

Austin College

Student Assembly

20**SA**22

900 North Grand Avenue, Suite 6J

assembly@austincollege.edu

Sherman, TX 75090-4440

(903) 813-2300

Office located in Wright Campus Center 176

Amendment Resolution: Election Committee's Reform Package

Sponsor: Drew Easley, Axel Wilson, Richard Williamson III, Nia Carter, Syd Maher

Thanking: Representative Jeffrey Berk for highlighting a couple constitutional inconsistencies which have been incorporated into this resolution,

Thanking: Miguel Liuzzi and Dauvo McDonald for their contributions as part of the Elections Committee last semester,

Believing: The Constitution of the Student Assembly should serve as a living document which provides a consistent framework for a democratic, egalitarian, inclusive, and effective student government,

Asserting: That inconsistencies both in the style of writing, as well as inconsistencies between the written word of the constitution and the practice of the Assembly must be rectified,

Also Asserting: Any shortcoming of the constitution in regard to securing a democratic, egalitarian, inclusive, and effective student government must be amended,

First Noting: Article II – Section 3.8, which assigns the number of representative to various residence halls, is greatly outdated. There are no subclauses extending enfranchisement to the North Flats, the Cottages, or the Jordan Language

House, thus constitutionally denying these residences the right to run for office.

Further: The constitution grants only one representative position to each of the residence units.

Because this is in contrast with the custom we have established in practice, for as long as any of those present can testify, of accepting two representatives from each residence unit, this inconsistency should be *de jure* acknowledged as *fait accompli*.

Second Noting: That the language of Article XII, Section 1.D, the clause referring to the structure of the Public Relations committee is slightly inconsistent with the language of the other clauses in this section, and therefore should be slightly reworded to make uniform the standard of committee structure, as well as emphasize role of the committee in managing social media,

Third Noting: That what we have traditionally referred to as the “Food Advisory Committee” for many years was in fact established as a temporary special “Food Committee,” which was never meant to be a permanent body, has become an indispensable organ of the Student Assembly which has had many productive and fruitful conversations with Aramark officials, despite not making full use of the special powers granted to it in recent years, and deserves to be promoted to a permanent standing committee, renamed with what to us will seem a more appropriate official title, reinvigorated with the power to invite students with dietary restrictions into its ranks,

Fourth Noting: That the constitution lacks any specific rules for procedure, while acknowledging that the By-Laws make a reference to *Robert’s Rules of Order*, in an effort to live up to the principles laid out in the *Believing* preambular clause, the constitution itself should benefit by the inclusion of a section specifically declaring certain privileges inviolable, including that of representatives to vote anonymously if they choose to do so, and that of students without positions in student government to attend general assembly meetings, address the assembly, and submit resolutions to the floor, thus easing the burden of peer/authority pressure and ensuring *all* students have the constitutional right to participate in student government, even if they are unable or unwilling to hold office;

Be it Resolved: That the Constitution of the Student Assembly of Austin College adopt the following proposed changes:

First, the text of **ARTICLE II - Section 3.A**, which currently reads:

“A. One (1) representative shall be elected by the members of each living unit in the late spring, to serve for one (1) academic year, and shall represent each of the following designated living units:

- 1. Each residence hall*
- 2. Bryan Apartments/Johnson Roo Suites*
- 3. Off-Campus Housing*
- 4. The Flats at Brockett Court”*

Shall be amended to:

“A. One (1) representative per 75 inhabitants shall be elected by the members of each living unit in the fall with a minimum of one representative to serve for one (1) academic year, and shall represent each of the following designated living units:

- 1. Each residence hall*
- 2. Bryan Apartments/Johnson Roo Suites (BARS)*
- 4. The Flats at Brockett Court*
- 5. The North Flats*
- 6. Hass Village on Grand (The Cottages)/ Victorian on Grand (Green House*
- 7. The Jordan Language House*

B. All present and future residency units officially opened by the college to student habitation should be considered to have the right to one (1) representative per 75 inhabitants with a minimum of one representative elected from among their residents each fall even if not yet directly acknowledged by the Constitution of the Student Assembly.

Second, the text of **ARTICLE XII – Section 1.D**, which currently reads:

“D. Public Relations

1. The Public Relations Committee shall be directed to handle all communication, publicity, and public relations matters that the Assembly encounters.

2. The primary duties of the communications Committee shall be:

a. To organize, publicize, and run all Student Assembly forums.

b. To publicize all Student Assembly-sponsored events and all campus elections.

c. To publicize on a regular basis the events that occur and decisions that are made in the Assembly meetings in a manner that will reach the majority of the campus and students.

d. To maintain communication with the Sherman community and keep the Assembly and the Student Body informed of important developments in this area.”

Shall be amended to:

“D. Public Relations

1. To handle all social media, communication, publicity, and public relations matters that the Assembly encounters

2. To organize, publicize, and run all Student Assembly forums.

3. To publicize all Student Assembly-sponsored events and all campus elections.

4. To publicize on a regular basis the events that occur and decisions that are made in the Assembly meetings in a manner that will reach the majority of the campus and students.

5. To maintain communication with the Sherman community and keep the Assembly and the Student Body informed of important developments in this area.”

Third, the text of **ARTICLE XII – Section 2.A**, which reads:

“A. Food Committee

1. The President of the Assembly will appoint a Chair for the Food Committee that will report back to The Assembly. The membership will be comprised of Representatives of the Student Assembly as well as members of the Austin College student body.

2. The Food Committee will work with the appropriate officials and administration officials to advocate for students to improve the quality of food services.”

shall be struck from the constitution.

Fourth, the following clause shall be added to **ARTICLE XII – Section 2** as Clause E:

“E. Food Advisory Committee

1. To work with the appropriate officials to advocate for students to improve the quality of food services.

2. To better accommodate the diverse diets of all students through the active inclusion of members of the Austin College student body, not necessarily limited to Representatives of the Student Assembly, at the discretion of the Chair of the Food Advisory Committee, and Executive Officers of the Student Assembly, with a special emphasize being placed on those with special dietary needs.”

Lastly, and the exact way this should be done shall be left to the appointed constitutional committee, and take into account all feedback, but the spirit of the following will be integrated into the Constitution of the Student Assembly:

The Right to a Private Ballot – Voting does not have to always be done privately; the voting procedure is up to the Assembly and the Chair so long as it is in line with the by-laws. The Elections Committee has two suggestions on the Right to Private ballot. The majority opinion is that if even a single student expresses hesitation about voting publicly, voting must be done secretly. The dissenting opinion is that there should be a vote at the first meeting each semester after orientation where the status of public/private voting will be decided unless otherwise stated in the Student Assembly Election Codes.

The Right to Petition – All students, including those who hold no position on the Assembly, have the right to attend Assembly meetings, speak during open floor, and present and defend resolution ideas before the assembly.