

Princeton USG Senate
Meeting 8
March 28, 2021
8:30pm EST



**Undergraduate
Student
Government**

Introduction

1. Question and Answer Session (5 minutes)
2. President's Report (5 minutes)

New Business

1. Wintersession 2021 Recap- Judy Jarvis (20 minutes)
2. Honor Committee Internal Referendum- Wells Carson and Dylan Shapiro (10 minutes)
3. Senate Language Review Referendum- Kate Liu (15 minutes)
4. Projects Board Resolution- Christian Potter (10 minutes)
5. Projects Board Funding Request- Turquoise Brewington (5 minutes)
6. Office Hours Presentation- Juan Nova and Ayush Alag (5 minutes)

Honor Committee Proposed Revisions

**just as a note, the proposed modifications in red are removals and in green are additions*

First Proposed Revisions:

These proposed changes will give the Chair and ODUS investigators more flexibility for investigations. The goal is not to eliminate student investigators at all - just to make it so the Constitution would allow for ODUS investigators to take a larger role in the investigations. During the past year, we really saw what a valuable resource they were and how difficult investigations can be for students.

Part C 1- eliminating the specification of “two” would allow the Chair to appoint only one student if need be. Best practice would recommend still appointing two, this just gives the option.

Part C 4 - allows the ODUS investigators to participate more robustly in the investigations on par with the student investigators. It would also mean that in the case one two student investigators are on the case and cannot be present for a time-sensitive meeting, the ODUS investigator (and most likely another ODUS investigator) can conduct the meeting.

Part C 7 - just continues the previous pattern of not specifying the number of investigators to allow for more flexibility.

All of these changes are designed for efficiency and making the jobs of student investigators easier while still having them remain in their current capacity.

(Under Article III):

C. Investigation Procedures

1. Upon receiving a report of a suspected violation, the Chair will appoint two members on a rotating basis to conduct a preliminary investigation.
2. If an allegation of an Honor Code violation is made over the summer, the Committee will make every reasonable attempt to investigate it in a timely manner. All cases that cannot be practically concluded over the summer will resume in the fall.
3. The appointed investigators may:
 - a. Meet with the student or students in question;
 - b. Meet with witnesses;
 - c. Collect any relevant documents or material evidence;
 - d. Obtain any other information bearing on the allegation.

4. The Chair and investigators shall utilize the help of professional investigators from the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students during the course of investigations for tasks including but not limited to collecting relevant student witness testimony and compiling investigative summaries.
5. When making initial contact with a student, the investigators will disclose the student's status as a student in question or a witness. If the student's status changes during the course of the investigation, the investigators will inform them as soon as possible.
6. The investigators' meeting with the student in question will proceed as follows:
 - a. The investigators will explain the rights of the student in question (see III.A. above).
 - b. The student in question will be asked to sign a statement prior to a hearing saying they have been informed of their rights under the Honor Constitution.
 - c. The student in question will be asked to provide an account of the suspected violation in question.
 - d. The student in question will be given a letter, describing the suspected violation in reasonable detail, from the reporting witness. The letter need not be signed.
 - e. The investigators will explain the nature of the suspected violation.
7. Upon the completion of the investigation, the two investigators in consultation with the Chair will determine whether or not a hearing is warranted.
 - a. If a hearing is not warranted, all records of the case that personally identify the student in question or any other student will be immediately destroyed.
 - b. If a hearing is warranted, the student may exercise his or her right of up to seven days of preparation

Second Proposed Revision:

Several times in the Constitution, the phrase "his or her" is used to denote all students. We want to change it to a neutral "their". It is a small language change that will have no practical effect on the Constitution but is more inclusive to students.

This change will take place in:

Article II:

Part B 1

Part C 1

Part D 1

Article III:

Part C 7b

Article IV:

Part A 2a

Part C 4

It will look like, as an example (from Article II, Part B 1):

Any attempt to give assistance, both inside and outside the examination room, whether the student attempting to give assistance has completed **his or her** **their** own work or not.

