

Resolution on Popular Election of the Chairperson of the SGA

Preface

For many years, some students have argued that the SGA Chairperson should be popularly elected by the entire NYU student body. Others have made arguments against popularly electing the Chairperson. The question has often been brought before the Organization and Governance Committee, where it has been discussed extensively in recent years. The natural turnover rate of students and committee members coupled with inter-committee disagreements has previously prevented the Organization and Governance from reaching a final determination on the issue, until now.

While debates over the implementation of this change are ongoing, we believe that further work on this issue should not continue until the SGA has voted on the core principle of a popularly elected SGA Chairperson.

Resolution

WHEREAS, the SGA Chairperson is internally selected by the outgoing voting members of the SGA, of which some members are themselves internally selected;

WHEREAS, presidents and chairpersons of student government organizations across NYU and many peer institutions are popularly elected;¹

WHEREAS, in February 2020, the Organization and Governance Committee created a poll to gauge the NYU student body's opinion on the election of the Chairperson and the results of the poll, consisting of 527 respondents, showed that 62.4% of students preferred the option to “vote for my Student Representatives and also vote for the Chairperson of the NYU Student Government”;²

WHEREAS, the SGA Chairperson currently has competing responsibilities to be accountable to the entire student body and to be accountable to a specific subset of the student population, either members of a school or an under-represented cross-school constituency;

¹ E.g. [Student Bar Association of New York University School of Law Constitution](#), Art. 9, § 6; [Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Council. New York University Tandon School of Engineering](#), Art. V, § 2; [Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Council. New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies](#), Art. VI, § 4; [New York University Graduate School of Arts & Science Graduate Student Council Constitution and Bylaws](#), Art. III § A; e.g. also [Constitution of the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Government of Princeton University](#), Art. VII, § 804; [Constitution of the University of Michigan Ann Arbor Campus Student Body](#), Art. III, § 1; [Constitution of the Georgetown University Student Association](#), Art. II, § 1; [University of Florida Student Body Constitution](#), Art. IV, § 2.

² [2020 Organization and Governance Committee Poll](#).

WHEREAS, a popularly elected SGA Chairperson could act as a stronger executive within SGA to hold all members accountable to the students they were elected or selected to represent;

WHEREAS, a popularly elected SGA Chairperson may have increased influence and ability to drive an agenda by having a mandate supported by weight of a fair election; and

WHEREAS, a popularly elected SGA Chairperson may have an increased influence with university administration because they will be the voice for the entire student body;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, that the Chairperson of the SGA be popularly elected by the student body of NYU;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that a committee be formed, composed of graduating members of SGA, which will deliberate and propose the timeline, methods, eligibility, nominations, and other election administration procedures for the popular election of the SGA Chairperson.

As proposed by the 2021-2022 Organization and Governance Committee