

STUDENT SELF GOVERNANCE

PREPARING
THE NEXT GENERATION TO LEAD



UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA

Charlottesville, Virginia

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“One of the most distinctive features of the University of Virginia is a long tradition of vigorous student self-government. Faculty and administrators should not and must not intervene in matters controlled by student government. The University as a whole benefit when students assume significant responsibility for their own well-being without supervision, and advocate for policies they prefer. Moreover, society benefits when our students learn leadership skills they can apply their whole life through.”

Dr. Larry Sabato, Professor of
Politics and Student Council
President Emeritus

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Table of Contents

Preface

Student Council

1. A History of the Student Council at the University of Virginia	5
a. Establishment of Student Council	7
b. A New Structure for a New Era: 1960 - 1970.....	7
c. Student Activism Reaches a Peak: The Rotunda Strike of 1970	9
d. Student Council's New Direction: 1971-1973	9
e. The Sabato Era: The Building of Clemons	10
f. The Conservative Backlash of 1976	11
g. Apathy and Cynicism Grow: 1980s-1990s.....	12
h. The Modern Era: 2000-Present	13
2. Challenges facing Student Council	15

No Higher Honor: The Honor System

3. A History of the Honor System	19
a. “Chaste Honor”: The Jeffersonian Heritage of Honor (1785)	19
b. “Resolved”: The Honor Code is Born (1825- 1909)	19
c. “Enter by This Gateway:” The Honor Spirit is Honed (1916 -1972)	20
d. “Honor for Honor’s Sake” : Honor on Trial 1975-2016	22
4. Challenges Facing Honor and Reflections.....	25

The University Judiciary Committee

5. History of the University Judiciary Committee	27
a. Early Days: 1825-1948.....	27
b. An Early Model: 1948-1954	27
c. Judiciary Revisited: 1954-1970	31
d. The Introduction of Standards: 1970-1980	32
e. The Adoption of Confidentiality: 1980-1990	34
f. Defending Self-Governance: 1990-2000	34
g. The UJC of Today: 2000-present	35
6. Challenges Facing University Judiciary Council	38

Notes on The Future of Student Self Governance in 2018	41
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Conclusion	44
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Appendix A: Project Founders and Contributors	46
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Appendix B: Select Organization Profiles	47
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Preface

The University of Virginia is an institution with a peculiar culture. You may be asking yourself: “Are they serious about calling it ‘Grounds?’” or “What’s with all this graffiti on the stairs?” To be a member of the faculty, or administration, is to become a member of the community, yet until now you receive no orientation to the culture of the place. The aim of this booklet is to provide you with a brief orientation to what is the most significant aspect of the culture of the University of Virginia: Self-Governance. Even just a glance at this booklet will better allow you to connect with your students, and to enjoy the distinct advantages of self-governance.

Self-Governance is often called “student self-governance,” and that’s not incorrect. To see the idea of self-governance, merely as a convoluted way of organizing student activities is to miss the point. Self-governance is the radical idea that students from the moment they walk on our grounds are both relevant stakeholders at the University, and are equipped to advance it. Integral to this understanding is that students are just one of many stakeholders (including faculty, administrators, government, alumni and residents of Charlottesville) working collaboratively to move the University forward. The sentiments of ‘self-governance’ are pervasive; the University didn’t even have a President until 1904.

If you are a faculty member at all interested in researching with students, mentoring students, engaging in activism, or broadly being a resource, you must at least appreciate self-governance. Here are a few examples of the many ways you might experience self-governance: No student organization is required to have an advisor, yet many would still benefit from your involvement. In return, you’ll receive access to students ripe with potential for your next research effort. If you’re looking to push for a change that would affect students, it’s always worth engaging students themselves. And, while not the most important, the most famous aspect of self-governance is the Honor Code which allows you the convenience of letting students’ self-protect exam. Finally, in times of crisis and tragedy, it is remarkable what can happen when the whole community comes together, yet when divided only confusion and regrets abound.

While the merits of self-governance are manifold, I don’t want to give you a false impression of its strength. Self-governance needs your help. Students by their very nature are only at Virginia for, hopefully, a few short years. The problems that elite institutions of higher education like ours face are too complex to be resolved by any one generation of students. What results is a transience, that damns even the most ambitious and well-conceived project based in self-governance. Things at the University of Virginia tend to repeat themselves. This booklet records a brief history of self-governance in the hope that less effort is wasted in repetition. As an educator, I can’t think of a better partner for the future to help students and our University remember the past and evolve from it.

A faculty and administration that understands self-governance becomes woven in its fabric and assures its endurance. As we enter our bicentennial, there has never been a more crucial time to critically examine self-governance and invest in its progress.

Very Truly Yours,

Abraham Axler 2017
Project Founder

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“If leadership is the art of getting things done, then student self governance is the application of this art. UVA students get to experience firsthand the challenges of leading large organizations and both the successes and failures that can follow weeks, months, or years of hard work. They enter the workforce resilient with both leadership successes, but most importantly, leadership failures behind them and knowing how to continue their efforts after experiencing both.”
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Dean Allan Stam, The Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy
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A History of Student Council

“The first meeting of the University of Virginia Student Council was held in Madison Hall, April 25th, 1945.” In what is now a weathered journal, Secretary John B. Jones recorded the first minutes of Student Council. More than seventy years later, little remains the same: the officer positions have changed, the constitution has changed, and the students bearing the mantle of self-governance are different. The only thing that has truly stood the test of time has been the belief that students, acting on their own, can better their community, the University, and themselves.

Establishment of Student Council

Before there was a Student Council, there was the “University Student Body” with two separate branches consisting of a Student Assembly and Student Senate. Its membership consisted of 50 representatives – one from each fraternity on Grounds. In 1942, concerned with the unrepresentative nature of the organization – membership was restricted to only those in fraternities – and the body’s lack of authority, student leaders proposed a series of reforms, all of which failed in a University-wide referendum by a 545 to 421 vote.

The failure of the referendum prompted the discussion of drafting a completely new constitution. In 1944, the constitution was proposed to the university body via referendum. It passed with 79 percent of the vote and on April 25 1945 Student Council was formed.

In the new constitution, 14 members were to be elected as representatives of the University, each member representing 300 students: eight from the College of Arts and Sciences, two from the School of Law, two from the School of Engineering, one from the School of Medicine, and one from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer were internally elected by the Council. Each officer would serve for one semester, until the next election when new officers are elected by the Council.

In 1949, University President Colgate Darden delegated the judicial powers to “try and punish students” to Student Council when a new constitution was passed by 94 percent of the student body. As Student Council began to acquire more influence in the day-to-day workings of students’ lives, President Darden began to grow wary of Student Council’s growing perceived power and pushed back on some of Student Council’s initiatives, eventually leading Darden to revoke Student Council’s judicial powers in the summer of 1954. The student body’s response to his actions initiated private talks between Student Council leadership and Darden to discuss how to proceed with Student Council’s disciplinary authority. In November 1954, Student Council and Darden came to an agreement resulting in what the Cavalier Daily described as Student Council gaining “more power” in the creation of the new Judicial Committee. Three years later, the Committee established its own constitution to form an independent University Judiciary Committee.

A New Structure for a New Era: 1960 - 1970

Issues of parking and vehicle taxes dominated many meetings during this era, however bigger issues – namely coeducation and increased recruitment of black students –

proved consequential with respect to the relationship between Student Council and University administrators. Student Council President Arthur H. Ogle's term would epitomize the increasingly tense relationship between Student Council and the administration. In his end-of-term report, Ogle was highly critical of the Administration's indifference to Student Council's progressive initiatives including the following: a report in support of non-disciplinary action towards students caught using marijuana, advocacy for an African Studies program, a report in support of coeducation, and reports advocating for the increased recruitment of African American students to the University. Student Council remained a champion for a more race-sensitive University, electing James Roebuck to succeed Ogle, becoming the first African American Student Council President.

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“You don't have to be a leader,
just someone who cares.”

.....

Anonymous student

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ident to be directly elected by students while maintaining the old system for electing representatives. By the end of Roebuck's term, the student body approved via referendum the new constitution by a vote 2208 to 598, ending the tradition of one-semester Student Council presidents. This structure and constitution would serve as the basis for the current document used by Student Council - albeit amended by nearly three decades of amendments and enhanced by the adoption of bylaws.



Student Council President James Roebuck

Claiming the presidency under the newly structured Student Council was Roebuck's vice-president and long-serving Student Council member, Kevin L. Mannix. Mannix remains one of the longest serving members of Student Council, serving on the council in his undergraduate years and then as a representative of the Law School. As a regular member of Student Council from 1967 to 1973, he was one of the strongest advocates for coeducation, heading the Student Council committee that would call for women to be admitted into the College of Arts and Sciences. A major voice for progressive change, he encountered major resistance to his election despite run-

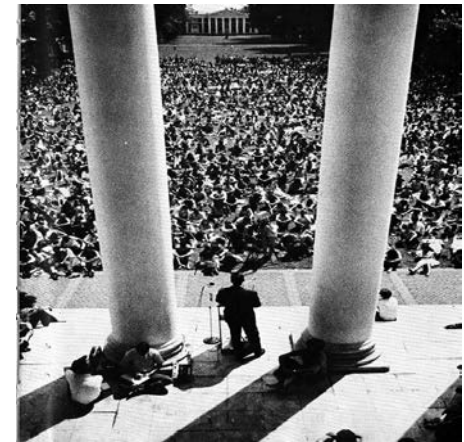
ning unopposed- many conservative elements at the university advocated for students to leave ballots blank or write someone else in. However, Mannix won the election 1958 to 1520, becoming the first two-semester president ever elected under the new constitution.

The 1970 presidency of Mannix would be noted as a “transformation year.”

As specified in the constitution, there was to be an allotted amount of time in each Student Council general body meeting, preferably in the beginning, in which any student outside of the Council was able to voice their concerns and interests. Originally marked as “Student Interests” by the secretary, this outlet for students to speak to their governing body would become the “Community Concerns” section of meetings continued to this day by Student Council. More fortuitous to Mannix's legacy and mark at the University, the year of his presidency would also be the same year in which women were first admitted to the College of Arts and Sciences, a policy that Mannix had fought in favor throughout his undergraduate career.