§ 306. Senate Referendum Language Review

- a. **PRE-SCHEDULED TIME.**—The Senate referendum language review shall occur at a pre-scheduled time.
- b. **TIMING.**—
 1. **IN GENERAL.**—The Senate referendum language review shall occur on a date no earlier than 15 days before the first day of campaigning and no later than 8 days before the first day of campaigning.
 2. **SENATE MEETING.**—The Senate referendum language review shall occur during a Senate meeting.
 3. **RECESS SCHEDULING PROHIBITED.**—The period beginning on the date after the Senate referendum language review and ending on the referendum petition deadline may not overlap with an academic recess.
- c. **COMPONENTS.**—In order for the referendum sponsor to begin petitioning, the Senate must, by majority vote, pass a motion to approve the language of both the referendum resolution and the ballot question.
- d. **SCOPE OF REVIEW.**—
 1. **REFERENDUM RESOLUTION.**—The Senate shall approve the language of the referendum resolution if—
 1. the resolution is neutrally worded;
 2. the resolution clearly describes the direct effects of its adoption; and
 3. the resolution does not claim to exercise a power that cannot be exercised by an undergraduate referendum.
 2. **EXCEPTION.**—A section of a referendum resolution is exempt from the requirement that the section be neutrally worded if both of the following conditions apply:
 1. The section is issued solely under the advisory power.
 2. The resolution unambiguously states that the section is issued under the advisory power.
 3. **BALLOT QUESTION.**—The Senate shall approve the language of the ballot question if the ballot question clearly describes the referendum resolution.
- e. **AMENDMENTS TO REFERENDUM.**—
 1. **ONLY SPONSORS MAY AMEND.**—Only the sponsor may amend the language of the referendum resolution or ballot question.
 2. **BEFORE APPROVAL.**—Before the Senate approves the language of the referendum resolution and the ballot question, the sponsor may amend the language.
 3. **AFTER APPROVAL.**—After the Senate approves the language of the referendum resolution and the ballot question, the language shall not be amended.
- f. **FRIVOLOUS REFERENDUM DETERMINATION.**—If the Senate approves the language of the referendum resolution and the ballot question, the Senate may

also determine the referendum to be frivolous in accordance with subsection 1001(c) of the Senate Constitution.

Suggested Practice 3-6.

The “direct effect” of a resolution issued under the advisory power is to take an official position on a question of interest to undergraduates. The Senate should not consider such a resolution to have violated section 306(d)(1)(B) merely because the proposed official position of the undergraduates, as expressed in the resolution, lacks specificity.

Referendum Question No. 1

Princeton University Undergraduate Student Government Election—Spring 2021

Sponsored by ELAINE WRIGHT '21

On March 28, 2021, the USG Senate approved the language of this condensation (ballot question) and referendum resolution as being clear and not claiming to exercise a power that cannot be exercised by an undergraduate referendum (XX members in favor, XX members opposed, XX members abstaining).

Condensation (Ballot Question)

Shall the undergraduates call on Princeton University to prioritize American Sign Language (ASL) scholarship by broadening access to ASL courses and allowing them to satisfy the undergraduate language requirement, and affirming that sign languages such as ASL and their associated cultures are equivalent to spoken languages and cultures taught or otherwise represented on campus?

Explanation (Submitted by the Sponsor)

The sponsor's explanation is due Friday, March 26 and may be updated before that date.

ASL classes are among the most popular and highest-rated offerings. In Fall 2020, over 250 students applied to take ASL I, exceeding five times the class capacity. Ratings for ASL I-IV courses have been between [4.77 and 5 out of 5](#) since the sequence's inception.

Despite student interest, the University has not granted ASL classes language credit, lagging behind peer institutions. As of 2019, [more than 230](#) American colleges and universities count ASL for their language requirement.

Furthermore, only one full-time faculty member has been tasked with teaching and grading all courses. The resulting size cap excludes a significant number of students from enrolling, and because language credit is not granted, many cannot complete the sequence when there are other competing requirements to fit into their busy schedules.

These policies unintentionally and falsely communicate that ASL and Deaf culture are not equivalent to other languages and cultures represented on campus. The administration must grant ASL language credit, permanently fund ASL courses, and hire additional faculty members to show that it recognizes and respects ASL, its signers, and their culture.

Once these critical needs are met, the University should offer multidisciplinary courses related to ASL and Deaf culture, which would further enrich the undergraduate curriculum and satisfy relevant degree and distribution requirements.

Engagement with ASL has yielded incredible results to date. Students, including a recent [Rhodes Scholar](#), have incorporated study of the language and its culture and linguistics into their theses. Others have [won entrepreneurship competitions](#) for founding an ASL research and education startup. If the University expanded the curriculum to encourage engagement with ASL and Deaf culture, more such excellent contributions could be made.

