



# Rules and Procedures Committee

## Students' Senate

### Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Anurag Sahay | Parliamentarian



## End Term Report

### Parliamentarian, Students' Senate & Rules and Procedures Committee

The Rules and Procedures Committee of the Students' Senate (2013-14) consisted of the following members:

Anurag Sahay	Parliamentarian, Students' Senate	Convener ( <i>ex-officio</i> )
Praveen Honhar	UG Senator	Member
Vivek B.	PG Senator	Member
V. Srinivasan	Chairperson, Students' Senate	Member ( <i>ex-officio</i> )

The Rules and Procedures also invited the following individuals from time to time when agenda items relevant to them, or when agenda items with their expertise were discussed:

- Ankit Bhutani
- Karthik Balasundaram
- Himanshu Pandey (President, Students' Gymkhana)
- Sohil Bansal (General Secretary, Films and Media Council)

The Committee met five times respectively on:

- 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2013
- 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2013
- 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2014
- 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2014
- 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2014

The following items were considered by the Rules and Procedures Committee:

#### **1. Constitutional amendment regarding UGSAC and PGSAC.**

The Committee considered the proposal for two new standing subcommittees of the Senate, the Undergraduate Students' Academic Council (UGSAC) and the Postgraduate Students' Academic Council (PGSAC) sent to the Committee by the Senate for its opinion.

The Committee deliberated on the issue and came up with text to be proposed to the Senate for amendment. The Committee then deliberated on its opinion of the constitutional amendment. The Committee strongly favoured the amendment, and



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believed that the amendment would help increase awareness among the students about academic issues and the Institute decisions regarding academics. Further, the Committee believed that it would help provide a forum to the students' representatives to the various academic committees of the Institute to communicate with each other and formulate a coherent opinion for students on items that affect more than one department. Finally, the Committee believed that such standing committees would inadvertently increase the involvement of the Students' Senate itself on matters relating to academics, something that the Committee felt has been missing in the past few years. Hence, the Committee recommended that the Senate pass this constitutional amendment. The Senate has since passed this amendment.

## **2. Constitutional amendment pertaining to the expansion of standing subcommittees of the Senate**

The Committee considered the proposal to expand the Rules and Procedures Committee, the Nominations Committee and the Steering Committee sent to the Committee by the Senate for its opinion.

The Committee also considered the issue of the Senate's inability to sometimes elect PG Senators to its standing committees. In this regard, the Committee proposed that a failsafe be added, allowing the Senate to elect a UG Senator if no interested PG Senators are found, and vice-versa. It was thus decided that, with this failsafe, for all three of these subcommittees, the UG Senators shall be increased from 1 to 2, and the PG Senators shall be increased from 1 to 2. The Committee then drafted the text of the constitutional amendment.

The Committee deliberated on its opinion of the constitutional amendment. The Committee strongly favoured the amendment, and believed that the amendment would help improve the working of the Senate by enhancing the efficiency of these committees, and allowing these committees to handle more work that the Senate does not need to deal with. Hence, the Committee recommended that the Senate pass this constitutional amendment. The Senate has since passed this amendment.

## **3. To consider the constitutional amendment to increase the representation of girls in the Senate.**

The Committee considered the proposal to increase the representation of girls in the Senate by splitting the "Girls' Representative" post to a "UG Girls' Representative" and "PG Girls' Representative". The Committee then drafted the constitutional amendment.

The Committee deliberated on its opinion of the constitutional amendment. The Committee strongly favoured the amendment and felt that there was a need for such an



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increase in female representation. Hence, the Committee recommended that the Senate pass this constitutional amendment. The Senate has since passed this amendment.

#### 4. The Students' Governance Report and its applicability to various posts in the Students' Gymkhana.

The Chairperson, Students' Senate had briefed the Committee about the context of the Students' Governance Report and its current applicability to the Gymkhana. The Committee had been requested by the Senate to consider the report and comment on its applicability to the posts of the Students' Gymkhana, so that it could be incorporated into the Constitution. The Rules and Procedures recommended that the Senate adopt the following in this regard:

For the following academic programs of the institute, "normal duration" is defined as –

Undergraduate (BT/BS)	8 Semesters
Dual Degree (BT-MT/BS-MS)	10 Semesters
Double Major (BT-BT/BS-BS/BT-BS)	10 Semesters
MTech	4 Semesters
MSc (two-year)	4 Semesters
MDes, MBA and other eq. programmes	4 Semesters
PhD	8 Semesters

For all nominated or elected posts of the Gymkhana (including the officebearers and other council, festival and senate positions) except for nominees to Institute level committees, a student will only be eligible to apply if:

- i. He/she has not exceeded their normal duration (except for PhD students) or their maximum duration as defined in the UG or PG Manual (for all students),
- ii. He/she has permission from her advisor (in case of PhD students who have exceeded normal duration or PhD students who are in an advance stage of their thesis).
- iii. He/she will not exceed normal duration during the tenure of the posts for which he/she is applying and he/she guarantees in writing his/her stay on campus during the tenure of the post.
- iv. He/she has not been put on Warning or Academic Probation by the SUGC.
- v. He/she has not been debarred from holding positions by standing committees of the Academic Senate (in particular, by the SSAC).
- vi. He/she has a CPI greater than 6.5 (for UG students) and 7.5 (for PG students who have not completed their coursework) and 7.0 (for PG students who have completed their coursework).



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For nominees to Institute level committees (in particular, Students' Senate nominees to standing committees of the Academic Senate), all the above rules except (i), (ii) and (iii) shall apply.

