INTRODUCTION OF BILL 56-B-31: IN SUPPORT OF A REFERENDUM TO REFORM THE STUDENT SENATE VACANCIES COMMITTEE

The Student Senate Vacancies Committee is currently comprised of the Student Body President, the Student Body Vice President, one member of the Executive Board, one Off-Campus Senator, and one On-Campus Senator as outlined in the Student Body Constitution. This committee is tasked with appointing new Student Senators to the Student Senate when vacancies arise. The committee fills appointments upon a majority vote within the committee and the nominees are approved with the advice and consent of the entire Senate. This appointments process allows Student Senate to have all 30 Senator positions filled as elected Senators resign or graduate throughout their year-long term. However, if a certain number of vacancies exist, a special election is held.

While the Students of UW-Eau Claire ratified the latest version of the Student Body Constitution just four years ago in 2009 the vacancies process outlined in Article III, Section 1, Part F requires maintenance. Bill 56-B-31 alters this section of the Constitution changing the composition of the vacancies committee to the Student Body President, the Student Body Vice President and three Student Senators at least one of which must be from the on-campus community. This change allows broader representation on the committee from the Student Senate. Vacancies Committee Members from the Student Senate are nominated and elected from the floor of the body during a regular meeting.

As with any Constitutional amendment, this must be approved through a student-wide referendum. Bill 56-B-31 proposes this referendum be put to a vote on the Student Senate general election ballot in April. The language for the referendum question is outlined within the bill and reads:

“Do you a student of the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire, authorize an amendment to the Student Body Constitution to change the Student Senate vacancies committee membership to include the Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, and three Student Senators at least one of which must be an on-campus Senator? This changes the membership from its current makeup consisting of the President, Vice President, one off-campus Senator, one on-campus Senator and one member of the Executive Board. The vacancies committee appoints new Student Senators to Student Senate when elected Senators resign their position before their year-long term has expired.”

I look forward to introducing this Bill on Monday, February 25th during the Student Senate’s weekly scheduled floor-period.

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