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Emma Kiefer

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Associated Students of the University of Montana
Resolution Amending Article IV, Section 7 of the ASUM Bylaws
September 18, 2021
SB 15-21/22

Authored by: Emma Kiefer, ASUM Senator;

Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) Bylaws aim to facilitate an efficient, adaptable, and democratic representative body¹;

Whereas, Article IV, Section 7 of the ASUM Bylaws is generally vague and does not provide rules for the interview process;

Whereas, The Chair of the Interview Committee (the Committee) changes frequently and is not a permanent position;

Whereas, The Chair of the Committee currently has no rules guiding the approval of applications, the interview process, the voting process, or a timeline for the processing of applications;

Whereas, The Committee has struggled in the past with facilitating interviews in a timely manner, and failed to consider applications for over five months in one case²;

Whereas, The Committee carries out one of the most important duties of the Senate by approving or disapproving applications;

Whereas, In order to be efficient, the Committee should have a set timeline and basic voting rules for processing all applications;

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That Article IV, Section 7 of the ASUM Bylaws be amended to read:

Section 7. Interview Committee

(1) The Interview Committee shall be composed of seven (7) voting members, of which five (5) shall be Senators and the remaining two (2) shall be Senators and/or students-at-large at the discretion of the Vice President.

(2) A Senator shall chair the Committee.

(3) The Committee shall be responsible for interviewing and recommending individuals to the President for positions within ASUM. This may include, but is not limited to, vacant Senate seats, Student Regent Nominees, the ASUM Lobbyist, and the Student Political Action Director.

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¹ ASUM Bylaws Preamble

² Appendix I - Emma Kiefer Personal Statement

44 (4)The President may request the Committee to convene to interview and rec-
45 ommend any other positions within ASUM except classified staff.

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47 (5)The President and the Committee shall be required to meet following the
48 conclusion of the interviewing process and disclose the reasoning behind
49 both their recommendations.

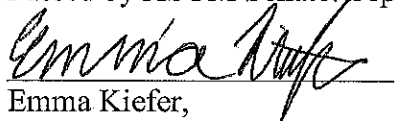
50
51 (6)The Committee shall vote by a simple majority to advance an application
52 to an interview. The Committee shall vote by a simple majority after an in-
53 terview to forward the application to the President for confirmation.


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55 (7)The Committee shall process all Senator and Student-At-Large applica-
56 tions within fifteen (15) days of submission. Extensions shall be granted at
57 the discretion of the Chair, with written notice to the President. This does
58 not include Student Regent Nominees, the ASUM Lobbyist, the Student Po-
59 litical Action Director, or other similarly appointed or interviewed posi-
60 tions.

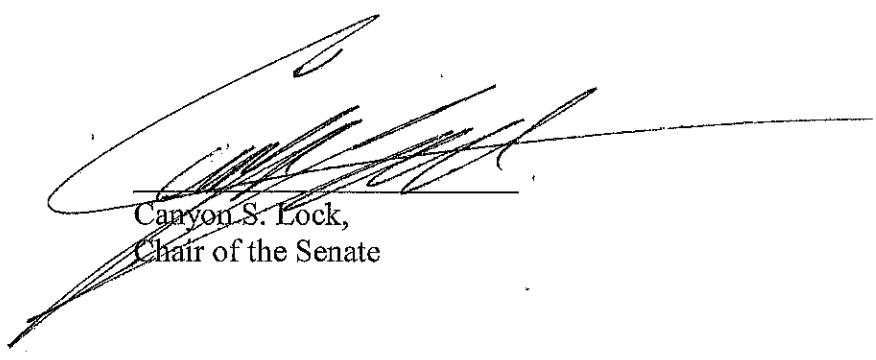
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62 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be sent to Gwen Coon, ASUM Office
63 Manager, and Alexandra Berna, ASUM Secretary.

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66 Passed by Committee: September 26, 2021

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68 Passed by ASUM Senate: September 29, 2021

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70 
71 Emma Kiefer,
72 Chair of Interview Committee

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75 Elizabeth Bowles,
76 Chair of Relations and Affairs

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Canyon S. Lock,
Chair of the Senate

79 Passed Unanimously.

79 **Appendix I**

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Emma Kiefer - Personal Statement

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I submitted an application to become an ASUM Senator in summer 2020, following the ASUM General Elections of 2020. In this election, I ran for ASUM Vice President and was unsuccessful. I still wanted to be involved in Senate and continue to represent students and their interests. My application was ignored and I did not receive emails back. I figured that because I submitted the application over the summer that it was possible that the Interview Committee simply hadn't met yet. I submitted another application in late September 2020 that was also ignored. I continued to work as an SAL on University committees that I had an established relationship with. I did not ask to be on these committees but rather they requested that I continue serving even if ASUM hadn't explicitly appointed me to serve. I submitted a third application three weeks before the end of the semester in spring 2021. I called out the then ASUM Vice President at a Graduate and Professional Student Association meeting about the delay in my applications, and then my application magically appeared again.

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I immediately responded to emails from the Interview Committee Chair and scheduled an interview. I went through the interview process and was eventually appointed as a Senator. This was not an efficient or timely process in any sense. In fact, this process was offensive, given my academic and professional qualifications that I had already shown in the past as a full-term elected Senator in 2018-2019. I constantly heard lines from ASUM that they were looking for Senator applications, yet my own application was ignored. I know that I was more than qualified to serve as a Senator in the 2019-2020 academic year, and it hurt me that my application kept getting pushed aside and ignored. How is this supposed to promote student engagement? I know I am not the only person who was frustrated by the Interview Committee in previous years and had their application significantly delayed for no explainable reason. In email communications with the former Vice President, they attempted to explain that "I am guessing a miscommunication occurred somewhere. What probably happened was that I forwarded [name of Chair] her application as soon as I received it and we both forgot about it in the five months that it took for the next interview committee to convene. That or something else happened to the line of communication". This is completely unacceptable and is a failure to the functioning of the Senate and to the student body as a whole.

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To prevent such administrative failures in the future, this resolution sets a distinct timeline that holds the Interview Committee accountable in ways that they have not been held accountable before.