Student Activism Reaches a Peak: The Rotunda Strike of 1970

Following the Kent State Shootings, which left four college students dead after being shot by state police, students at universities across the country reacted in outrage. The University of Virginia was no exception. A group called the Strike Committee - including President Mannix and former President Ogle - organized a strike and boycott of classes in front of the Rotunda on May 5, 1970. Between 3,000 and 4,000 students joined the strike during the exam period, but ultimately failed to close the University. Student Council endorsed the strike in a special meeting held in the Amphitheater. The meeting was attended by nearly 300 students.



President Edgar Shannon stands on the Rotunda stairs while addressing University students on the Lawn in 1970.

Student Council then put up a series of demands in the form of University-wide referenda. The referenda included: a demand that firearms not be used on students, no penalties were to be placed on strikers, the removal of ROTC from the University's academic program, allowance for the strike to continue, the evaluation and recruitment of women to the university on the same basis as men, the cessation of University defense research, and the admission of 20 percent more black students within the next three years. A record-breaking 76 percent of the student body voted on the referenda, approving each of the demands except those calling for the elimination of the ROTC program and the cessation of defense research. Students continued their demonstrations until University President Edgar Shannon finally addressed the students on May 10, 1970 with a major anti-war speech. Shannon wrote to Virginia Senators Harry F. Byrd Jr. and William B. Spong Jr., urging them to fight against the continuation of the war and growing anti-intellectualism.

Student Council's New Direction

The Mannix presidency marked a peak year in Student Council's push for progressive policies and also as the year where Student Council took its greatest risk in favor of experimenting with a new model for student self-governance. The two-semester presidency and the community concerns time slot withstood its first year, but criticisms of the new Student Council structure would linger in Cavalier Daily editorials and com-

munity concerns would be suspended every so often in favor of strict discussion of the serious issues of the day. Mannix would not only be remembered for guiding Student Council through this transition, but for greatly improving its relationship with the administration. In 1971, Tom Collier was elected as Student Council President, marking the end of an eventful decade.

Despite the explosive first year for the new Student Council constitution, the new structure proved formative in how Student Council would proceed in its day-to-day actions. With a president having to campaign for the students' votes, platforms developed to address the basic needs and wants of the average student. Rather than making bold moves such as writing letters to politicians and administration demanding coeducation or increased recruitment of black students, Student Council became more deeply involved with local issues such as library spacing, parking spaces, curriculum changes, and vehicle fees. Contenders for the Student Council presidency had to have an answer for these questions and often promise a more inclusive and responsive Student Council. Moreover, community concerns brought to the membership of Student Council issues of concern outside their own daily lives.

Campaigning on a specific platform, Larry Sabato ran for Student Council President in 1973 using a pamphlet titled "Community in the Academical Village." In it, he urged that every student engage in self-governance, listing several means of being able to communicate concerns to the council. Larry Sabato won the election in 1973, and would embark on a presidency not only committed to the ideals of self-governance, but also committed to providing substantive results. Larry Sabato would deliver on securing the revision of the then food-services contract and eliminating the double-tax at UVA, which was a fee from both the city of Charlottesville and the University on vehicle use.

The Sabato Era: The Building of Clemons

Sabato's lobbying efforts in Richmond would result in one of the more infamous stories in Student Council history. When Alderman Library began to experience overcrowding



Larry Sabato receiving a phone call on an intra-campus telephone on Grounds.

issues due to the rapid expansion of the University student body, students began to come to Student Council general body meetings to testify on the lack of space. The demand for a new library became an ongoing issue, one that Larry Sabato sought to address during his time as president. Larry Sabato engaged in a yearlong lobbying effort at the Virginia House of Delegates, ultimately resulting in the inclusion of funding for a new library in Governor Linwood Holton's budget for fiscal year 1974.

On December 8, 1973, Student Council formally invited 30 delegates and state senators to take a tour of the crowded conditions facing the University's library. Students sup-

portive of Sabato's efforts to secure funding for a new library came to the library to help illustrate the perception that Alderman was indeed overcrowded. Ten of the dele-

gates invited came and were sold on the fact that UVA needed another library. Sabato would sweeten the visit for the delegates who came by giving them a welcoming reception later that day and tickets to the football game. These delegates would become active lobbyists for the funding of the library, meeting with the other invitees who didn't come over the Christmas break to get their support. By the end of the fall semester, the search for an architect began and on May 8, 1977, the Board of Visitors officially approved the construction of the library. Students would be able to use the library starting in 1982.

Sabato's legacy would be that of turning self-governance into a tangible thing for the everyday student. Though Student Council's actions affect the lives of virtually every student at the university, a poll in 1973 would indicate that only one in every three students had ever taken an interest in Student Council news and that only one in every ten students had ever been to a Student Council meeting. However, instead of engaging primarily in the sphere of ideas, in being a constant bell for progressive change, Larry Sabato would help usher in what 1977 Student Council President Underhill would describe as a "service-oriented" organization, focused primarily on the daily issues faced by students.

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 "Importantly, while students at other universities work against or for administrators, UVA students work often as equals with them."

Rory Finnegan, Col '18, President of the Inter-Sorority Council

The Conservative Backlash of 1976

In 1976, Student Council's BOV-delegated role as an appropriator of the Student Activities Fee (SAF) was seriously challenged by the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF). The conservative organization and strong supporters of economic classical liberalism, believed the mandatory nature of the SAF was too burdensome. Though debate surrounding the fee has existed since its institution, it had never faced the organized opposition created by YAF. The chairman of YAF argued that the fee coercively taxed students to improperly fund organizations that may run counter to other students' beliefs. He also argued that Student Council itself was funding liberal organizations at the expense of the beliefs of a more conservative student population. The Gay Student Union was the central target of YAF's attacks, often using the group as an example of Student Council funding organizations that most students may have found immoral. YAF as part of campaign effort, mailed flyers to students' parents encouraging them to oppose the student activities fee, stating, "Your child is funding a gay group!"

Though the debate over whether or not Student Council had the authority to appropriate funds through the SAF had faded away into nuisance obscurity, another incident occurred in the same year that involved the marginalization of a gay student. Fob James, a conservative representative on Student Council, challenged openly gay student Bob Elkins' right to be a resident advisor. The incident became public, but all candidates running for election that year condemned representative James' comments and ultimately a resolution was passed in 1977 opposing "discrimination on the basis

of effectual or sexual orientation,” essentially adding sexual orientation as a protected class in the non-discrimination clause of the constitution. Such incidences of conservative challenges to Student Council’s legitimacy became the defining controversies of the mid years of the 1970’s. Though Student Council’s approach to governing the student body had transitioned more towards being a service-oriented organization, memories of its progressive stances would linger for a growingly cautious and cynical student body.

Apathy and Cynicism Grow: 1980s-1990s

Growing cynicism and antipathy towards Student Council and student self-governance as a whole would be epitomized by the election of 1979. That year, John S. Serpe ran unopposed for Student Council president, losing by a vote of 1743 to 1688 to “Howard the Duck” - a fictional write-in candidate. Although he did serve as President it remains an embarrassing moment in the organization’s history when the true winner was a fictional duck.

Student Council’s image problem began in the late 70s. In 1973, Mannix would admit that anywhere from between 25% to 75% of students seeking office



Students protest the Vietnam War in May 1970.

in Student Council were simply trying to build their resume and get into positions of power. Though his figures are seemingly arbitrary, his sentiments were reflective of the perception that Student Council had garnered, even from within its own leadership. Editorials from the Cavalier Daily would regularly use the term “politico” to describe members of Student Council in a pejorative manner, often remarking of their empty-promises, non-substantive resolutions and actions, and the ambitious, yet unimaginative people who run for office.

As 1980 rolled in, Cavalier Daily would remark, “Representatives muster enthusiasm only for useless procedural fights,” a common theme harped by the majority of students. The term of the “Tuesday Night Rep” would become popularized in these years to describe members of Student Council who only came to the Tuesday meetings and did nothing outside of that.

Further indicative of the apathy that dominated the general view of Student Council were the voting rates of the 1980s. In years before, representatives would be elected with upwards 1000 votes in competitive elections. However, by 1981, representative elections received barely 500 votes in an election. Likewise, Student Council presidents would also be voted into office with less than 10% of the student vote throughout the 80’s. Standard campaign issues at the time included creating a more responsive and communicative Student Council, increasing student safety, and advocating for a more diverse faculty. These campaign promises generally would not change from year to year, regardless of the candidate. Such cookie-cutter campaigns continued to perpetuate the disinterest with self-governance that many students throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s had.

In 1991, five marketing students from the McIntire school of business would

create a report titled “Student Council Image Study” which concluded that many of the ills of Student Council, including negative student perception of the organization, was not the result of organizational or structural ineffectiveness but was instead the result of its inability to communicate properly and market itself to the student body. According to the report, only 15.5% of students indicated any familiarity with a Student Council committee and that less than 10% of students were able to even name a single representative. Even as the positive development of the student body electing its first woman Student Council President in 1984, Carole Kirkland, it happened in the midst of student apathy. Negative perceptions would only grow when in the same year, Vice President of Organizations Rudy Beverly pled guilty for embezzling Student Council funds.

The Modern Era: 2000-Present

The modern era of Student Council, from the beginning of the new millennium onward has been one of confronting controversy in a world where the medium to communicate is ever changing and demanding. In an era where technology, social media, and a far more advanced press is able to rapidly circulate the flow of information, Student Council has found itself confronting national issues head on once again as it did in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the 2003 race for Student Council President, candidate Daisy Lundy reported that she had been the victim of a racially motivated hate crime where she was physically assaulted and called a racial slur, with the attacker denouncing her candidacy for Student Council president because of her race. This incident immediately sparked outrage, leading to a massive campaign on Grounds in cohort with the Law School to address issues of race that still so prevalently affect people of color at the university. Due to the massive support Lundy received after her attack, her opponent withdrew from the race and she won the presidency on a wave of furor against racial prejudices at the university.

