that petitioning is an artificial and arbitrary barrier to entry, and that it isn't beneficial to reduce the number of candidates on the ballot for competition.
64. K. Everett motioned to amend line 187 of the Resolution to state "requirements including tabling with documented form of engagement".
65. S. Parikh questioned if verbal confirmation from candidates would be acceptable.
66. K. Everett stated that documenting would lead to more comprehensive engagement.
67. A. Vinson highlighted that certain tabling locations would leave candidates disadvantaged given the petitioning system.
68. K. Everett stated that documentation leads to data for the Elections Committee to take into consideration and doesn't include any thresholds.
69. I. Rezaka highlighted that an honor system can fail at times.
70. K. Everett highlighted the validity of compromise.
71. J. Swenson stated that the incentive to engage people is to win the election.
72. K. Everett stated that this documentation is not a barrier, but a way to quantify engagement.
73. D. Akkiraju highlighted that including signatures makes engagement feel transactional rather than thoughtful.
74. K. Everett highlighted that the documentation is helpful for the Elections Committee.
75. C. Ting stated that petitioning has safeguarded the Elections in previous years.
76. K. Everett stated that tabling is inherently a transaction, and that documentation provides another metric to gauge candidate engagement.
77. R. DeLorenzo noted that there are better table locations than others out there, where there could be some inequities leading to competition in tabling locations.
78. P. Kuehl called the amendment to question. The motion to approve the amendment passed through a vote of 14-9-3.
79. C. Lederman motioned to move the Resolution to question. I. Rezaka dissented. The motion **failed**.

80. A. Akpan noted some language in the Resolution such as prohibition of outreach and questioned the necessity, noting a lack of improvement from the previous semester.
81. S. Parikh stated that campaigning shouldn't occur in a Student Assembly capacity. S. Parikh noted that campaigning should not occur before the campaign period starts or ends. S. Parikh emphasized that there is vagueness so cases can be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
82. F. Berry questioned how TV time would be implemented and utilized.
83. S. Parikh stated that the TVs would publicize the elections rather than promotion of specific candidates.
84. C. Lederman gave previous context to help answer A. Akpan's concerns.
85. I. Rezaka questioned the new endorsement requirements and what the application process for endorsements would look like.
86. C. Thomas stated that there isn't too much care on details rather than focus on equity.
87. I. Rezaka asked for further details on how endorsement requirements would be endorsed.
88. C. Thomas stated that organizations would submit their process to be validated.
89. P. Kuehl noted that an email would be sent to all organizations on this requirement.
90. P. Kuehl motioned to increase the adjournment time by 10 minutes. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.
91. R. DeLorenzo questioned where the line would be drawn on sponsorships from student organizations.
92. S. Parikh stated that anything is fine as long as all candidates can be considered.
93. S. Parikh called the Resolution to question. The motion passed through a vote of unanimous consent. The motion to approve the Resolution **passed** through a vote of unanimous consent.
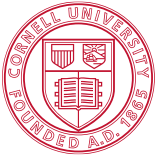
XI.   Appointments and Vacancies Calendar
   a.   There were no items.

XII.   Adjournment
   a.   This meeting was adjourned at 6:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Zhang
Clerk of the Assembly