Wesleyan Council on Student Affairs

**Standing Committee on Administrative Policy**

Tuesday, 16 September, 2014

Members in attendance: Mr. McCord, Ms. Groseclose, Ms. Green, Mr. Lherisson, Mr. Raees

Members not in attendance: Mr. Fleischer\*

\* Provided excuse for leave of absence prior to meeting.

Executive Summary

The Committee discussed the results of the internal poll for structural operations of WCSA. It agreed to remove Parliamentary and Hybrid systems from consideration due to entrenched opposition to every proposal on ballot among concerns on practicability of either system in the current dynamic.

It further discussed detailed matters of structure for executive and legislative officers.

Committee met at 12:10.

Result of Internal Polling for Executive Elections

The CHAIR (Mr. McCord) presented the results of the internal poll taken on Monday, 15 September 2014, in relation to Executive positions.

PART A - RANKED CHOICE VOTE TOTAL VOTES %

ROUND 1 – ALLOCATION OF FIRST PREFERENCES  
Presidential 7 27  
Parliamentary 8 31  
Hybrid 10 38  
Spoiled /Exhausted 1 4  
TOTAL 26 100

ROUND 2 – DISTRIBUTION OF PREFERENCES  
Parliamentary 10 38  
Hybrid 14 54  
Spoiled /Exhausted 2 8  
TOTAL 26 100

PART B - TWO OPTION CONDORCET TOTAL VOTES %

SECTION 1 – PRESIDENTIAL VS PARLIAMENTARY  
Presidential 13 46  
Parliamentary 12 46  
Spoiled /Exhausted 2 8  
TOTAL 26 100

SECTION 2 – PRESIDENTIAL VS HYBRID  
Presidential 10 38  
Hybrid 15 58  
Spoiled /Exhausted 1 4  
TOTAL 26 100

SECTION 3 – HYBRID VS PARLIAMENTARY  
Parliamentary 12 46  
Hybrid 13 50  
Spoiled /Exhausted 1 4  
TOTAL 26 100

The CHAIR read the comments attached to the ballots.

* I support the idea of electing a treasurer not through the full student body but through WCSA or application process
* I really hate the way we do it now
* I think we need to look at the student body to see if they would support change before implementing
* We need better ways to represent student body
* Great work!
* These votes indicate my current leanings
* Treasurer should come out of Budget Committee. There's too much info that only a member of BC would know
* Positives and negatives both ways -- one avoids popularity contest but other avoids power corruption from inside the inside, a la House of Cards
* Like the idea of internship for treasurer instead focus energy in increasing visibility of WCSA
* FB selection of treasurer sounds good but students should have some kind of vote
* go hybrid

The CHAIR read the volunteers for the Administrative Policy Review Group.

* Brian Williams (bewillia)
* Sam Schurer (saschure)
* Kyle Murray (ksmurray)
* Matt Mehaffy (mkmehaff)
* Elisabeth Raphael (ewraphae)

The CHAIR stated his opinion that, under the rules of Condorcet elections, there is no winner at the 67% threshold, although Hybrid has a significant advantage in polling.

The CHAIR stated his belief that, resultant of no Condorcet winner being returned, the Committee had two effective choices: 1) to take a referendum on the subject, or 2) to take the results as they stand and to make its own determination based thereof.

Ms. Groseclose asked if the holding of a referendum would be feasible in the timeline required for passage of the new Constitution act. The Chair stated that the Committee does have some time in which to work, although not an extensive amount, requiring near-immediate implementation of any poll.

Ms. Green inquired if turnout would be anything approaching substantial as a base for development. The Chair stated that turnout would likely mirror that found in general elections – around 20-30% of eligible voters.

Mr. Lherisson inquired as to the resolution of tensions under either replacement system proposal if a President and Vice-President were elected disjoint.

Ms. Groseclose stated that the holding of a referendum at this stage would be counter-productive, as the proposals themselves were not fully expanded upon.

Discussion of Parliamentary System Model

The CHAIR requested statements on the Parliamentary model’s function in practice.

Mr. Raees stated his concern that the Parliamentary system model would require parties, a principal to which the Committee had disagreed previously. He further stated that the Parliamentary model caused even greater insularity and problems in nations like Pakistan.

*Members agreeing –*

The CHAIR stated his opinion that the Parliamentary model was not functionally workable for the purposes of the organization for the reason that it would remove primary influence over leadership from the student body, a provision that would be met with significant opposition. The Chair suggested dismissing Parliamentary as a considered model.

By leave – agreed to.

Discussion of Hybrid System Model

An inquiry was raised about Presidential-Prime Ministerial systems, namely, that in such systems, a Prime Minister has effective power and the President simply acts as a head of state. The Chair stated that, for the purposes of the Committee’s consideration, the Hybrid model acts more like the French system.

Mr. Lherisson voiced his concern over the model that a President and Vice President would be selected from different groups, thereby making an unworkable situation. The Chair replied that that was the intention of the system: to foster compromise. He further stated that the idea of this system is to ensure that all parties have their leadership selected – both student body and WCSA membership.

*An unmoderated discussion regarding executive separation, veto, and leadership interests having occurred –*

Ms. Groseclose proposed that the Committee examine ways to repair the Presidential model to ensure all parties were satisfied.

By leave – agreed to.

Discussion of Presidential System Model

*A moderated discussion being declared –*

The following were proposed in moderated session:

* Separating President from legislative in a voting capacity
* Clarifying roles of President and of other members
* Vesting more power to Vice President in representing Executive to Legislative, and vice-versa
* Clarifying that the Presidency is meant to be a conciliatory role, not a role to lead government *or* opposition *or* crossbench.
* Enabling Legislative to select committee chairs
* Enabling Legislative to select a majority leader if it feels its interests are not being represented appropriately
* Changing confidence/no-confidence procedures
* Changing impeachment/recall procedures
* Appointment of a separate post of Chair (discussion postponed)

Posts of Treasury and Secretary

*A moderated discussion being declared –*

The following were proposed in moderated session:

* Members of Budget/Appropriations stated their beliefs to a member of the Committee that the Treasury post should be selected from the Budget Committee, due to the necessary work, demands, and qualifications of that post
* Budget being a paid internship and appointed post – worry about payment being a gateway to paying all members and about inequity it would create in positions between Treasury and other executive officers
* Possibility of splitting Treasury portfolio into separate Executive and Legislative portfolios
* Direct/indirect election of Treasury and Secretary

Committee adjourned at 13:15.