Controversy over Student Council’s efficacy as a truly democratic and representative body would emerge once again in the election of 2004. Though university-wide cynicism had been decreasing in the past few years as issues of race and gender began to animate elections, the appointment of Chief of Staff by the newly elected Student Council president Noah P. Sullivan flared up old criticisms of Student Council as being more interested in politics than actual solutions. Sullivan had served as Chief of Staff to Daisy Lundy from 2003 to 2004; so many heads were turned when he appointed Daisy Lundy as his Chief of Staff after his election victory. The Cavalier Daily, along with other students voicing their dissatisfaction with the appointment, once again questioned the legitimacy of a Student Council that seemed to refuse to hold itself accountable for its “nepotistic” actions.

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“It’s the process of learning to fail, grow, and succeed outside of the classroom.”
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Lauren Fogel, Comm ‘18, McIntire School of Commerce Council President
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Though sharp controversies and an animated group of students who seek to institute change for students of minority backgrounds have marked the first decade and a half of the new millennium for Student Council, the next few years may very well be the dawn of a new era. Such controversies on race and gender capture the minds of students across the country, and in response to tragic events, students look to their student governments for answers. Criticisms today aren't like the criticisms of the 1980's and 1990's where Student Council was described as "doing nothing." Criticisms today are that Student Council isn't doing enough. Slowly, yet gradually, voting rates have been increasing from year to year. However, the most recent structural change that could potentially change perceptions in the future of Student Council could be that of the opening up of membership under the presidency of Abraham Axler in 2015. As opposed to allowing individual Student Council committees to se-



Student Council Executive Board and Cabinet Chairs, Spring 2017

lectively choose whom they want on their committees, resulting in perceived high rejection rates, Axler standardized the application and admissions process, increasing membership dramatically under his term. Such a move has proven to increase the scope of Student Council's reach and increase student participation in committees that may very well affect their lives. Future Student Council presidents may not be able to truly scale back such a development, as the benefits of having a larger and more diverse Student Council cannot be easily refuted. In a time where presidents take bold actions to democratize Student Council, where technology and the rapid flow of information forces student leaders to take immediate and

non-equivocal stances, and where recent tragedies and events animate a once apathetic and cynical student body, the future of Student Council and self-governance has never looked brighter.

Very little history of Student Council is passed on throughout the years. The very existence of a truly self-governed student body is a fragile one, riddled with challenges and threats to the idea that we can indeed have a say in our own fate. As former president Abraham Axler noted in his last speech to Student Council, the gavel that the Chair of the Representative Body only says, "For the self-governed." There is no name; there is no mention of events or history. The only history on the gavel is its roughed-up head, chipped away from the years of serving as the punctuation between meetings. The loud crack as it hits the table is one that every leader of Student Council has heard. Despite the wide range of challenges that Student Council has faced and may continue to face in the future, there will be students who rise to the challenge to uphold the tradition of true self-governance. At the end of the day, no matter what troubles may come, the gavel's declaration, "For the self-governed," and its idea of a truly self-governed student body lives on.

Challenges Facing Student Council

Student Apathy

Many students simply do not care about Student Council or are interested in living out the ideals of self-governance. Often, the problem with Student Council accomplishing its goals is that people simply do not care about the success or projects that Student Council may be involved in. While much of the issue with students not caring about much of Student Council's initiatives is a communication and marketing issue, there simply exists a natural predisposition to apathy amongst many students throughout the university who are not involved with activism, politics, or are directly engaged with many of the primary institutions of self-governance. Student Council general body meetings are always open to the public but often, no one outside of Student Council attends the meetings. A lack of energy and excitement amongst the student body for self-governance serves to hinder the energetic capacity of Student Council and other governing institutions themselves.

Institutional Knowledge

Current operational issues within Student Council, such as the completion of projects and the delegation of responsibility with certain functions can be based on the fact that there exists little to no transferring capability of institutional knowledge. Many duties amongst executive officers and other leaders within Student Council are often apportioned by virtue of word-to-mouth advice from the last person who held their position, which is inherently unsustainable. Such a system of institutional knowledge transfer allows for positions to become a vessel for strong personalities to assume authority not prescribed by the constitution or bylaws leading to ineffective operating practices. In addition, every new administration suffers from a period in which executive board members and committee chairs are looking for what to do and how to do it. Every year, there seems to be a reinventing or rediscovering of the wheel, leading to organizational deficiencies that have to be rectified by the next administration.

Branding & Marketing

A widely held belief amongst members of the council is that, Student Council does not have an effective means of marketing its message and purpose to students. Most students are incapable of discerning what exactly Student Council does leading to sequential perceptions that Student Council doesn't do anything other than serve as a body of "elitist" students. Student Council is often perceived as comprised of an unrepresentative group of students while at the same time Student Council and its leaders are constantly trying to communicate to the general student body that it serves them and is hungry for solving their problems. The perennial challenge of providing a more effective means of communication between the general student body and Student Council has been a consistent theme in most campaigns for the presidency for the past few decades. Additionally, once projects and initiatives are completed, Student Council has had trouble marketing their successes to students, furthering the perception that Student Council is a do-nothing organization.

Self-Governance Under Attack

One of the major current and future challenges that Student Council faces is the skepticism to the idea of self-governance by virtue of an ever-evolving world where tragedies are magnified. Where litigation serves as a looming possibility in the aftermaths of high-profile incidents, administrators become quick to claim responsibility and authority that self-governed students traditionally held at the University. Whereas this realignment of authority and responsibility may be appropriate and beneficial in some cases, such actions lead administrators to forget the benefits of student self-governance. As past Chair of Legislative Affairs Committee Jackson Nell says, “Self-governance systems are risky in the sense that they can be spontaneous, inconsistent, and prone to student mistakes. Despite these risks, self-governance is an investment in the students themselves and a laboratory of leadership and a classroom of cooperation, project management, and self-initiative.” Since student self-governance is the status quo, it is hard to illustrate its benefits when tragedies happen under its purview.

Diversity

A current challenge that serves to question the legitimacy of Student Council being a representative organization is the fact that Student Council’s leadership lacks in diversity. From the executive board to its chairs, the number of Hispanic or Black students is small. Diversity in opinion is also largely an issue where many members of Student Council may have ideological similarities leading to a lack of robust debate. While diversity of ethnic, cultural, and ideological backgrounds may not be a detriment to organizational efficiencies, a lack of diversity serves to only signal a form of disenfranchisement of the unrepresented groups which in turn leads to the student apathy that drives a cyclical pattern of non-participation with Student Council. Where minority communities don’t see representation in positions of power in an organization with considerable weight, resentment and cynicism festers within these communities towards Student Council. As these communities’ populations and influence grows in the coming years, Student Council must find a way to act as a truly representative body for all students in the university.

Retention & Buy-In

The future of Student Council’s projects and initiatives and its organizational foundations largely rests in the ability to retain members who can build off of many of its past members’ successes. When students join Student Council, it is a common occurrence that they not continue membership in the next year which leads to problems when trying to find new people to replace outgoing chairs of committees. Student apathy, a deficient system of institutional knowledge transfer, and lingering negative perceptions makes student buy-in to student self-governance a difficult task, which perpetuates cynicism. Sarah Kenney, Current Vice-President of Administration, wonders if with “frustration with a perceived apathy, elitist and resume building culture,” that people will “stay on their committees, with their projects and move up in leadership.” Such an issue results in the shrinking of the talent pool for leadership positions within Student Council, which can only serve to weaken Student Council’s long-term capabilities.

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Student self-governance is an integral part of our Community of Trust, the bedrock of life at the University. Students are entrusted to lead organizations, such as the Honor Committee. It is a student run system. These leaders take on great responsibility. They are taken at their word. Students are trusted. Their word is their bond. Examinations are not proctored. Professors are not required to write additional exams because a student may not be able to take the exam at the scheduled time. The student is trusted not to compromise the trust the Faculty member has placed in her or him. Many new professors state that this trust in students is one of the great strengths of the University. This is part of the character of the University that must be protected and carried forward into the next century. This is why I have been involved with Honor since returning to the University in 1999.
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McIntire Professor Lucien Bass, SEAS 1963
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No Higher Honor: A History of the Honor System at the University of Virginia

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“Chaste Honor”: The Jeffersonian Heritage of Honor (1785)

Like the traditions of student self-governance and faculty independence, Honor can be traced back to the University’s founding in 1825. The first students agreed not to lie to a professor or cheat on exams upon matriculation. Although the Honor Code was not adopted until 1842, honor was a cherished value of the faculty and of the University’s founder, Thomas Jefferson. He wrote

When your mind shall be well improved with science, nothing will be necessary to place you in the highest points of view, but to pursue the interests of your country, the interests of your friends, and your own interests also, with the purest integrity, the most chaste honor. The defect of these virtues can never be made up by all the other acquirements of body and mind. Make these then your first object. Give up money, give up fame, give up science, give the earth itself and all it contains, rather than do an immoral act. And never suppose, that in any possible situation, or under any circumstances, it is best for you to do a dishonorable thing, however slightly so it may appear to you.

Jefferson believed that equal to the pursuit of knowledge was the pursuit of unwavering honor and service to country. Inspired by his vision, the University of Virginia has continuously affirmed its commitment to the student-run Honor system by embracing change. At the heart of each of its evolutions has been a desire to engender the value of honor, to promote fairness, and to strengthen the relationship between members of the community of trust.

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“Resolved”: The Honor Code is Born (1825 - 1909)

Managed by the faculty, the early student conduct system was ill equipped to handle the variety of issue that afflicted the community during its formative years. From the killing of a professor, to the abuse of enslaved laborers, students of the early University committed a multitude of dishonorable acts. Under the regulations of the And in 1842, following a period marked by academic fraud, the faculty adopted resolution that instituted a universal honor code for students. This code would become standard issue for honor systems around the country, and much of the current written pledge mirrors its intention. “On my honor as a student, I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment/exam.”

