

**UC Resolution 2017-18A**  
**Resolution to Amend the University Council By-Laws**  
**As Recommended by the Governance Task Force**

Approved by Staff Senate:	August 17, 2017
Approved by Graduate Student Assembly:	September 21, 2017
Approved by Student Government Association:	September 29, 2017
Approved by Faculty Senate:	October 31, 2017
First Reading by University Council:	December 4, 2017
Second Reading by University Council:	February 5, 2018
Approval by University President:	February 5, 2018
Effective:	Beginning of the 2018-19 Academic Year

**WHEREAS**, Commission on Faculty Affairs Resolution 2015-16B was passed by University Council and approved by the President on February 1, 2016, providing a formal mechanism of consultation with the Faculty Senate during policy formulation by four commissions: The Commission on Faculty Affairs, Commission on Research, Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, and Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies; and

**WHEREAS**, on the same date, a joint resolution by the Commission on Student Affairs (CSA 2015-16B) and the Commission on Faculty Affairs (CFA 2015-16D) calling for the creation of a Governance Task Force was passed by University Council and approved by the President; and

**WHEREAS**, the charge of the Governance Task Force included collecting data on the impacts of CFA Resolution 2015-16B and based on an analysis of that data presenting recommendations for changes to the system of shared governance intended to enhance the consultative role of the constituent groups; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governance Task Force concluded that CFA 2015-16B achieved its intent of increasing the consultative role of Faculty Senate without causing any delays in the approval process for resolutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governance Task Force subsequently concluded that the other three constituent groups (staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students) would each benefit from having a parallel consultative process;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Article II, Section 2 of the bylaws of Virginia Tech's University Council be amended as follows:

**WITH CHANGES NOTED IN RED:**

2. In preparing the case for a new policy or program, each Commission shall keep constituencies (and also, as appropriate, other Commissions, the Faculty Senate,

the Staff Senate, the Graduate Student Assembly, and the Student Government Association) sufficiently well informed that relevant advice and counsel from outside the Commission proper can be brought to bear at the policy (program) formulation stage.

- A. For all Commissions, it is the responsibility of individual Commission members, mainly by means of their cross-representational affiliations, to keep affiliated governance bodies and constituencies informed and to afford the opportunity for consultative referral.
- B. ~~Those Commissions that deal with issues for which the faculty have primary responsibility, that is, the Commission on Faculty Affairs, the Commission on Research, the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies, shall consult with the Faculty Senate~~ All Commissions shall consult with the four formal constituent groups at the beginning of and during the process of developing resolutions. The four groups are identified as: Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association.
- C. Upon first reading at the Commission, resolutions shall be referred ~~by the Commission~~ to the ~~Faculty Senate~~ four constituent groups (Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association) ~~for the purpose of issuing~~ to provide each group the opportunity to issue a formal recommendation, unless ~~the Faculty Senate~~ the respective constituent group waives its right to do so (see subsection E. below). ~~The Faculty Senate~~ Each ~~respective constituent group~~ shall send its recommendation to the Commission upon the conclusion of its next regularly scheduled meeting, but in all cases within four weeks (counted while the University is in session). ~~(Failure of a constituent group to forward its recommendation to the Commission within four weeks will not delay a resolution from progressing to University Council.)~~ Any additional changes made to the resolution before its adoption by the Commission will be communicated to the ~~Faculty Senate~~ four constituent groups for their consideration ~~by the Senate~~ in formulating ~~its~~ each group's final recommendation to University Council. In addition, the Commission may request additional input from ~~the Faculty Senate~~ any of the groups before the final version of the resolution is completed.
- D. The Commission will send ~~the~~ its final version of the resolution to the ~~Faculty Senate~~ constituent groups upon the Commission's approval. The ~~Faculty Senate~~ groups will send ~~its~~ their final recommendation(s) to University Council for consideration by Council. ~~To be considered by University Council, any recommendations must be sent by the respective constituent group to the Secretary of University Council prior to the date of first reading at University Council.~~ The ~~Senate's~~ recommendation(s) of the group(s) will become a permanent appendix to the resolution not subject to revision or amendment by the Commission or by University Council.

- E. Waivers of the Referral process in subsection C. above may be conditional or unconditional and may be issued at any time during the discussion of the resolution by the Commission. Waivers become operative when submitted to the Commission chair by ~~a Faculty Senate officer~~ designated representative(s) of the respective constituent group.

