



**TO:** Members of the Student Senate  
**FROM:** Jared Schlachet, *Student Union Parliamentarian*  
**DATE:** 8:00 pm November 10, 2022  
**RE:** Recommendation on SO2223-10b

### **COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION MEMORANDUM**

The Committee on the Constitution has concluded its peer institution benchmarking regarding voting requirements of the amendment to the *Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Body* regarding Article XIV (Petitions, Initiatives, and Referendums), in particular to the voting requirements for initiatives. Attached here is the [data](#) and the corresponding [memo](#) summarizing the findings of the research.

Upon discussion of the data in relation to the proposed amendment, it became clear that, assuming initiatives are for constitutional amendments, that the voting requirements as outlined are not unreasonable in comparison to our peer institutions. The threshold of student participation is well within the bounds of our peers, and while a supermajority is less common than a majority approval, it is not out of line in comparison to the Senate requirements for a constitutional amendment, which is a widely accepted approval rating.

However, the committee notes that interpretation of Article XIV is overly complex and confusing. The common political use of the terms in Article XIV do not correlate to their use in the Constitution. Additionally, there is significant confusion as to the difference between a petition and an initiative, the function of the second sentence of clause 2(b) in relation to the idea behind an initiative, and what each of the three mechanisms can be responsible for in the bounds of the Constitution and the Student Union as a whole. Part of the reason for the lack of clarity and the concerns in this article going unnoticed, is the minimal utilization of these mechanisms, including the entirely theoretical nature of initiatives at the current moment.

As a result of our discussions, the Committee on the Constitution recommends that SO2223-10b be tabled by the Student Senate for the reasons stated above, and that potential changes to this Article be withheld until the Committee on the Constitution completes further research into the verbiage and particular mechanisms and functions of student-body voting mechanisms at our peer institutions.

Best,

Jared Schlachet

*Student Union Parliamentarian*