Resolved, that in all future written examinations for distinction and other honors of the University each candidate shall attach to the written answers presented by him on such examination a certificate in the following words—I, A.B., do hereby certify that I have derived

no assistance during the time of this examination from any sources whatever, whether oral, written or in print in giving the above answers. It would be nine years before the force of the code would be tested. In 1851, a student in the medical school was dismissed after being charged with committing academic fraud.

The development of the formal Honor System, which exists to promote honor and to protect the community of trust, did not occur until 1909 when its procedures were first codified. The first Honor Committee was made up of the student presidents of the five departments, and the vice-president of the department in which the alleged offense occurred. In order to find a student guilty, five of the panelists had to vote in favor of the motion. If a student was dissatisfied with the judgement, there was no opportunity to appeal.

“Enter by This Gateway:” The Honor Spirit is Honed (1916 - 1972)

Following codification in 1909, the Honor System continued to redefine its jurisdiction and procedures. Bad-check writing and gambling were added to Honor’s purview in 1913. At this time, Honor introduced the practice of printing the names of guilty students in the student newspaper, *College Topics*. These notices can still be seen in the archival editions of *College Topics* in Alderman Library! In 1934, the Honor Committee determined that cases of lying to acquire alcohol did not rise to the level of an honor offense. Even today using using a fake ID to enter a bar or to buy alcohol is not generally considered an honor offense. This is a small example of the ways that the student body has affirmed similar rules for each generation.

According to Mr. Jefferson’s University, a popular history of the University of Virginia, many students had concerns that the University’s enrollment growth and regional diversification were having negative impacts on the university. Some students



“Enter by this gateway and seek the way of honor, the light of truth, the will to work for men.” Plaque pictured near medical school entrance to Grounds off of University Avenue.

believed that the University was moving away from the code of honor that the south was known for. This led many students to call on the Honor system to strengthen its efforts to combat theft. The University Judiciary Committee was established in 1954 to promote the principles of civility and self-discipline that are appropriate to the conduct of an academic community. In practice, this meant that the UJC was responsible for managing student misconduct. In the 20th century, the Honor System was refined by fire. An increasingly large, diverse, and geographically dispersed student body challenged the system and added kindling to the debates of the age. Con-

vinced of the value of honor, students called on the system to make changes which reflected the concerns of the day.

The Honor Committee also took to educating faculty members about the workings of the system and the ways that they could prevent cheating in the classroom in 1958. “Among the practices warned against were take-home quizzes, giving

the same quiz to more than one class section, and providing less than ‘ample room’ between students seated during an exam, which ‘places the student in a delicate position.” It is interesting to note that in the most recent version of the Honor Faculty Handbook, professors are encouraged to give take-home exams and to take students at their word.

The 1960s were marked by intense conversations about the scope of the honor system. The broad charge of the Honor System weighed on many student’s minds. At the time, students were at risk of being expelled for writing bad checks, using fake identification to obtain alcohol, gambling, and more. **Did the Honor System extend beyond Albemarle County? Could a student be found guilty of an offense while on break?** These

questions were hotly debated and the final decision stands today. “A student is considered a representative of the university no matter where he may be and no matter what the time of year.”

While some believed that the scope of the honor system should be reigned in, others advocated for its expansion. In 1969, students voted in favor of extending the Honor System to include administrators, faculty, coaches, and staff. Although this non-binding resolution was largely ignored, this instance highlights the desire for students to deepen the bonds of the community of trust by holding everyone to the same standard. In 1971, the Honor Committee reiterated its commitment to serving the interests of the student body. “The Honor System shall concern itself solely with those offenses which are classified as dishonorable by the public opinion of the student generation involved.” This seemingly simple statement proved to be difficult to define and defend. For instance, in 1971, a student was found guilty of an honor offense for stealing soda cans from a vending machine. Students were outraged at the determination and the honor committee was pressured to reverse the judgement.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s it became apparent that the majority of the cases that were going through the system were related to academic offenses. This was a natural progression. In 1970, The University Judiciary Committee, established in 1955, was given the responsibility for adjudicating cases related to the standards of conduct which included disorderly conduct, reckless behavior, and general failure to comply with University policy. Thus, the UJC was suddenly responsible for many of the cases that had once been forwarded to the Honor Committee. In 1972 students were finally given an opportunity to appeal their judgements. Following a hearing, students who were found guilty were permitted to appeal on the basis of new evidence. Students also engaged in fierce debates about the single sanction at times dividing the Honor Committee itself. In 1966 the *Cavalier Daily* printed an article detailing the debate.

“It treats mistakes mistakes On the one hand, the *Cavalier Daily* argued

“Students are provided with the autonomy, capacity, and trust to take ownership of their experience and develop a deeper investment in the university community.”

Diane D’Costa, Curry ‘18, Class of 2018 Vice President

We do not see the system as a legal one, however, with penalties for certain offenses. We view it, on the contrary, as a moral system, with one sanction applied by the community as a whole, and since the entire community agrees what that sanction is and that it be the only one, that in itself makes the system a just one. (Justice, after all, is only reflection of the standards of the community.)

In 1972, four of the thirteen students on Committee voted to introduce a two-penalty system. After the failure of this effort, the Committee conducted a student poll; 68 percent voted in favor of maintaining the single sanction.

“Honor for Honor’s Sake” : Honor on Trial 1975 - 2016

In 1977 the Honor Constitution was ratified. Finally, after over one hundred years in operation, the committee established a timeless set of written guidelines to govern their management of honor cases. The basic foundation of the constitution survives today and has been amended several times through the bylaw ratification process. The constitution gave the student body authorization and means to change the functioning of the Honor System via the popular referenda. Amendments to the constitution



The 2017-2018 Honor Executive Board is pictured here in the joint Honor and UJC Trial room.

can be put forward by a majority within the Honor Committee and then presented to the student body, or they can originate directly from the student body through the use of the referenda. Changes to the Honor System must be approved by of those students voting in the referenda election, given that at least 10% of the eligible voting population has voted in favor. Currently, changes to the Honor System can flow successfully through the referenda phase with less than 2500 affirmative votes. The Honor Constitution also enumerated the

various rights afforded to the accused student by the system. Some of which include:

1. Students have the right to select the composition of their hearing panel (Elected Officers of the Honor Committee, Student Jurors Only, or Both)
2. To be advised in writing of the nature of the accusation
3. To be informed of the nature of the evidence to be used against him;
4. To have all proceedings against him held publicly or privately at his election...
5. To be given a reasonable time to prepare for a hearing before the panel
6. To be assisted by counsel of his choosing from the student body
7. To confront and to cross-examine witnesses against him
8. To present evidence and witnesses in his own defense
9. To be heard in his own defense
10. To refuse to testify against himself
11. May appeal the panel’s finding on the basis of new evidence affecting that finding or of a denial of a full and fair hearing
12. To file an Informed Retraction admitting guilt and waiving all other rights guaranteed under the constitution.

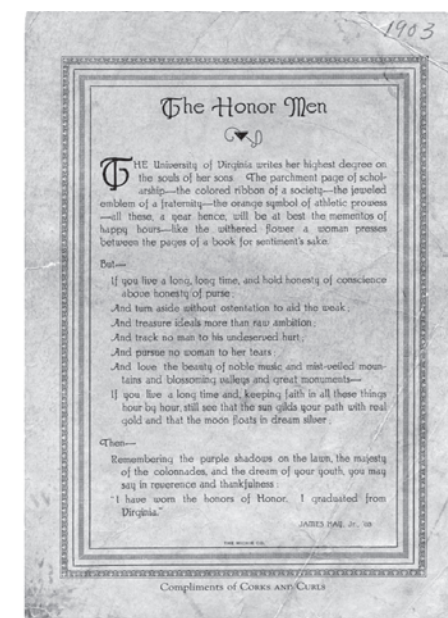
The introduction of the referenda procedure provided a gateway for reformers to work

outside the system to make changes. Following this change, the student body and committee have introduced sixteen referenda related to the single sanction. Some of these referenda campaigns are discussed below.

Dual Sanction Efforts

In 1980, students voted on adopting a dual sanction which would have included a one year suspension for the first offense, and expulsion for any following offense. This initiative failed by only two percentage points. Similar proposals would be raised five more times before the close of the decade. Each would fail by widening margins. In that same year, the Honor Committee charged the Honor System Study Committee with conducting “a comprehensive evaluation of the Honor System.” This committee recommended a dual sanction system consisting of a one year suspension or expulsion for the first offense, and immediate permanent dismissal for a second offense.¹ This recommendation proved to be quite contentious and was perceived by some as a political statement rather than an objective discovery. The committee conducted a series of surveys as a part of their work. A survey of other universities with honor systems revealed that “Honor Systems, with single sanctions of expulsion, although effective in fostering trust and deterring offenses and in gathering support from their students, do not seem to do so any better that do those with dual sanctions.” Furthermore, the committee acknowledged that “an honor system derives the deterrence effect from the degree of enforcement of a sanction, irrespective of the severity of the sanction.” A Gallup survey of the student body showed that “less than one-third of the students favor the single sanction, while over two-thirds opt for either dual or suspension sanction.” Additionally, “Under both the suspension and dual sanctions, students would be more willing to consider [reporting] an honor violation in all of the hypothetical cases given.” The committee also surveyed alumni and faculty members. The Faculty Committee Report stated that “a substantial majority of the faculty ‘do not favor the single sanction.’” The responses from alumni closely mirrored the student survey results.

Given their extensive research the committee concluded that “the dual sanction serves as a suitable compromise between the single sanction and suspension sanction.” **However, this was not a unanimous decision.** Contained within the report are dissenting opinions issued by individual members of the committee. One, written by Mary Nell Smitherman deserves recognition here. She states a question that has wracked the system consistently in simple terms, “Is a change necessary to re-vitalize a system which already works? Is it worth risking the consequences of



The Honor Men poem from which the classic “I have worn the honors of Honor. I graduated from Virginia.” Is drawn from and the Society of the Purple Shadows draws their name.

outside the system to make changes. Following this change, the student body and committee have introduced sixteen referenda related to the single sanction. Some of these referenda campaigns are discussed below.

increased cheating and dissolving the community of trust, i.e., rendering the system meaningless, to accommodate those who for whatever reason cannot abide by its standards the first time around?” In addition to sanctioning reform, the committee recommended that the criteria of reprehensibility, later referred to as seriousness or significance be removed from the bylaws. The committee also noted that materials should be updated to reflect the presence of women within the student body.

