



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



Councils Review - Final Report

The Executive Councils are at the Core of the structure of Students' Gymkhana and play a critical role in providing students with opportunities for developing co-curricular skills. The committee looked into issues with the structures and general functioning and did not dive into reviewing individual clubs considering in mind the independence they have been given and that these would come to the fore once the recommendations are accepted. As the Academics and Career Council was founded amidst the discussions of the committee, some sections may not apply to it. The committee also restricted its discussions on General Championship considering the number of ongoing changes. Discussion on specific activities of a Council was also limited with the understanding that most of the issues are highlighted during Election period or in term reports.

New activities and Hobby Groups

Existing System

As per clause 5.05 of the Gymkhana Constitution:

“A Hobby Group shall be an association of 10 or more students united by a common activity or interest. Such groups shall be associated with a council, with the consent of its General Secretary, and shall be headed by one or more Leaders appointed by Senate at the recommendation of the General Secretary. An exceptionally performing hobby group can be converted into a club.”

In the current structure, normally, if a group of students has to organize an event, it must be a hobby group and needs to rely on SSF for any financial needs.

Following are issues with the current practice:

- For formation of a hobby group (an association of 10 or more students united by a common activity or interest), a full discussion in Senate is required followed by a change in Gymkhana Constitution, leading to unnecessary delays and bureaucratic processing.
- To procure funds for organizing a small event, the organizers have to run behind individual Senators for SSF.



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



- Once incorporated in the Constitution, hobby groups continue to exist for years, even though enough students may no longer be interested in the activity.
- Senate ratifies the positions in Hobby groups for its whole term, even though its activities may be limited to a very few in number and/or a very short period of time.

In practice, these essentially inhibit such new activities, which contradicts the very vision of hobby groups and Students' Gymkhana.

Status of Hobby groups

The committee is of the opinion that the current system is not aligned with the actual vision of hobby groups and should be a lot simpler and informal. In light of this, the committee recommends that the constraint for need of a formal entity to procure SSF and organizing activities be relaxed and scope of the same be created for individuals as well. Councils shall also facilitate such activities in their structures.

It was deliberated at length whether hobby groups as a formal entity were still required as an intermediate structure below clubs. Although it may reduce the immediate instability, it was felt that it would lead to unnecessary hierarchy and complexity in the long run. Also, clubs in this format would be a privileged entity and a strict check would be required on clubs and hobby groups to ensure they are performing to their stature.

Finally, the above format was rejected and it was decided that as hobby groups are small associations for specific activities, they shall be informal entities internal to Councils. Consequently, Hobby groups need not be formally recognized by the Gymkhana Constitution. The council will not provide a 'Position of Responsibility' to these students but give them the recognition for conducting their activities. It is to be noted that zero-budget clubs may exist under this format.

Now, such groups of students with a common interest may directly approach the Council heads and request for support in their activities. If such a group performs well, it may bring a proposal to the Senate in the 2nd consecutive year of its dynamic activities for being promoted and recognized as a club. This time limit is set considering in mind that new students adopting the interest is a necessity to ensure that the proposed club will survive in future. The existing hobby groups shall be asked to bring a proposal to the Senate if they wish to be promoted to a club.



Students' Senate (2018-19)

Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Students' Gymkhana

Gymkhana Review Committee

Senate Seed Fund

The committee recommends that the current practice of Senator Seed Fund be discontinued and instead a central 'Senate Seed Fund' be set up, which shall be under the direct supervision of the Chairperson, Students' Senate. The present logistical issues should reduce drastically with the new system which would facilitate a more effective use of this fund, which at present is largely left unused. Any sanction of funds from the Senate Seed Fund would require a prior information to the Senate over the mailing list along with details of the proposed activity by whosoever recommends the activity. The same shall be noted in the immediate next non-emergency Senate meeting. As per the current practice, the form shall require the signatures of the proposer of the activity, General Secretary/President/Senator(s) who recognizes and recommends the activity, Chairperson who then authorizes on behalf of the Senate and the Finance Convener for final approval. Consequently, the cap for usage shall be reduced to 1/10th of the total fund, not complying to which shall require a full discussion in Senate. It is also recommended that income not under any budget head (Election fines etc.) shall be added to this fund.