Referendum Resolution 2-2021
Referendum Question No. 1 (Spring 2021)
Sponsored by ELAINE WRIGHT '21

Referendum Resolution

Calling on the administration under the advisory power to prioritize American Sign Language (ASL) scholarship by broadening access to ASL courses and allowing them to satisfy the undergraduate language requirement, and affirming that sign languages such as ASL and their associated cultures are equivalent to spoken languages and cultures taught or otherwise represented on campus.

Resolved by the undergraduates of Princeton University,

SECTION 1. FACULTY, DEPARTMENT HEADS, AND ADMINISTRATION.

The undergraduates call on the faculty and administration to prioritize ASL scholarship, broaden access to ASL courses, and affirm that ASL, its signers, and their culture is equivalent to other spoken languages and cultures represented on campus by:

- (1) Granting foreign language credit to ASL I-IV courses and allowing the four-course sequence to satisfy the undergraduate language requirement.
- (2) Securing permanent funding for ASL courses.
- (3) Hiring additional qualified faculty members to support current and future course offerings and allow more students to enroll.
- (4) Expanding and cross-listing course offerings in special or advanced topics in order to foster increased engagement with ASL and Deaf culture, including among students without language background. Such courses could include ASL literature, poetry, and theater; theoretical or computational ASL linguistics; medical and legal ASL; Deaf history; American or global Deaf culture; and more.

SECTION 2. USG SENATE

As per Section 708 of the Elections Handbook, the USG Senate will write a report that explains the official position of the undergraduates as stated in the referendum resolution. The report will include action steps for the Senate and recommendations for the administration to further the undergraduates' official position.. The report must be written and sent to the administration by no later than the end of Spring 2021 final exams on May 14, 2021.

SECTION 3. TRANSMITTAL OF RESOLUTION

The Executive Secretary of the Senate shall transmit an official copy of this resolution to each of the following university officers:

- (1) Christopher L. Eisgruber '83, President of the University.
- (2) Jill Dolan, Dean of the College.
- (3) W. Rochelle Calhoun, Vice President for Campus Life.
- (4) Kathleen Deignan, Dean of Undergraduate Students.

BRIAN LI '24,
Chief Elections Manager

Attest:

JOSEPHINE KIM '23,
Executive Secretary of the Senate.



Senate Resolution 1-2021

Submitted by Christian Potter '22, President

Resolution

Amending the USG Projects Board Charter to permit funding requests that meet new criteria of adherence to the Social Contract, interpersonal interaction, and efforts to integrate others during the Spring 2021 semester.

Explanation

The USG Senate temporarily amends the Charter of the USG Projects Board to allow its funds to be allocated to student groups for members-oriented events that meet the criteria of adherence to the Social Contract, interpersonal interaction, and efforts to integrate others during the Spring 2021 semester.

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has hindered efforts to cultivate bonds within various Princeton groups that are central to the Princeton community at large, particularly affecting how newer community members integrate, explore student groups, and engage with upperclass students,

Whereas the Office of the Vice President for Campus Life and the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students have amended the regulations surrounding in-person gatherings to allow for student groups to organize in-person gatherings of their members within the guidelines of the social contract that governs campus life in the spring 2021 semester,

Whereas USG's funds for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters were granted directly from the University's central funds to promote community-building, rather than from student fees:

Now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Government,

SECTION 1.

In accordance with §308. Committee Charters of the USG Constitution, Section 506.6 of the USG Projects Board Charter is amended as follows for the purposes of the Spring 2021 semester only:

The following provision of the Charter of the USG Projects Board is suspended

§506 Criteria for Funding (6): "the inclusiveness and openness of the event"

to allow student groups to make funding requests that meet the following criteria:

- 1) Strict adherence to the letter and spirit of Princeton University's Social Contract for Spring 2021
- 2) A primary purpose of community-building through interpersonal interaction, rather than projects that can be undertaken outside of an interpersonal context (e.g., funding gear), including reasonable requests related to senior send-offs
- 3) The group in question has made and continues to make efforts to integrate newer community members and make itself open to prospective members.

The funding to meet these requests is limited to those past and future allocations by the USG Senate to Projects Board of funds directly from central University funds and not from student fees.

SECTION 2.

This resolution becomes effective upon approval by a majority of the Senate in accordance with Section 308(c)(2) of the Senate Constitution.

Approved March 28, 2021.

With ___ voting members of the Senate present and
By a vote of ___ in favor, ___ against, and ___ in abstention

Ashwin Mahadevan '22,
*Vice President of the Undergraduate Student Government and
Presiding Officer of the Senate*

Attest:

Josephine Kim '23
Executive Secretary of the Senate