Merger?

In 1987 a group of students who identified themselves as “Students for Restoring Honor,” developed a proposal that would fold UJC into Honor and adopt a multiple sanction system. Inspired by a concern that many students were not being found guilty of honor offenses because of the criterion of seriousness, SFRH gathered the

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“Student self-governance is a compact between all members of this community to share in the maintenance of our most important institutions.”
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Bryanna Miller, Col '18, Student Member of the Board of Visitors
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necessary signatures to bring the issue to a vote. The referendum proposal included a provision that would give the UJC and Honor one calendar year to merge their constitutions and to establish a new set of bylaws. The group used arguments about the early history of the university to bolster their claims stating in a 1987 op-ed, “[we] wish to point out that this proposal returns to the original design of the honor system. For the first 100-plus years of its existence, all cases of student dishonor were heard by the honor system. It has been only in relatively recent history that honor has been compromised by a split of the honor system into two systems.” Andrew Metcalf, co-author of the proposal encouraged students to “vote to restore sanity and honor to our shambles of an honor system.” This referenda received the endorsement of the Cavalier Daily Editorial Board, but there were many students who were concerned that the proposal would undermine the community of trust.

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Detractors like Sean Folk, the Chair of the Honor Committee at the time, argued that the issue of students “being let off” was less dire than suggested by SFRH campaigners. “Almost every student who is confronted, accused, and/or goes to trial before having his case dropped due to lack of seriousness will undoubtedly be affected by the proceedings enough to think long and hard the next time a similar situation presents itself.” In the week leading up to the vote, another student group called “Students for an Honor System” was founded by Rob Gustavson. Their primary objective was to defeat the referenda by emphasizing that the proposed system would “punish misbehavior instead of actively promoting trust.” Other opponents of the proposal argued that it would blur the line between an honor offense and the kind of “hooliganism” that the UJC was designed to manage. Ultimately the proposal would be defeated at the ballot box 1,409 to 609.

Informed Retraction

The years following the 1987 proposal would be marked by proposals to institute a multi-sanction system. The vast majority focused on implementing a two-strike policy that would provide for temporary suspension for a first offense, and expulsion for a second offense. None of these proposals were approved by the student body. For reformers to succeed in their efforts, they would have to take a different approach.

In 2002, the originally conceived “informed retraction” came up for a vote. Under this proposal, students who were accused of an honor offense would have the opportunity to admit guilt and agree to leave the university for three semesters. This measure was a departure from the stale logic of the past. 41% of voters supported this initiative the first time that it was placed on the ballot. That number would finally cross the threshold in 2013 with 64% of voters voting in favor of instituting the IR. The informed retraction allows a student to admit guilt and agree to take a two semester leave of absence. Some students argue that the IR combined with expulsion are the multiple sanctions that the system offers to students. However, the debate over the “single sanction” continues. Most recently in 2016 students had the opportunity to choose between maintaining the single sanction system and directing the Honor Committee to consider a multiple sanction system. The single sanction barely survived. 58.9% of students voted in favor of establishing a multi-sanction system, .1% less than the constitutionally mandated 60% required to make such a change. In response to the narrowness of this vote, the Honor Committee elected to establish the Honor Audit Commission to evaluate the internal challenges that Honor faces. The report of the Commission is due to be released in 2018.

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Final Reflections and Challenges Facing Honor

Honor today is much like the Honor of yesteryear. It is a feeling and a security system. It is strongly supported by some and questioned by others. It is strongly enshrined in our culture but it continues to face challenges. Some of the key questions that honor has had to answer for each generation are listed below.

Purpose

- What is the purpose of honor? Do students understand the mission of honor?
- What is the community of trust and how does honor uphold it?
- Should honor focus on rooting out cheaters or deterring cheating?
- Should honor focus on adjudicating academic offenses?

Relevance

- Is honor still relevant to students? How can honor encourage students to think about its values even if there isn't a referenda on the ballot?
- Are faculty members using the honor system or do they prefer to handle cases of academic fraud themselves?

Impact

- Does honor effectively reduce cheating?
- Does honor unfairly punish minorities?

Sanctioning

- Should honor maintain the single sanction?
- What would be the impact of implementing a multi-sanction system?
- What has been the impact of the informed retraction?

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As an undergraduate student, the ideals and practices of Student Self-Governance at UVa helped to strengthen a foundation of self-advocacy, confidence, and responsibility for my work in the future. As a staff member, I feel fortunate to watch future generations of Hoos have experiences that allow them to do the same. I think that the greatest opportunity offered in this system is the opportunity—and the obligation—to think and act beyond yourself or your friends. Being a student and a leader at the University is not just an chance to build your resume or boost your employment prospects; it is a responsibility to contribute to something meaningful and lasting, and to accept the burden of difficult decisions, tough conversations, and hard work that are necessary to make those meaningful contributions.

Alex Hall, Assistant Dean of Students

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A History of the University **Judiciary Committee**

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Early Days: 1825-1948

The University's first disciplinary policy closely followed Jefferson's ideals for government: Jefferson believed that students (like states) should be allowed to govern themselves. He did not think students should be coerced into good behavior through fear, but that appeals to their character and pride would be sufficient to ensure upright behavior. Historian Philip Bruce writes, "Jefferson was never so keenly chagrined by an unexpected turn of events as he was by the ungovernable temper which the students manifested during this initial session." The students, all Southern boys unused to freedom, did not meet Jefferson's expectations in the least. Tales from the University's earliest days are filled with stories of the rowdy and unruly behavior of the students, whose pastimes included drinking, gambling, and rioting. The first regulations of student behavior came after an assault by students on Professors Emmett and Tucker in 1825. Threatening resignation, faculty members demanded that student conduct be policed more effectively. The result of this ultimatum was a strict set of regulations from the Board of Visitors. Students were required to wear dull gray uniforms, be in their rooms by 9 at night, and wake each day at dawn. Gambling and drinking were expressly forbidden.

By the 20th century, these strict rules had worn down considerably. Regulations existed governing attendance in classes and behavior at social events like football games and fraternity parties. In 1940, for example, no student who had missed more than 50% of the lectures for a class was allowed to even receive a grade in that class. But there was no specific dress code, no wake-up call, and after Prohibition, no limits on drinking for students who were of age. Except in instances of Honor offenses, student misconducts were handled by the administration.

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An Early Model: 1948-1954

When President Colgate Darden took his position as the 3rd President of the University of Virginia, he had a dream to fulfill Thomas Jefferson's vision for student self-governance at the University. He decided that students should be able to regulate their own conduct.

Over the course of several meetings in the spring of 1948, Darden and the Student Council created a plan for students to assume jurisdiction over matters involving student conduct. On April 20th, the Cavalier Daily reported that President Darden and the Student Council had come to an agreement: students who violated the code of conduct of the University would be judged by their peers, not the administrators. A body would be created to fulfill these judicial duties, composed of 3-5 members of the Student Council who had been appointed by the Student Council President. Cases would be heard by this small judicial committee, the decisions of which would be subject to review by the entire Council and by the administration. The administration would also handle appeals and had the power to change the decision of the Student Council in the case of a miscarriage of justice.



Joy Collins (Col 19) pictured reading Maya Angelou's poem "Still I Rise" at the candlelight vigil following the white supremacist attacks on UVA and Charlottesville on August 11 and 12, 2017.



First Year students sign the Honor Code following convocation.



Students at the Fall 2017 "March to Reclaim Our Grounds" sponsored by the Black Student Alliance and the Minority Rights Coalition following the August 2017 white supremacist attacks on UVA and Charlottesville.



A photo from the Fall 2016 Activities Fair. The Fall Activities Fair is held every August on the Monday before classes start and is arranged by Student Council. The Fair hosts nearly every CIO (400+) and is an opportunity for students to sign up for information or join.



Students present at an Undergraduate Research Network Symposium in 2015.



Student Council members lead the UVA walkout as part of the March 14, 2018 National School Walkout in protest of gun violence.



Students stand at the Jefferson Statue on the North-Side of the Rotunda at the center of a white supremacist attack on the University on August 11, 2018. They were attacked with tear gas and torches.

Notably, Darden and the Student Council did not agree on a specific set of rules for the University's code of conduct. Instead, students could be brought before the judicial committee for any action reflecting discredit upon the University. In a speech at convocation in 1948, Darden said, "As a matter of fact, I think it might fairly be said that there is only one regulation designed to control or guide the conduct of those who are working here. It is that the young men are expected to behave as young gentlemen and the young ladies are expected to behave as young ladies."

In May of that same year, students were judged by their peers for the first time in the University's history. The first charges brought before the nascent judicial committee were public intoxication and creating a public disturbance. The involved students were sanctioned with either "ordinary" or "strict" probation. Both ordinary and strict probation meant that another infraction of the vague code of conduct would result in either suspension or expulsion. Strict probation also meant that the student was not allowed to attend dances or concerts and could not participate in any extracurricular activities.

The judicial committee continued its duties without interruption until the spring of 1954, when student-administration relations were at a low point. The rift

was partially caused by an event known as the East Lawn incident, a polite euphemism for the gang rape of a student's date in his East Lawn room. In May, 11 prominent students were either suspended or expelled for their part in the incident. Their cases were not heard by the judicial body of the Student Council but by the administration; when appealed, a special committee of members of the Board of Visitors heard the case and upheld the sanctions imposed by the administration. In a statement,

Darden spoke about the incident with bitter disappointment:

"I cannot escape the conclusion that the University itself must bear some blame for what has occurred. We failed, for what reason I do not know, to build a society here that furnishes safeguards that parents have a right to expect, for children who are students here or who visit here. But nothing can be gained by brooding over the past. The task is a bitter and unrewarding one. The important thing is to decide what must be done for the future and then to turn our attention and energies to doing it. With God's help we shall retrieve the ground we have lost and we shall succeed in this great undertaking."

William Tazewell, then Student Council President, called the East Lawn incident "kindling that set off the fire of student reaction to a general problem." On May 27th, over 900 students gathered in Cabell Hall for a Student Council-sponsored discussion of student-administration relations. The general problem was that students felt the administration was slowly but definitely encroaching upon their freedoms. The Student Council made plans to go before the Board of Visitors and convey the dissatisfaction of the student body, hoping to mend the division. However, the Council was unsuccessful. Over the summer of 1954, Darden suspended the judicial powers of the Student Council.

Judiciary Revisited: 1954-1970

Throughout the fall of 1954, Darden met with the Student Council several times to plan how disciplinary powers might be returned to the hands of students. In November, it seemed like the two parties had come to an agreement: The Cavalier Daily published an article describing the tentative plan in objective terms, or so reporter Breck Arrington believed. Soon after Arrington's article was published, Darden wrote a letter to Blaine Phillips, then Student Council President, in which he argued that the reporting, which he believed to have been based on statements made by Phillips, suggested a fundamental misunderstanding had taken place between Darden and the Student Council. Darden complained that "the powers claimed by the Student Council are altogether too sweeping and extravagant." He felt that Student Council had tried to claim the power to "legislate for the University as a whole" and noted that the entire agreement was contingent on the fact that Student Council would make an effort to be more representative of the entire school -- a promise that Student Council had not yet fulfilled. Based on this dissatisfaction, he called off the plans to return disciplinary powers to students for the time being. Phillips quickly wrote to Darden, claimed there was no misunderstanding, and asked that they continue their talks.

In December, Darden agreed to return to the table, and on December 14th, Student Council and President Darden reached an agreement. Darden issued a memorandum detailing the specifics: Composed of nine elected students, two from College and one from each of the other schools, the Judiciary Committee would judge cases that had been referred to the Student Council by any student or by the Vice President for Student Affairs. Still, the Judiciary Committee had no set standards. The only guideline was conduct which would discredit the University or conduct which was becoming of a gentleman. Initially, the Student Council was to investigate the charges brought against students; however, this was soon changed so that those elected to Judiciary Committee would serve as investigators for one semester and judges for the next. The memorandum was put to ballot on February 17th, 1955. It passed with a slight majority, and nearly 60% of the eligible voting population (full-time male students in good standing) turned out. In October 1957, the Judiciary Committee officially adopted its first Constitution.

The Judiciary Committee remained mostly unchallenged and unchanged in the decade and a half that followed, with the exception of the student demonstrations of 1959 and the creation of the First Year Judiciary Committee in 1969. In the spring of 1959, student riots broke out, which the Cavalier Daily called "purposeless demonstrations by students who were apparently looking for relief from their studies." During one such demonstration, a car was stolen and burned in Madison Bowl. Several of the students involved were tried by the Judiciary Committee and received harsh

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 "We have an active awareness that we are responsible for the general welfare of other students, and that we have the power and resources to improve upon and uphold that aim."

Anonymous student



A Cavalier Daily article from 1948 highlights the formation of an independent University Judiciary Committee.

sentences. The affair thrust the Judiciary Committee into a rare position in the spotlight. In 1969, the First Year Council vote to split into two distinct groups: the First Year Legislative Council and the First Year Judiciary Council. The FYJC would elect among themselves a Chair and Vice Chair and handle misconduct in first year living areas.

The FYJC was one of four sub-judiciary bodies in 1970. The other three bodies were the Inter-Fraternity Council Judiciary Committee, the Inter-Sorority Council Judiciary Committee, and the Association of Residential Colleges Judiciary Committee, the body that handled student misconduct in upperclassman dorms. Appeals made to decisions of any of these subsidiary judicial bodies would come before the Judiciary Committee. Appeals of Judiciary Committee were sent to University Committee on Students, a body composed of members of the administration, faculty, and students. All decisions of the Judiciary Committee were subject to review by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

The Introduction of Standards: 1970-1980

May of 1970 was a tumultuous time on college campuses across the country. Students protested the advance of American troops into Cambodia and the draft. Even at Mr. Jefferson’s University, students felt the electricity and excitement of protest and dissent. In response to the Kent State shootings on May 4th, students occupied Maury Hall, the Naval ROTC building. Students outside threw rocks at the building’s windows, and those inside burned a mattress in the building’s basement. By May 7th, student protesters had frustrated the police enough that several were arrested.

President Shannon asked the Judiciary Committee to persecute several students who had been involved in the riots. The Chair, a law student named Tom Boyd,

was troubled by the idea. He knew that dozens of students had been arrested and that the police had not bothered to connect individuals with specific crimes. He also recognized that the lack of specificity in the University’s code of conduct meant that the Judiciary Committee’s rulings would be hard to defend in court and might even violate students’ due process rights. With these doubts in mind, and with the support of the rest of the Committee, Boyd dropped all the cases involving the student protesters. Displeased, Shannon and the Board of Visitors asked Boyd to attend their next meeting and explain his actions. After Boyd made his case,

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 “It’s working to not just make sure you have the power and opportunity to make your goals become reality, but also lifting up other students to have the same chance you do. It is about respect, maturity, and camaraderie.”

Galen Green, Comm ‘19, Class of 2019 President

Shannon assigned Don Santarelli, the youngest member of the Board, to work with Boyd to create a more detailed list of Standards. Over the summer, while both men were in D.C., they hammered out 11 Standards of Conduct and presented them to the Board. While both the Honor Committee Chair and the Student Council President were

invited to join in the process, neither contributed to the extent that Boyd did.

In September, students returning to Grounds were greeted with specific written rules governing their behavior—and told that violations of these new rules would earn them a hearing before the Judiciary Committee. The student body was outraged. They felt as if they had had no say in the adoption of the new rules. The Union of University Students requested a referendum on the Standards with a petition that began, “Whereas George III is dead but his spirit lingers on,” and continued to lambaste the Board of Visitors with what Bud Ogle, former Student Council President, called “not so subtle to allusions to autocratic administrative techniques” that he found “eminently appropriate.”

The Student Council took the particular issues of students to Board of Visitors, which agreed to make minor changes to the wording of several Standards. The revised Standards of Conduct were approved in October 1970. Still, students felt that their rights were being infringed upon. The Student Council formed the Ad Hoc Committee on the Code of Conduct in November, which rewrote the standards and added a list of student rights. The student body approved of the Committee’s rewritten version in a December referendum, but the Board of Visitors rejected the version that the Ad Hoc Committee produced.

In March, Vice President for Student Affairs D. Alan Williams created his blue-ribbon committee of students and faculty, which would “not be concerned with the details of a code or with rewriting” the Standards of Conduct, but instead would investigate, “from a general perspective, whether or not students should have a power to make their own rules.” The committee, however, was ultimately unsuccessful in turning over rule-making power to students; the Board of Visitors retained control over that power and the October 1970 version of the Standards remained in place.

Two major referendums were put before students in the 1970s. In 1975, the Judiciary Committee put forward two proposals. The first would allow individuals elected to the Judiciary Committee to serve as judges for both semesters of their term. Investigators would be appointed to the Judiciary Committee for a single semester. Previously, students elected to the Judiciary Committee would serve as investigators for one semester and as judges the next. The second would limit the size of the Committee to ten judges total—only one judge would be elected from each school, instead of the current system, which allocated judges to schools based on student population. Both proposals passed. However, the new ten-member Committee had difficulty meeting the seven-member quorum for trials, and in 1979, another referendum was passed that allowed two representatives from each school to sit on the Judiciary Committee instead of only one.



A Cavalier Daily article by William H. Wranek describes President Darden’s delay of reorganizing UJC and Student Council.

Trials in the 1970s could take several forms. Informal trials occurred when a student admitted guilt or the offense in question was considered relatively minor. A sole counselor would quickly present the facts of the case, and the accused and complainant were both present in case the trial panel had questions. Formal trials occurred when the accused student contested the charges brought against him or her. Two separate counselors were assigned for the accused and the complainant, and both sides had the opportunity to present their case. Similar to informal trials, hearing panels occurred when the student admitted guilt for a minor offense and the case was relatively straightforward. The Trial Chair and two other judges read the factual report of the case without the accused student or complainant present, and based their decision off the report entirely. In all cases, guilt and sanction required a majority vote, while suspension and expulsion required 2/3 agreement.

By the late 1970s, many students believed that the Judiciary Committee needed to be reformed. A Cavalier Daily editorial claimed that the problems facing the Judiciary Committee that merited the reform effort included “inconsistencies, useless appendages, and an inferiority complex.” In 1979, an Ad Hoc Committee for Judicial Reform was created and led by Larry Sabato. The committee proposed two changes that were eventually adopted. First, the committee proposed that the Judiciary Committee absorb the Association of Residential Councils Judiciary Committee. Second, they proposed that the Judiciary Committee hire a student to serve as a Judicial Advisor. This Judicial Advisor would act as a liaison between the administration and the Judiciary Committee and would ensure sanctions were completed. Sabato also personally recommended that the Judiciary Committee booklet, an informational pamphlet published every few years, be revised to include a list of student rights in addition to the list of Standards of Conduct the students were expected to follow.

The Adoption of Confidentiality: 1980-1990

Compared to the decade before, the 1980s were a quiet time for the Committee. After a 1980 change to the bylaws, the formal name of the Judiciary Committee became more specific; the body now referred to itself at the University Judiciary Committee, or the UJC. In 1987, the Standards of Conduct were revised for the first time since their adoption in 1970. The most significant change was inclusion of another Standard requiring confidentiality. Students could be tried by the UJC for violating rules of confidentiality in Honor or UJC cases.

Besides the change of name and the new rules regarding confidentiality, the UJC of 1987 looked similar to the UJC of 1979. Each school still had two judges, with the exception of the College, which now had three. The Committee judges still elected a Chairman, but also elected two Vice Chairmen to oversee subcommittees. A standing pool of counselors would assist the accused and the complainant in the presentation of their case before the trial panel, and investigators were expected to compile the relevant facts of the case into a report for the case record.

Defending Self-Governance: 1990-2000

In 1990, the Chair of the Committee had only two Vice Chairs, whose main tasks were to head subcommittees. As the case load of the UJC grew with the expanding University, the Vice Chairs were asked to provide important logistical help to the

Chair. New Vice Chair positions were created one by one throughout the 1990s as the need arose. First, the position of Vice Chair for Trials was created to organize trial dates with accused, complainant, support officers, and judges. Next, the position of Vice Chair for Sanctions was created to ensure that sanctions had been completed. Finally, the position of Vice Chair for First Years was created to train FYJC judges. Later, the Vice Chair for First Years would also select the members of the First Year Judiciary Committee, instead of the First Year Council.

The network of support officers also grew as the University expanded. In early 1990s, investigators were expected not only to investigate cases, but also to educate students about the UJC, giving presentations about the Committee to first years at orientation and holding office hours. By 1993, educators had been established as their own separate support officer pool, complete with a Senior Educator to lead them.

In the fall of 1997, Sandy Kory, a first year, was assaulted on Ruffner Bridge by Richard Smith and two accomplices, Harrison Tigrett and Bradley Kintz. The three attackers were charged with Standard of Conduct violations, but when the time came for their trial, none of the three accused students appeared. The trial panel tried the three men in absentia and voted to expel all three students. Smith, Tigrett, and Kintz appealed the verdict, arguing that they had been told the trial had been postponed. A board of students, faculty, and administrators granted the appeal. Students began to see the case as a battle for self-governance against wealthy bullies armed with well-paid lawyers; over 300 students protested for the expulsion of Smith, Tigrett, and Kintz on the Lawn in April 1998. The Cavalier Daily lead editorial published on April 16th, the day before the retrial was to occur, spoke in plain terms:

“That Smith, Kintz and Tigrett still walk these Grounds is a disgrace to the University and a blow to the concept of student self-governance. That the process has taken so long breeds a loss of faith in the judiciary process. The Committee has no choice-- for the sake of justice and for the integrity of student self-governance and their own institution, they must re-expel Smith, Kintz and Tigrett.”

That same day, the three counselors and trial chair all stepped down from the case. According to the Cavalier Daily, the students were afraid of being sued. Since UJC members refused to hear the case, it went to William W. Harmon, then Vice President of Student Affairs. Harmon appointed a panel to listen to testimony from Smith, Tigrett, Kintz, and Kory, and then make sanction recommendations to President Casteen. In June, 1999, Casteen suspended Smith for two years, Tigrett for one, and Kintz for a single semester. Smith, Kintz, and Tigrett all filed lawsuits against the University for violating their due process rights. In October of 2000, Smith lost his case, and in March of 2001, the combined case of Kintz and Tigrett was dismissed. After nearly four years, students felt that ideal of student self-governance was secure once again.

The UJC of Today: 2000-present

By 2000, the UJC had taken its modern shape. The body has reorganized itself around a much stronger executive committee and a network of support officers. The executive committee includes the Chair, as well as three voting Vice Chairs. Five non-voting members also sit on the executive committee: a Senior Counselor, Senior Investigator, and Senior Educator, as well as the First Year Chair and Vice Chair. The senior support officers lead their respective pools of counselors, investigators, and educators. The

addition of a Senior Data Manager in 2009 as a sixth and final non-voting member completed the modern executive committee.

In the new millennium, trial procedure has settled into a well-defined pattern. First, both sides make opening statements, then the accused and complainant provide testimony. After each account, there is time for cross-examination and questioning from the trial panel. The trial panel, composed of five judges, must reach agreement in both trials for guilt and trials for sanction.



A Cavalier Daily article from 1948 highlights the formation of an independent University Judiciary Committee.

The most substantial recent change to the UJC occurred in 2001, when the Standards of Conduct were revised. Several minor changes were adopted, as well as one major change: Standard 1, which had previously combined physical or sexual assault with conduct which intentionally or recklessly threatens the health and safety of others, was split into two distinct standards. The final decision by the Board of Visitors in March 2001 to adopt the changes was years in the making; discussions of the changes took place over several years leading up to the Board's vote.

The decision to change the Standards of Conduct has always required considerable discussion, often over the span of years, as it did in 2001. However, University students in 2005 and 2006 wanted more change than just the splitting up of a Standard. In the early 2000s, several racially motivated incidents spurred students to create a referendum that called for the UJC to craft specific sanctioning guidelines for hate crimes. Some wanted a 13th Standard of Conduct while others wanted a change in the constitution requiring stricter sanctions for those found guilty of committing hate-crimes. Many argued that the inclusion of such a Standard would limit free speech and even violate the first amendment. Others pointed to issues within the Judiciary Committee itself, wondering how a body that does not operate on precedent could set a precedent for handling violations motivated by hate. In the end, no change was made to the Standards, but after a school-wide referendum, the UJC did make a change to its constitution indicating that a Standard violation "motivated by the age, color, disability, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, or veteran status of the victim" would be deemed an aggravating circumstance.

After the addition of the confidentiality standard in 1987, few UJC cases made it to the headlines of the Cavalier Daily. Unless a student wants to make his or her trial public, the entire process occurs quietly and without observation by the student body. One of the rare exceptions to this pattern was the case of Richard Felker. Felker, a Tibetan activist and member of Students for a Free Tibet, protested the visit of Chinese Ambassador Yang Jiechi in April 2004. He was charged with violating three Standards: intentional disruption of University activities, disorderly conduct, and failure to comply with University officials. Felker opted for an open trial to further publicize his protest, and students had a rare opportunity to witness a UJC trial in action. The event made many students realize how little they knew about the UJC, what it does, and how well their representatives were serving them. Calls for greater transparency in

the UJC's undertakings plagued Cavalier Daily opinion pages for weeks; one student went so far as to argue that "students have little reason to respect the UJC if they have no way to ensure that the system works well." Despite demands for a more transparent judicial body, the UJC made no changes to the way it handles student cases.

Since 1955, the UJC has existed in one form or another as a well-respected and legitimate body. However, this reputation was called into question in 2011, when the Cavalier Daily itself was brought before the Judiciary Committee for allegedly violating the confidentiality of an Honor case. On September 12, 2011, the Cavalier Daily ran an editorial which disclosed that a staff writer had plagiarized several articles and that the Cavalier Daily managing board had decided to report the student to the Honor Committee. Honor Committee Chair Ann Marie McKenzie then filed UJC charges against the managing board for breaching confidentiality. Eventually, McKenzie dropped charges against all the members of the managing board but Jason Ally, editor-in-chief. Ally opted for an open trial, and the matter became so public that it even reached the pages of the Washington Post. Adam Goldstein, attorney advocate for the Student Press Law Center, commented: "The Judiciary Committee may well believe it's a court. I assure you they are not... They will come to find out they don't get to punish people the way judges do." Before the trial, both the Honor Committee and the Cavalier Daily submitted briefs to the UJC outlining their argument.

On October 18th, in a trial room crowded with spectators, the trial panel announced that it had decided the UJC did not have jurisdiction in the case, since a clause in the UJC constitution states the UJC does not have jurisdiction over "journalistic and editorial functions by student groups." Although Jason Ally faced no sanctions from the UJC, the conflict did not stop there. Many launched complaints at the executive committee for agreeing to hear the case in the first place, if the constitution so obviously stated that this case was outside the body's jurisdiction. Again, students questioned the UJC's lack of transparency and precedent, but once again, no changes were made.



Local news coverage of a Cavalier Daily writer facing UJC charges after breaching confidentiality.

Challenges Facing University Judiciary Council

Underreporting by students

Anyone can file a complaint with UJC—students, police officers, faculty—but cases in which the complainant is a student are relatively rare. Most cases are filed by deans of the University. This may mean that students rarely witness other students violating the Standards of Conduct, but “what seems more realistic is that students are either not informed enough about our reporting policies (i.e. that anyone can file a complaint) or that they are not comfortable bringing charges against their peers, or a combination of both,” says Mitch Wellman, Chair. Regardless of the specific reasoning, students are failing to participate in the student judicial system in a crucial way.

Lack of interest in serving

There are 25 representative positions: three for the College and two for each other school. While the representative elections in the College and other undergraduate schools are usually competitive, many of the elections for graduate schools are not competitive, and in some schools, the Committee has difficulty finding a representative at all. An open representative spot poses both philosophical and logistical problems: that school is not being represented fully, and that the Committee has fewer judges to sit on trial panels.

Turnover

All student organizations face the burden of turning over leadership almost entirely every year, and UJC is no different. While there are a few University employees that year remain connected to UJC year after year, such as the body’s legal advisor, the executive secretary, and the Vice President for Student Affairs, the composition of the executive committee changes each spring. Ongoing student-led initiatives are difficult to sustain from term to term, which means that great ideas for improvement of UJC can be lost in the transition.

Training counselors

Accused students are represented during trials by student counselors. Counselors also guide the accused through the pretrial process. They play a crucial role in ensuring that each student receives a fair trial. The counselors come from a variety of academic backgrounds: Many of the counselors are law students, accustomed to the pressure and formality of a trial room, while others are only first years in the College. Until recently, there has been little to no standardization of the training process for counselors. Senior counselors Emily Woznak and Alex Haden hope to create a booklet that will clarify pretrial and trial procedures for their pool so that each new counselor knows exactly how to perform their duties.

An increasingly litigious society

Several times throughout its 70-year-old history, UJC has been threatened by litigation.

Two aspects of the body have been particularly targeted: the body does not operate based on precedent, and the accused students are represented not by paid attorneys, but by student counselors. The structure of UJC allows students the opportunity to discipline themselves, but also means that the University is sometimes asked to defend its disciplinary policies against those who challenge them in court. As our society becomes increasingly litigious, UJC will doubtlessly be challenged again and again, and the University must be willing to protect its student judiciary body if it wishes for the body to continue.