Further the Committee recommended the following:

- a. The Constitution should be amended by the Senate to include the abovementioned rules in the Constitution and/or its appendices.
- b. When appointing any position, the Senate shall specify the tenure of the post as required in the above rules.

The Committee directed its Chair to forward the above to the Senate for its consideration. The Senate has since accepted the above recommendations. However, the Constitution has not yet been updated to reflect the changes.

#### **5. Unified Design Team for Festivals/Gymkhana**

The proposal for the Unified Design Team for the Gymkhana had been accepted by the Senate, after which the Senate had sent the proposal to the Committee for its opinion as well as any constitutional amendment if necessary. The Committee discussed the third proposal in detail and agreed that the item did not require a constitutional amendment and could be decided merely by a decision of the Senate to amend the Appendix of the Constitution pertaining to Festival affairs. The Committee further directed the Chair to forward this to the Senate for its consideration, which the Senate had accepted.

#### **6. Inquiry of the President, Students' Gymkhana regarding the voting norms in the selection panels of Festival core teams.**

The President, Students' Gymkhana had sent an inquiry to me regarding the voting norms in the selection panels of Festival core teams. In particular, he had inquired regarding whether each member of the panel has equal voting rights.

The Committee considered the matter in detail, and consulted Ankit Bhutani and Karthik Balasundaram for their experience in such selection panels. The Committee noted that Article 8.13 (c) of Appendix III to the Constitution of the Students' Gymkhana states the following:

**c. The Students' Senate will set up an interview panel which composes of the following people:**

- i. Previous Festival Coordinator**
- ii. Respective Core Team Member (Head, Marketing/Finance/Events/Security)**
- iii. General Secretary of the respective council (if applicable)**
- iv. President, Students' Gymkhana**



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#### v. Chairperson, Students' Senate

**Other than the above, Senate may invite incoming/outgoing President, Chairperson and/or respective General Secretary as the special invitees for their comments.**

The Committee decided that each member of this panel should have one vote. The Committee further noted that it does not make logical sense for each Head/Festival Coordinator/General Secretary to have one vote since one may at a future date have much more than one Head/Festival Coordinator/General Secretary in the panel. The Committee thus agreed that all Festival Coordinators shall have one vote combined, all Heads shall have one vote combined and all General Secretaries shall have one vote combined. The Committee directed me to forward this position to the Senate for its consideration, which it has since accepted.

#### 7. Constitutional amendments due to decisions taken by the Senate regarding the GRC recommendations, COFA etc.

The Senate had sent several of its decisions to the Committee that were proposed by the Gymkhana Review Committee which involved a review of the entire Constitution. The Committee deliberated on the issue and agreed with the Senate. The Committee rewrote the main text of the Constitution (which has since been accepted by the Senate) to incorporate these changes. I am not mentioning the changes made here since they are quite a lot, however anybody who wishes can see the new Constitution and compare.

Furthermore, the Committee proposed to the Senate that the Appendices of the Constitution also be written. The Senate accepted the same, and directed me to rewrite these appendices to incorporate changes accepted by the Senate as well as changes above which were to be incorporated. **This has not yet been done**

Thus, the following items are still pending, and will have to be considered by the new Senate, its Chairperson and its Parliamentarian:

- Incorporating the decisions taken as per 4 in the Constitution or its appendices.
- Incorporating the other decisions taken by the Students' Senate (2013-14) in the appendices of the Constitution.
- Rewriting the following appendices:
  - Rules and Procedures of the Students' Senate
  - Rules and Procedures regarding Financial Affairs
  - Festival Manual



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- Writing the following appendices from scratch:
  - Constitution of the SAC (Students' Academic Council)
  - Constitution of the COSHA (Council of Students for Hostel Affairs)
  - Eligibility Criteria for Gymkhana posts

#### Recommendations:

- **Parliamentarian's Webpage** – I maintained a webpage on the Students' Senate website where I put up Agendas, Minutes, Opinions of the Rules and Procedures Committee, Constitutional amendments tabled and so on. Sadly, I was not able to maintain this webpage throughout my tenure – I have not updated it since the start of the 2013-14/IIInd Semester. However, I feel that something like this should be maintained by all Committee/Council Conveners, particularly for bigger committees with their own Conveners, viz. UGSAC, PGSAC and COSHA. I hope that the incoming Parliamentarian will also try to maintain such a page in order to increase the transparency and accessibility of the Students' Senate.
- **Policy decisions** – In my manifesto, I had said that I find that a lot of policy decisions taken by the Senate are not written down anywhere other than the Minutes of Senate meetings, and hence with time they get forgotten or lost. I had proposed that I would prepare a document every time a policy is approved by the Senate, which would be uploaded on the Senate website for continuity. I have, however revised my opinion. I now believe that all policies such as this should be maintained in the Constitution, or its appendices if it does not fit well in the main text, and I recommend that in the future any policy decision taken by the Senate be sent to the Rules and Procedures Committee so that it can be incorporated in the Constitution somewhere.

I would like to end the report by thanking Praveen, Vivek and Srinivasan for their participation in the activities of the Rules and Procedures Committee, and for trusting me when I wished that the Committee leave a certain part of our collective job simply to me. I would also like to thank Karthik and Ankit for coming to meetings as special invitees even though they are technically no longer holding any position of responsibility in the Senate or otherwise which compelled them to do so. The guidance of experienced people like them is, I believe, an invaluable asset to the Senate, and I would like to thank them for it.

**Anurag Sahay**  
**Parliamentarian, Students' Senate**