

Student Assembly Trustee Delegation Proposal

In the Fall 2020 semester, Student Assembly unanimously passed a resolution which called for the Student Assembly President and Vice President to assume an additional role as “student trustees.” In this capacity, they would become voting members of the Board of Trustees, to be present at the quarterly Board meetings.

However, upon discussing the details of the proposal with Board of Trustees Chairman Steve Sadove, Vice Chairwoman Linda Johnson, Vice Chairman Robert Delaney, and Secretary Gill King, as well as President David Wippman, we now see that it was far from perfect. First, placing the responsibility of being well-informed voting members — understanding the necessary breadth and depth of issues, topics, and procedures — on just two students whose term lasts but a year is unrealistic. Second, student presence on solely the quarterly Board meetings is not helpful in the goal to include student voice in Trustee decision-making; the most important seat, rather, is at Trustee committee meetings, where the real problem-solving and decision-making happens.

Taking these issues into consideration as well as many others discussed at the meeting, we instead propose to create a group of student “Committee Delegates” to ensure meaningful student voice within Trustee committees. By distributing the responsibility of student representation on Trustee committees across a larger group of students, we avoid the pitfall of creating an unmanageable amount of work for the student delegate.

These student Committee Delegates are official, though non-voting, members of their committees — not simply “invitees.” We recommend 8 Committee Delegates, each serving on two of the following Trustee committees:

- i. Academic Affairs
- ii. Student Affairs
- iii. Advancement
- iv. Enrollment
- v. Buildings, Grounds, & Equipment
- vi. Budget and Finance
- vii. Nominations
- viii. Investments

We have selected these relevant committees because it is clear to us that they would benefit from student input. The only committees which would not gain student representation are the Executive Committee and the Audit Committee.

The Committee Delegates would be organized within a new branch of Student Assembly, which currently is composed of the Central Council (what is colloquially referred to as Student Assembly), the Honor Court, and the Judicial Board. This “Trustee Delegation” would be chaired by a single student, the “Chief Student Delegate.” The primary function of the Chief Student Delegate is to be a voting member of the Board of Trustees and to attend the quarterly Board meetings in that capacity. They would also serve on the Board Governance and Affairs committee as well as be a third member of the all-important Student Affairs committee.

The Trustee Delegation would have periodic meetings to discuss as a group all of the various projects going on in their respective committees. This way the Chief Delegate can be informed in the quarterly Board meetings, rendering their vote meaningful and not simply a formality. The SA President and Vice President would be ex officio members of the Trustee Delegation, and party to their meetings. In addition, the Trustee Delegation would be expected to interface, present and exchange with the Central Council often. The Trustee Delegation would be responsible for reporting back to the student body the public decisions and publishable work of the Board of Trustees, and might also collect input and feedback from the student body.

Delegate Selection Process:

Chief Student Delegate:

The Chief Student Delegate will be a one-year term, with a one semester transition period after their appointment but before their term begins on July 1st. The appointment process for the Chief Student Delegate is as follows: The Central Council will publish notice of the selection process to all students. Each class delegation will select, by a majority vote, a nominee from among the entire list of names of interested and qualified students responding to the notice. Each class delegation’s nominee will be submitted to the SA president, who themselves has the option to override these nominations and appoint someone of their own choosing. Once new members have been chosen, the Student Assembly shall offer the student body the opportunity to offer their input regarding the appointments, before holding a vote to confirm the new appointments. At this meeting, the nominee must deliver prepared remarks to the Assembly to show their qualification for and commitment to the position. Following these remarks, there is a period of questioning. The Central Council must vote to confirm the appointment with a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority. If the nominee does not get enough votes to be confirmed, the SA President must appoint someone new.

In the case of a sudden or unexpected vacancy, the SA President must promote one of the sitting Committee Delegates to the position of Chief Student Delegate. At the next SA meeting, the Central Council can vote to confirm with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority. That appointee holds the position until the standard transition to the next Chief Student Delegate. A new Committee Delegate must be appointed to replace the promoted one.

Committee Delegates:

Committee Delegates will be selected during the spring semester of the academic year by the outgoing Board. The Central Council will publish notice of the selection process to all students. A delegate appointment committee of senior officials of Hamilton students and staff will then select, by a majority vote, the student members from among the names of interested and qualified persons responding to the notice. This delegate appointment committee shall include the SA President and Vice President, the sitting Chief Student Delegate, the newly appointed Deputy Student Delegate, the President of the College, and the Director of Student Activities. Once new members have been chosen, the Student Assembly shall offer the student body the opportunity to offer their input regarding the appointments, before holding a vote to confirm the new appointments. The Central Council must vote to confirm each appointment with a 2/3 majority. If a nominee does not get enough votes to be confirmed, the delegate appointment committee must choose a different applicant. Committee Delegates shall serve for a one-year term with a two-term limit with approval by the committee.

Delegate Removal Process:

The student delegates serve at the pleasure of the Central Council of Student Assembly. The Chief Student Delegate, Deputy Student Delegate, or any Committee Delegate can be removed from their position through a vote of no confidence. In this situation, a representative on the Central Council motions for a vote of no confidence. If seconded, the Assembly must deliberate over the causes of the loss of confidence. For a student delegate to be removed, the vote of no confidence must pass by a 2/3 majority, culminating in a resignation by the delegate in question.

Relevant [Bylaws of the Board of Trustees:](#)

- + Article I. Section 6. *Prohibitions*: “No member of the college faculty or administrative staff other than the President shall be a member of the board.”
- + Article III. Section 3. *Officers of the College*
 - + (d) *Other Officers*: “The Board, with the approval of the President, may appoint additional officers who shall hold office at the will and pleasure of the Board.”
- + Article IX. *Amendment*: “These Bylaws may be modified or amended by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees present at any regular meeting.”