

Sidney Pacific 2016 Constitutional Review Committee
Committee Charter
June 2016

Mission and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Constitutional Review Committee is to develop recommendations for bylaws and amendments to the SP constitution that ensure that it is both internally consistent and creates a functional framework for government in SP which supports a cohesive, caring community.

Before developing recommendations, the committee will make a thorough investigation of the constitution to identify areas where it could better support life in SP. In addition to topics brought up by committee member or residents-at-large, the committee may discuss:

- Alternatives to fixed dates in the constitution which would enable greater flexibility in responding to changing deadlines from housing.
- Resolving internal inconsistencies in voting timelines and policies (for instance, regarding the timeline for hall counselor elections).
- How should residents be represented in SP government? Motivating problems include:
 - Hall counselors have taken on a greater role supporting resident well-being since the last constitutional review. Diverse hall counselors may be able to help residents more effectively, but elections may limit SPEC's ability to promote such diversity.
 - Since hall counselor elections typically take place in March/April, first-year residents have no role in electing their representation for their first 6+ months in SP.
 - Can/should the constitution be restructured to promote better representation of residents in the house government.
 - Is there anything the constitution can/should do to promote non-officer participation in the house government?
- Mechanisms for motivating underperforming hall counselors/officers/SPEC, including review of the process for removing or replacing officers.
- How to make the constitution more accessible to the SP Community.

After identifying areas to be addressed, the Constitutional Review Committee will develop amendments/bylaws to address the identified areas of weakness in the constitution. The Committee will also draft a written statement detailing perceived strengths and weaknesses of the proposed amendments/bylaws to be made available to all SP residents in advance of a vote on these amendments/bylaws, including a formal endorsement of all amendments/bylaws that a 2/3 majority of the committee votes to endorse.

Membership

The committee will consist of up to 12 members, chaired by the SP President or a substitute designated by SPEC. SPEC will select members with a focus on a diverse community in terms of time in SP, current and past roles in the SP community, academic departments, and experience with the greater MIT community. Membership will be restricted to SP residents and officers.

Meetings

The Constitutional Review Committee will convene for at least 3 dinner meetings between July and August. A quorum of any meeting shall consist of a majority of its voting members.

Agenda, Minutes, and Reports

The committee chair is responsible for establishing the agenda for meetings and for sending the agenda and all relevant materials to the committee in advance of each meeting. At each meeting, a member will be designated to maintain minutes, which will be made available for all SP residents to review. As a final report, the committee will develop proposed amendments/bylaws to address perceived weaknesses in the constitution together with a document detailing pros and cons of each amendment/bylaw. An early draft of both documents will be circulated to various groups in SP, including the Heads of House, house staff, and interested residents. The final report will be made available to all SP residents and officers.