Positions in Councils

Associate Heads - Need

The committee felt that the scope of work under councils had increased significantly in recent times, and the manpower at the top tier has not increased in proportion. The current name and cap for position of Senior Executive does not justify the amount of work that is needed for a top-tier post at present, even if compared to other entities in the Gymkhana.

Moreover, the committee felt that a single General Secretary may be unable to cater to the specific needs of all entities under the Council. Considering that the General Secretary is the ex-officio head of the Council, the committee recommends that a new position called 'Associate Head' be created for all Councils who shall be affiliated a particular facet of the Council.

The Associate Heads shall:

- Assist the General Secretary in performing his/her duties
- promote & create avenues for new council activities
- coordinate activities of Council Secretaries
- cater to the specific needs of entities in their domain



Students' Senate (2018-19) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur Students' Gymkhana Gymkhana Review Committee



Associate Heads - Appointment Procedure

The committee felt that as the position will play a pivotal role in the functioning of the Council, the process shall be extremely transparent and include the say of all sections of the Council, which may not be possible in the current nomination-interview process for equivalent positions. The appointment shall be made in a formal meeting of the outgoing Council core committee which shall be open to all members of the Senate. The names shall then be ratified by Senate. The total number of associate Heads in a Council shall be capped at 3 at all times.

The committee recommends that the following positions be introduced consequently:

- Associate Head, Films and Media, MnC Council
- Associate Head, Non-performing Arts, MnC Council
- Associate Head, Performing Arts, MnC Council
- Associate Head, Teams, SnT Council
- Associate Head, Technical, SnT Council
- Associate Head, Research and Development, SnT Council
- Associate Head, Teams, GnS Council
- Associate Head, Clubs & activities, GnS Council
- Associate Head, Career Development, AnC Council
- Associate Head, UG Academia, AnC Council
- Associate Head, PG Academia, AnC Council

Feedback from Executives: A major concern raised was that as the General Secretary will not directly appoint the Associate Head(s), their visions may not align which may lead to serious conflicts within the council and hamper its overall functioning. Also, affiliations in SnT and GnS council were not as convenient as those for the other two.

Council Secretaries

As the Associate Heads are expected to solve the current executive issues with Councils, the committee felt that the system of Sr. & Jr. Executives can be done away with and Council Secretary shall be appointed instead. The committee acknowledged that 'Executives' are clearly defined in the Gymkhana Constitution under clause 2.03 (President and the General Secretaries) and the term should not be misused within the same structure. The work of the position, however, is much similar to that of a 'Secretary' who assists someone at a higher position. This



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



would also ensure a uniformity with other positions with similar workload, responsibility and tenure.

In this regard, the committee recommends

- They shall be ratified as '<Specialized Work> Secretary, <Council>', for example, the secretary for financial activities in MnC Council shall be ratified as **Finance Secretary, Media and Cultural Council.**
- Council secretaries shall normally be appointed under one of the following domains (maxm. 2 each):
 - Media and Publicity
 - Content/Editorial
 - Events and Competitions
 - Finance
 - Design
 - Web
 - Council specific activity (for e.g. Tinkering Lab for SnT)
- Council Secretaries shall be made more inclusive in discussions and activities of the Council.
- Additional volunteers may be recruited by the General Secretary (not ratified by the Senate).

Other Positions

The committee made the following recommendation in regard to other positions in the Council:

- The current practice of Sr./Jr. Executives in the council shall be discontinued.
- The General Secretary shall be the ex-officio Contingent leader of all student contingents to various competitions. The number of Deputy contingent leaders shall be capped at 4 for inter-IIT contingents and 2 for others. Note that the nomenclature is in reference to the positions they will be ratified to in Students' Senate.
- Considering round-the-year form of General Championship accepted by the Students' Senate, the Associate Heads shall be responsible along with the General Secretary for overall conduction of the flagship event. Overall Managers for these event shall not be appointed anymore.
- Students responsible for organization of short-duration events (e.g. Freshers' Night, Josh etc.) shall be ratified as Organizers, <Event> in order to avoid the clashes with the



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



position of 'Manager' now introduced along with the concept of wings. The Council shall overall be responsible for these events additional names/new positions shall not be ratified/introduced.

Defining Roles and Ratification

Objective and Vision of Clubs and teams

The committee observed that there was a lack of absolute clarity regarding the purpose/objective of clubs/teams, which may create a difference in what is expected from a club what the clubs believes it to be. This has also led to some stagnancy in clubs/teams where they do not have any larger objective or vision and they monotonously repeat their activities. Therefore, the committee recommends that the objective of each club/team be incorporated in the Appendix-D. The vision of Councils shall be a part of the Gymkhana vision document.

Club Coordinator and Team Captains

A club coordinator/Team captain shall:

- Be responsible for all the activities under the purview of the club/team
- Be a member of the core committee of the Council
- Assign and coordinate the duties of Secretaries under him/her.
- Recommend the names of Secretaries to the Senate through the General Secretary for ratification

Secretaries

A secretary shall:

- Assist the coordinator in managing the activities of the club
- Executive tasks of the club as directed by the coordinator
- Mentor new members for activities of the club
- Bring in participation from various sections of the student body

Membership of clubs/teams shall be at an informal.



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



Ratification

As per the current practice, the club secretaries are not ratified by the Students' Senate. In this regard, the committee made the following observations:

- The work that is done by students as a Club Secretary needs to be recognized formally. Not acknowledging the work and still expecting the students to work diligently is unfair.
- The SPO is aware of the fact that these positions are not ratified, and thus in order to allow students to write this position in their resume, they ask the club coordinators and hobby group leaders to send a list of students who worked under them. As a result, the students are writing a post of the Students' Gymkhana in their resumes without following the due process. Many times, students who do not meet the eligibility criteria are also appointed as secretaries. This lack of control by the Senate creates a lot of non-uniformity and confusion among the members of the student community.
- It is not the fault of the SPO that they allow students to write these positions despite being not formally ratified by the Senate. They are simply working with the goal to help students here. The system of the Students' Gymkhana here is flawed, and we should commend the efforts of the SPO that they try to fix our mistake without interfering in our procedures.

In this regard, the committee made the following recommendations:

- All Secretaries shall be ratified by the Students' Senate
- An upper cap on the number of secretaries shall be placed. This upper cap shall be strict, and shall only be changed after due diligence.
- The committee suggested that the upper cap, as has been mentioned in the previous point shall be 15 per club, with explicit justification required on Senate floor if further names are requested for ratification.

Once our mechanism is fixed, a communication shall be sent to the SPO saying that the Students' Senate now formally recognizes all positions of responsibilities that it wants to, and thus the SPO shall only allow students to write these as 'Positions of Responsibility' in their resumes.

Timeline



Students' Senate (2018-19) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur Students' Gymkhana Gymkhana Review Committee



Ratification

The committee felt that the appointment and ratification process shall have fixed deadlines to ensure that names for ratification are sent in a time-bound fashion and the Council functions effectively throughout the year. In this regard, the committee recommends

- The appointment of General Secretary and Associate Heads shall be complete by the charge-handover.
- The list of names for club coordinators and team captains shall be conveyed to the Senate at least one week before the end-semester examinations of the even semester.
- The list of names for Council Secretaries shall be conveyed to the Senate within a month of the start of the odd semester.
- The list of names for Secretaries shall be conveyed to the Senate within the odd semester, along with the mid-term report.

The time relaxation for ratification of 'Secretaries' has been provided considering their nature of work and the fact that just interviews may not be enough to judge the candidate for the whole tenure. The committee also recommended that in case no name is recommended for the position of a coordinator, the Senate must discuss upon if the club shall be dissolved in the immediate next Senate meeting.

General Championship

The committee agreed with the decision of the Senate for round-the-year conduction of flagship competitions of Councils and that the complete onus (from bringing participation to judgement of competitions) of the same shall lay with the Council. The committee noted the issues with earlier scenario:

- student forcing participation in GC events leading to disciplinary actions
- Students not be able to manage time for academics ending up in Warning/AP
- Overcrowding of Gymkhana Calendar and pressure from administration.
- Lack of opportunity to participate in different competitions under the same Council.

The committee recommends:

- The same round-the-year structure shall be extended for SnT Council.
- The pre-conduction report of the flagship competitions shall be presented along with the pre-term reports of respective Councils.



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



- Atmost 35% (of the points) of events may be organized in any week and 60% in any two consecutive weeks.
- Club coordinators shall be a part of the organizing team and hence shall not participate in competitions of their own clubs.
- The committee does not recommend anything more specifically as it feels that the Councils shall be given complete freedom in how (incl. format) they wish to conduct these competitions.

Freshers' Exposure to Councils

The committee felt that freshers shall be provided an opportunity to explore all the clubs before the mid-semester examinations (of the odd semester) and makes the following recommendations:

- Any council shall not organize any activity in the last 10 days before the mid-semester exams (in each semester) and 15 days before the end-semester exams.
- The Media and Cultural Council gets a good enough opportunity through Freshers' Night. The council shall ensure that events in Freshers' night cover all the its clubs.
- As Takneek would be distributed throughout the year like other GC events, a separate event shall be organized for freshers with a minimum number of competitions. The objective of this is to provide freshers an exposure to all clubs and not competition. The SnT Council shall organize introductory sessions and mentor students for these competitions. It is to be noted that no other competition, apart from the one described here, shall be held in before the mid-semester examinations of the odd semester.
- Freshers' Inferno shall continue in its current form. Activities of clubs under the council shall either be made more inclusive in Freshers' inferno or be organized be separately before mid-semester examinations.

With the above in place, the committee felt that freshers would have ample time to study for mid-sems, post which, they would be in a much better position to decide how much time to devote, when and where.

Additionally, the committee recommended that Summer/Winter workshop charges be avoided as far as possible. The fee policy for workshops shall be implemented only after the approval from the General Secretary and the Finance Convener.

Teams



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



Incorporation into Councils

The committee discussed whether teams are needed to be in the Gymkhana or the Council structure. Considering the fact that these are student activities aligned with the vision of the Gymkhana and the Councils, the committee recommends that teams be incorporated into the Council and their captains be made a part of the Council Core committee. It is to be noted that the change will consolidate activities under the same objective (that of the Council) under a single umbrella, but the necessary independence of teams and their internal culture shall be respected under the Council. The basic distinction of teams from clubs, that they are financially independent and their primary motive is to participate in external competition(s) stands. It is to be noted that Team Captains will have an additional responsibility to organize events for its associated activities, which will add to participation in the team from the student community.

Teams under SnT Council

Currently, a major issue in their functioning is that most teams have born out of Robotics club, but the reason to separate teams from clubs - to differentiate their objectives and people involved, is not being met. Therefore, a formal constraint is required that although an individual may pursue both by his choice, he/she shall not be ratified for the two posts within the Council as their heavy demands will lead to a compromise in one or the other.

Also, as the mandate of the team is to participate in competitions, if a team does not participate for two consecutive years, it shall not be recognized by the gymkhana for the last year and until the team participates again. Team Captains shall be members of the Council Core Committee.

Games and Sports Teams

Unlike other Councils, the IITK Sports Contingent forms the most crucial aspect of Games and Sports in the campus at present. However, as teams were not a part of the Council, it was observed that over time, students' control over teams has reduced drastically leading to several other issues. In light of the same, the committee recommends that the nomination/ratification procedure for team captains be made same as that for Club coordinators. The responsibilities assigned to Institute team Secretaries ([proposal](#)) shall be of the team captains, whose number may be increased if needed to fulfil these responsibilities. It is to be noted here that the role of



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



Deputy Contingent leader(s) shall be specific to contingent for the competition whereas Associate Heads shall be responsible to the Council.

Council Core Committee

Membership

The membership of the Council Core Committee shall be:

- General Secretary (Ex-officio Chairperson)
- Associate Heads
- Club Coordinators
- Team Representatives

The President, Students' Gymkhana shall be a part of each Executive body in light of the powers vested in him/her by the Gymkhana Constitution under the clause 2.21.

Following shall be permanent special invitees to the Council Core Committee:

- Chairperson, Students' Senate
- Finance Convener, Students' Senate
- Festival Coordinators of the associated Festival
- Finance committee member associated with the Festival
- Chief Marketing Officer
- Council Secretaries
- Deputy Contingent Leaders

By-laws

- In case of voting, the General Secretary and associate heads shall carry equal individual votes, each club/team shall jointly have a single equivalent vote. In case of a tie, the decision of the Chairperson, Council Core committee shall be final.
- The quorum of meeting shall be half of the total voting strength (i.e. presence of even 1 representative from a club/team implies presence of the club/team, quorum is half of this total strength).
- Any student shall not be allowed to simultaneously hold two positions which both make him/her a member of a particular Council core committee.



Students' Senate (2018-19)

Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Students' Gymkhana

Gymkhana Review Committee

- Minutes of the meeting shall be circulated to all the members and special invitees normally within 7 days of the meeting by the committee chairperson.
- The Students' Senate shall be the highest and the only body which appoints/ratifies members of a Council Core committee to their position. (Note: Election results for Associate heads shall be sent to the Senate for noting).

Responsibilities

All major decisions pertaining to a Council shall normally be taken in a meeting of the Council Core committee (planning for inter-IIT meets, Council events etc.) The following agendas shall compulsorily be discussed in a meeting of the Council core committee meeting open to all the members of the Senate:

- Pre-term, mid-term and end-term reports (including individual reports/manifesto-review of the General Secretary and associate heads).
- Council Budget (which shall be sent to the Senate through the Finance committee as a part of the Gymkhana budget)
- Pre-conduction and post-conduction reports of its flagship events and competitions.
- Appointment of Associate Heads

Normally, the reports shall now be opened in the Senate only for questions and recommendations.

Feedback from Executives: A concern was raised that as the student community has entrusted the General Secretary, he/she shall be one making decisions for his/her council and the meetings shall only be for discussion and not making decisions. Also, with the spirit of the Constitution, all students (ratified) associated with the Council shall be its members and hence a separate core committee is not needed.

Connecting with Halls

The sheer lack of connection and communication between the Councils and HECs had led to the circumstances which led the Senate to take the unfortunate decision of keeping away a particular student body from Student Gymkhana's events. To bridge this gap, the committee recommends that Council Core teams shall include respective HEC member from each Hall be made a part of the Council Core committee.



Students' Senate (2018-19)
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Students' Gymkhana
Gymkhana Review Committee



This would help the student community in the long run in following ways

- Abridge the currently existing gap especially as HEC members are elected and may have more connection to their electorate than club coordinators.
- Allow councils to utilize hall resources in coordination with HECs, which may not be used efficiently otherwise.
- This may also help in involving the PG community which is often more associated with their hall and HECs than the Gymkhana and its Councils.
- This would also help halls as they could take assistance from Councils in terms of logistics for organizing events in their halls such as tournaments & Hall-day.

They shall be made special invitees to the committee for the Gymkhana year 2019-20, after which their status may be promoted to full voting members, subject to review by the Senate.

Acknowledgements

- Mr. Abhishek Sood, Ms. Bhuvika Gupta, Mr. Deepak Darji
- Mr. Kunal Kapila, Mr. Swapnil Kumar
- Mr. Rhythm Pathak, Mr. Suraj Yadav, Mr. Lakshya Kumar
- Office bearers, Students' Gymkhana 2018-19
- Incoming Office bearers, Students' Gymkhana 2019-20