



Executive Action Sheet for Senate Legislation

- Senate Bill 331- 008  
 Resolution 331-

I, Sydney Thayer, President of the Student Assembly of William & Mary do hereby:

- Approve  
 Veto

The Student Assembly Senate Legislation:

The Bolstering Ethics of Election Fairness (BEEF) Act Part 2

*Sydney Thayer*

President, 331st Student Assembly (23-24)

DATE: 5/3/23

0331<sup>st</sup> Student Assembly  
Senate Bill 331-008

A Bill

*To reform and address gaps in the code of Student Assembly regarding campaign and office vacancies*

**The Bolstering Ethics of Election Fairness (BEEF) Act Part 2**

An Act of the 331st Student Assembly of William & Mary,

Sponsored by Senator Max Berckmueller ('23), Senator Sean Nguyen ('25)

Co-Sponsored by Senator Sophia Tamera ('24)

Supported by IEC Member Mateo Huerta ('24)

WHEREAS, the Code and Constitution of the Student Assembly are the governing documents of the organization;

WHEREAS, to maximize the effectiveness of filling a vacancy in a class president or class senator position, it is imperative to involve a diverse array of voices from across the class and promote a high degree of collaboration;

WHEREAS, the ever developing nature of the world of technology allows individuals to stay increasingly involved and connected across significant distances through platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meetings;

WHEREAS, it is a common occurrence for senators and class presidents to not physically be present for numerous senate and committee meetings during a regular session due to illness, scheduling issues, and other appropriate reasons;

WHEREAS, William & Mary endeavors to encourage students to participate in study abroad experiences through the COLL 300 requirement;

WHEREAS, the Reves Center offers that, "the significance of an international academic community lies at the core of the mission of William & Mary," and "A university cannot be truly global without a diverse community of students, scholars, faculty and staff. Exchange of ideas and being exposed to new ways of thinking make our university more dynamic for all students;"

WHEREAS, a student should not be significantly limited in their ability to participate in organizations such as the Senate of Student Assembly due to an interest in studying abroad;

WHEREAS, currently students planning to study abroad in a spring semester would be ineligible to hold the position of class senator or class president for TWO full sessions of Student Assembly;

WHEREAS, there are presently regulations in the Student Assembly code which allow for incumbent candidates to acquire an advantage during campaigning over those who are running for office for the first time;

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of Student Assembly to ensure that all aspects of our elections are conducted in the most fair and equitable manner;

WHEREAS, Student Assembly recognizes the importance of holding competitive elections in ensuring the continual presence of the most qualified members of the elected body;

WHEREAS, the inclusion of write-in candidates has opened the door to a host of new potential issues during Student Assembly elections;

Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Student Assembly of William & Mary:

1. Amends **SECTION II: Election Dates, Special Elections and Special Appointments** in the Constitution of the Student Assembly to as read as:

- a. **SECTION II: Election Dates, Special Elections and Special Appointments**
  - i. **Clause III.**

If an Undergraduate Class Presidency or Senate seat is vacant prior to that year's freshman elections, a special election shall be held to fill the seat in conjunction with said elections. In all other cases, the President of the Class alongside the Senators of the Class to which the vacancy belongs shall, within fourteen academic days, appoint a member of that Class to fill the seat.

2. Amends **§2.1-2.1. Election** in the Code of the Student Assembly to as read as:

- a. **§2.1-2.1. Election**
  - i. **Clause 2:**

Should a Senator vacate their seat, the Class President of their social class shall announce an open application for the seat. All applications shall be reviewed by the Class President and Senators of that social class. At least 4 students will be given the opportunity to interview. The Class President, ~~in conjunction with the Senators, shall then~~ and Class Senators shall conduct a review process to select their top candidate. Should a tiebreaker be necessary, the relevant Class President shall serve as the tiebreaker. The position shall become open during the next election cycle, and shall be conducted according

to the normal procedures as outlined in Title 5 Chapter 3 of the Code of the Student Assembly.

3. Amends §5.2-7. **Election Procedure** in the Code of the Student Assembly to read as:

a. §5.2-7. **Election Procedure**

i. **Clause 6:**

Between a month and 14 days before the election, the Elections Commission shall provide/host mandatory candidate information sessions. If held in-person, at least 4 mandatory candidate information sessions shall be held, over no less than a 6 day period. If offered as an asynchronous virtual session, the information sessions will be advertised and available for at least a 6 day period. Potential candidates participating in the asynchronous virtual session will be required to complete a short quiz at the end of session to be marked as completed. The availability of Candidate Info Sessions shall be announced no later than one week prior and successive communications shall be sent out. A potential candidate must participate in a Candidate Info Session. ~~The Elections Commission may choose to offer only in person, only asynchronous/virtual OR a hybrid of both options.~~ At minimum, one info session should be held as an asynchronous virtual session. 14 days before the election, declarations of candidacy and a statement by the candidate for inclusion on the ballot are due. The Commission will notify the candidates and provide them with the listing of candidates and offices sought. The Commission will offer all candidates the opportunity to change their position sought within the Student Assembly up to ten days before the election. The interim change period will be openly visible, with candidates being notified what changes have been made to the candidate list as they arise. Any changes made to the candidate list must be announced to all candidates within 12 hours. In the event that the election timeframe is interrupted by a scheduled school break and the school is out of session, the period of the break shall not count as part of the time frame. The time frame shall resume immediately after school re-enters session.

4. Amends §5.3-8. **Campaign Regulations** in the Code of the Student Assembly to read as:

a. §5.3-8. **Campaign Regulations**

i. **Add Clause 16a:**

All write-in candidates will be required to submit a form to the IEC prior to polls closing which provides their contact information so that they may be contacted efficiently by the IEC in the event that the candidate wins the election.

ii. **Add Clause 16b:**

The IEC will not be required to contact a write-in candidate after the results of the election are confirmed unless they have won their race.

**iii. Add Clause 16c:**

In an election where there are fewer candidates running than there are positions available, a write-in candidate will have to win at least 20% of the overall vote in order to be eligible to be certified as the winner of the election.