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  - D. The Commission will send its final version of the resolution to the constituent groups upon the Commission's approval. The groups will send their final recommendation(s) to University Council for consideration by Council. To be considered by University Council, any recommendations must be sent by the

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**####**

## **Governance Task Force Final Report**

Date: November 3, 2017  
To: University Council  
From: Governance Task Force  
Subject: Final Report

### **Task Force Charge:**

- To collect data on the impacts of the CFA 2015-16B Resolution on Shared Governance, the key provision of which requires the following commissions to refer their resolutions to the Faculty Senate: The Commission on Faculty Affairs, The Commission on Research, the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies. The Faculty Senate, at its discretion, may issue a formal recommendation regarding the resolution that would accompany the resolution when it is presented to University Council for consideration. (Resolution passed 2/1/16).
- To recommend based on data analyzed any changes to the system of shared governance intended to enhance the consultative role of the constituent groups.
- To analyze the consultative role of the respective constituent groups.

### **List of the Task Force Members:**

Dr. Sam Easterling (chair)  
Kim O'Rourke (Secretary of University Council)  
Rami Dalloul (Faculty Senate)  
Sue Teel (Staff Senate)  
Matthew Chan (GSA)  
Alexa Parsley (SGA)  
Ellen Plummer (Provost Office)  
Gary Long (CUSP)  
Joe Merola (CFA)  
Andrew Neilson (COR)  
Scott Salom (CGSP)

**Overview of Task Force Work Plan:** The Governance Task Force met seven times (September 21, 2016, October 19, 2016, December 13, 2016, February 8, 2017, February 23, 2017, April 12, 2017, & November 3, 2017) to discuss and make recommendations on the improvement of the current shared governance structure at Virginia Tech. The Task Force also discussed areas of shared governance that present challenges (specifically for the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association).

### **Task Force Outcomes:**

1. The Task Force determined that there were no negative impacts associated with CFA 2015-16B Resolution on Shared Governance. The requirement for resolutions from specific commissions to be sent to Faculty Senate for review and comment did not delay the progress of a resolution through the governance system. As a result, the Task Force recommends expansion of this process to include review by all four constituents groups of resolutions emanating from all commissions. (Refer to outcome No. 2.)
2. UC Resolution 2017-18A – Resolution to Amend the University Council By-Laws as Recommended by the Governance Task Force (attached) has been approved by the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association and will be presented to University Council for first reading on December 4, 2017. This resolution will be sent to all commissions prior to the December 4 University Council meeting as a courtesy.
3. A calendar has been added to the publicly accessible governance website ([www.governance.vt.edu](http://www.governance.vt.edu)) where committees, commissions, and councils can add meeting times and locations.
4. Suggestions were made for a central office or person to work with commissions on governance training. The new Office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance will assume this responsibility.
5. The Office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance is implementing formal Governance 101 training session. Requests for training can be sent to [abmyers@vt.edu](mailto:abmyers@vt.edu).

### **Other Findings:**

1. There is a need to develop a more effective transition process of leadership of commissions, SGA, and GSA to ensure transfer of knowledge and best practices.
2. The Governance Task Force discussed a potential change the University Council Constitution to require approval by the GSA and SGA (along with Faculty and Staff Senates) before any proposed change to the constitution goes to University Council. The Task Force determined that this matter was beyond the scope of its charge.

This report concludes the work of the Governance Task Force

Submitted by:

Dr. Sam Easterling

Chair of the Task Force

**Resolution GSA2017-18A****Approval Timeline**

Approved, GSA Executive Board  
Approved, GSA General Assembly  
Approved, Staff Senate  
Approved, Faculty Senate  
Approved, Student Government Association  
First Reading, University Council  
Approved, University Council  
Approval, University President  
Effective,

**Executive Resolution****RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL BY-LAWS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE GOVERNANCE TASK FORCE: ESTABLISHING A GOVERNANCE REFERRAL SYSTEM**

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VirginiaTech



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**F-17-3R**

**Sponsors:**

**Jake Tabor**

**Jeremy Smith**

**Approval and acceptance of newly granted powers of shared governance to the Student Government Association as a result of a Governance Task Force's findings**

**WHEREAS**, a joint resolution calling for the creation of a Governance Task Force was presented by the Commission on Student Affairs and the Commission on Faculty Affairs and was later passed by University Council and approved by President Sands; and

**WHEREAS**, this Governance Task Force concluded their research with the findings that all four constituent groups: Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and the Student Government Association would benefit from a new system of shared governance; and

**WHEREAS**, this new system would grant our Organization power to issue a formal recommendation to any resolution being considered by a University Commission;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Student Government Association of Virginia Tech hereby approves and welcomes the recommended changes to Article II, Section 2 of the University Council by-laws regarding a new process for shared governance power.

Chair of the General Assembly

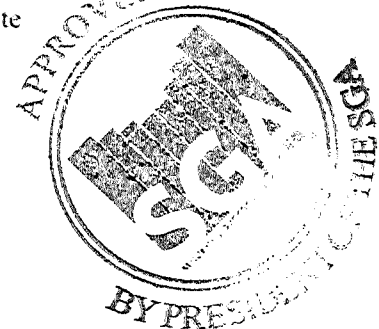
9-29-17

Date

President of Student Government Association

9-29-17

Date



*Invent the Future*

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY