

## **Report of the Student Regent on the General Assembly of Student Councils**

Second GASC for Academic Year 2011-2012

24 May 2012

To address unfinished business from the first General Assembly of Student Councils (GASC), a second was mandatory before the Student Regent Selection. The next assembly was convened on 31 March 2012 at the Engineering Theater of Melchor Hall, UP Diliman. It was hosted by the Diliman League of College Councils.

The GASC successfully approved the house rules and the version of the Codified Rules for Student Regent Selection (CRSRS) that will be used for the SR Selection. This paves the way for the start of the nomination process.

The delay in the schedule can be attributed to the disciplinary case arising from an attempt to influence one student council in the previous GASC. An investigation was initiated by the Student Regent, and thereafter, a complaint for serious misconduct filed against three students in UP Visayas mid-February. The Chancellor of UP Visayas assumed jurisdiction over the case on 9 March 2012. The case is still unresolved.

### **Attendance**

Forty-five out of 52 student councils were represented at the assembly, with some 280 individuals attending. This is a consistent turn out from the previous GASC. The roll was called at around noon of 31 March 2012.

The representation of the Asian Institute of Tourism was not counted for their failure to confirm. In the same light, the participation of three other student councils was limited for irregularities in compliance with registration requirements. This requirement is a matter addressed in the House Rules.

### **Agenda**

The only items agenda left on the agenda are the approval of the House Rules, and proposals to amend the CRSRS. The Student Regent briefly presented the relevant circumstances, referring to the alleged misconduct, and pertinent updates between the first and the second GASCs.

### **House Rules**

The House Rules were discussed at length, and then finally approved after six hours. As with the previous assembly, the arguments concentrated on the confirmation requirement. The proposed rule is to allow only confirmed delegates to attend the assembly. Confirmation helps the Student Regent and secretariat to appraise the legitimacy of representation by the delegate, determine quorum and arrange logistical matters.

In the previous GASC, two student councils stood to lose recognition in the assembly. Here, four student councils admitted that they failed to send in their intent to participate and the names

of their representatives. The body resolved their dilemma by granting them the opportunity to participate in the discussion, but not the privilege to vote.

By virtue of the strict 9:00 pm close of the venue, the body agreed to move to a venue which can accommodate the rest of the event. Lean Alejandro Hall, the gallery at the rooftop of Vinzons Hall, was hurriedly selected and prepared by the secretariat with the assistance of the Philippine Collegian.

The House Rules were used to check unruly behaviour by members of the assembly. Later, when student council officers, one from UP Baguio and two from UP Diliman, had an altercation that threatened to go physical, the presiding officer decided to eject the members from the assembly. They were reinstated after they regained their composure.

### **Codified Rules for Student Regent Selection**

Discussions and debate on the CRSRS began in Vinzons Hall. There was initially an impasse on whether to proceed, as some student councils felt that the assembly was still compromised. This time became emotionally charged, when the student council officer who had exposed the “attempted bribery” manifested that she has been discredited, maligned, harassed and ostracized for her actions.

For the record, this student council officer belongs to no political party. It is thus the duty of the Office of the Student Regent to look after her interests and welfare, without regard for political colors.

The main motion on hand was whether to approve the CRSRS in its present version, or not. The negative position would open the floor to more specific discussion of the proposed amendments:

- 1) Include minimum academic standing as a requirement for nominees
- 2) Exclude the Katipunan ng mga Sangguniang Mag-aaral sa UP from the selection process
- 3) Allow college student councils to vote directly in the system-wide process
  - a. All university and college student councils will have one vote each
  - b. Apply a population-based scheme for every mother unit
    - 10,000 students = one vote
    - 10,001- 20,000 students = two votes
    - Above 20,000 students = three votes
- 4) Extend the effectivity of the CRSRS to two years
- 5) Prohibit consecutive selection as Student Regent

As proposed by the Student Regent, the assembly entertained arguments for a specified time, and presented in a fashion similar to court oral arguments. Each side was given about 15 minutes, and another five for rebuttals.

Voting on the motion, 25 student councils approved the CRSRS, as 12 opposed. Thirteen student councils were absent. Amendments to the CRSRS needed a majority vote of all student councils in the UP system, while approval of the CRSRS in its current form needed a majority vote of all student councils present. The CRSRS was declared in force at 2:23 am on 1 April 2012.

## **Resolutions and action plans**

The selection process started immediately after the GASC. Informally, nominations opened on 1 April 2012. The official timeline is as follows:

Open nominations – 10-23 April 2012

College Search Committee (CSC) deliberations – 24-30 April 2012

Submission of CSC nominees to the University search committee – 30 April 2012

Resolution of protests in CSC deliberations – 1-7 May 2012

University Search Committee (USC) deliberations – 8-14 May 2012

Submission of USC nominees to the OSR – 14 May 2012

Resolution of protests in USC deliberations – 15-21 May 2012

GASC for SR Selection – 22-23 May 2012