Lack of understanding about UJC and its mission

Perhaps the most pressing issue facing UJC is that students simply don’t know all that much about it. Emily Woznak, senior counselor, says that it’s “rare to find a student who knows what UJC stands for, our role in the community, and the general UJC mission and purpose.” Kevin Warshaw, senior data manager, thinks the problem comes down to brand recognition: “We have a similar mission to Honor and as a result people often confuse us.” Even those students who do appreciate the distinction between the Honor Committee and UJC often regard UJC as the body that handles everything Honor doesn’t. Jenny Brzezynski, senior educator, believes that lack of knowledge about UJC leads to a lack of respect; she believes that there is “almost a dismissive aura when someone hears about UJC.”

.....
“Student self-governance”
is not a buzz phrase at the
University of Virginia – it’s
the real deal, as much a part
of this institution’s DNA as
the architecture. While...
[it] is student-sustained,
it behooves the rest of us
(faculty and staff) to support
this part of the University’s
heritage. How UVA students
govern themselves confers
externalities on everyone in
Mr. Jefferson’s Academical
Village.

Economics Professor
Kenneth Elzinga
.....

Notes on The Future of Student Self Governance

Student Council - Sarah Kenny, President

The past year has presented an exceptional number of opportunities for University stakeholders to build coalitions and rely upon one another, through both moments of excitement, such as the commencement of our celebration of UVA's Bicentennial and the selection of a new President, Jim Ryan, as well as moments of tragedy, such as the death of Otto Warmbier and the protests of KKK and Alt-Right groups on August 11th and 12th. While publications such as the Chronicle for Higher Education lambasted the University administration for weeks on end, UVA garnered international media attention, and our city became a discrete turning point in national trust and respect for our President, Donald J. Trump, students have carried forth the torch of responsibility and progressivism, held accountable for change by the angry, concerned, and hurting student body. Student Council began our year with a town hall attended by over 200 students to hold a vote on the Reclaim Our Grounds demands, a set of requests mirroring those presented to President Shannon by the first Black Student Council President, James Roebuck, in May 1970. The representative body's unanimous vote to advance the list of ten demands rippled throughout the community, carrying a great deal of significance by affirming the legitimacy students placed in the verdicts determined by this body of governance.

Some challenges I have observed are as follows: organizations across Grounds are plagued by statement fatigue, a sense of duty to release a cut and paste condemnation or affirmation of a consequential action or action on Grounds, and expect the administration to release one of their own as well. Administrators, in this same vein, have remarked on a decreasing sense of accountability for change among students and a greater reliance on administrators to “fix” problems in the student sphere. A documented increase in hate speech over the last two years has augmented this trend, whereby the officials of a public institution must tread carefully in the murky territory of first amendment jurisdiction when struggling to both uphold the integrity of our values, as well as allow protected political speech to persist on these Grounds. Graduate student leaders are also working to create a separate Student Council to better address the unique concerns of their schools. The current executive board and I have supported the creation of a loose pan-graduate affiliation group designed to improve communication and collaboration between the Law School and Graduate College of Arts and Sciences, for example, but we do not support the secession of the graduate community from this representative body. Along with a number of administrators, we would view such a move as harmful to the process of student self-governance across our multifaceted University community, and seek to instead bolster graduate



Student Council President Sarah Kenny (Col 18) delivers opening remarks at the Class of 2021 convocation ceremony in August 2017.

student engagement and representation in the Council that has served our community for over half a century.



Honor - Devin Rossin, Chair

Honor has faced an identity crisis over the past several years. Whereas it has been mostly considered from a place of academic integrity, Honor has been forced to take on a larger question of what an Honorable student looks like. Through the events of 2014, when the University was shaken by Rolling Stone and the brutalization of Martese Johnson on the Corner, to the events of August 11th/12th when the Alt-Right marched across our Lawn spewing bigotry and hatred, Honor has had to

respond. Honor isn't just a judicial body for acts of Lying, Cheating, and Stealing, its a system of morality. The adjudicatory functions of the Honor Committee are important, but even more important is the role that Honor plays as the University's moral backbone. Honor has a duty to speak out against injustice and to serve as the guiding light for what an Honorable University of Virginia student should be. This increase in the role of the Honor System and our heightened responsibility to the University will continue to be a challenge that the

In more concrete terms, Honor has worked to diversify its membership to achieve this goal, and I think that will be one of the greatest initiatives heading into the future. Part of this includes working more closely with groups that have been the subject of overreporting (such as international students) and student groups that are particularly vulnerable in the face of our judicial policies (such as undocumented students and low income students). Our education and outreach efforts here will continue to grow more and more robust, hopefully fostering a more cohesive Community of Trust.

While our judicial role isn't the entirety of the Honor Committee's duty, it's still an incredibly important role that requires constant effort to perfect. This year, we passed the most comprehensive reforms to the Informed Retraction since its introduction in 2014. These reforms allow for students to admit additional offenses at the time of their Informed Retraction meeting. We're working on a reform that will allow for students to take an Informed Retraction for any offenses that would be heard within a single hearing. Allowing students to have a fair and understanding judicial proceeding will continue to be a goal that the Honor Committee tackles in the future. For a more thorough discussion of the opportunities facing the honor system please view the 2018 Honor Audit Commission Report.



University Judicial Committee - Peter Baust, Chair

UJC has just completed a substantial overhaul of its case management system which will add requested features for the future, such as editing complaints and better notification policies to communicate with students and other parties. The Committee has also established a UVA Fund through generous alumni donations. Increasingly in the 21st Century, student organizations are having to turn to independent financial sources

(alumni donations, co-sponsorships, etc.) to supplement small budgets from the university - UJC is no different. As we look to increase our visibility on grounds, the support of our alumni will help us to promote SSG through co-sponsorships with CIOs in need of funds and the improvement of UJC processes and outreach materials.

Visibility remains one of UJC's greatest challenges. Although high visibility is not always a good thing for a disciplinary system, as publicity is often tied to something bad happening, UJC has struggled to garner enough visibility for students to know who we are and what we do. Too often, students have little idea of what UJC is until they come before us. Though most students can identify at least some components of Honor, they more often struggle to identify UJC components. This is an area that we will continue to strive to address. Furthermore, the UJC completed an internal survey which shows our committee is fairly representative of the student body as a whole. We want to continue to keep our committee that way and improve outreach in the few areas where we weren't representative (e.g. transfer student population).

Conclusion

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Jefferson Trust Foundation for their support of this project. Without their incredible generosity, this resource would not exist. My hope is that this text has both clarified and complicated your understanding of student self-governance at the University of Virginia. Both in the theoretical and the practical sense of the concept, student self-governance is as dynamic as the students who live out the tradition. With such dynamism comes great opportunity for evolution and progress, whereby students are empowered to create and amend structures freely and frequently to best serve the present needs of the student body. On the other side of this propensity for enterprise comes great fragility, a fragility rooted in the sure transience of the groupings of minds and bodies that uphold and create student organizations. In the moments of transition with each shift in leadership, we, the students, would benefit from looking to you, our faculty and administrators, as our partners. Together, we can more effectively ensure the progress and integrity of this defining feature of the undergraduate student experience across classes and interests.

In our community's celebration of the Bicentennial this academic year, I have most certainly observed a heightened sense of enthusiasm and commitment to the ideal of student self-governance from students, staff, faculty, and administrators alike. The ethos of this code stands to mold generations of UVA graduates into highly competent and confident professionals and public servants who seek out opportunities to dedicate themselves to causes of the greater good. While the spirit of this tenet has endured for decades, by no means will student self-governance prevail in perpetuity without strategic stewardship. Abraham, MacKenzie, and Faith built this project upon a hope in the endurance of this value. Nevertheless, they applied for a Jefferson Trust grant because of a profound, shared concern about the means by which student self-governance would live on into this next century.

As I prepare to graduate from the University of Virginia this May, I share these students' concerns about the health of student self-governance. In the February 2018 student elections, only 26.6 percent of the UVA student population voted, a sharp drop in participation from last year's 42.1 percent turnout. The University Board of Elections has noted 50 vacant seats across schools and councils this year, whereby no student decided to run for a representative office. Perhaps most strikingly, neither the Curry nor Batten Undergraduate Councils had students run to lead them, leaving a haphazard collection of representatives without Presidents. In today's socio political atmosphere of staunch anti-institutionalism, I fear that students have translated their concerns with political leadership more broadly to the hyperlocal governance structures of our University.

Our system grants unprecedented responsibility, access, and voice to our students. When students do not step up to assume these positions, however, the administration must assume historically reserved controls and tasks, thereby diminishing the scope and authenticity of student self-governance that all UVA parties are theoretically committed to preserving. Student self-governance requires partnership, trust, and assumption of best intentions by both students and administrators. By no means does such requisite partnership preclude student activism and intermittent conflicts of interest; no, these dynamics are endemic to and often healthy for such relationships. Naturally,

trust is hard to gain, and easy to lose. Nevertheless, it is my hope that students, faculty, and administrators can strive to trust in one another, despite the intolerance, lack of civility, and frenzied division that presently characterizes our national atmosphere. United by the common pursuit of truth, the legacy and potential of this great institution, and a commitment to citizen leadership, our community can coalesce around the empowering, collaborative ideal of student self-governance. In this capability, I truly believe.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kenny
Student Council President
CLASS 2018

Appendix A: Project Founders + Contributors



Abraham Axler

Abraham Axler graduated from the College of Arts and Sciences in 2017 as a Politics Honors student. He served as Student Council President from 2016-2017 and sought to make the organization increasingly inclusive. He is now a Marshall Scholar pursuing a Master of Science degree in social policy and an M.S.c. in political communication from the London School of Economics.



Mackenzie Austin

Mackenzie Austin graduated from the College of Arts and Sciences in 2016 with a degree in Political & Social Thought and Latin American Studies. During her fourth year at the University, Mackenzie served as the Chair of the University Judiciary Committee, which drove her to partner with other student leaders at the University to formulate a project to preserve student self-governance for future generations of Hoos.



Faith Lyons

Faith Lyons graduated from the University in 2016 with majors in Commerce and Global Development Studies. She was an elected representative to the Honor Committee from the McIntire School of Commerce and served as Chair from 2015-2016. She served on the executive committee of Student Council from 2014-2015. Faith now lives in Atlanta, GA where she works as a Business Analyst for McKinsey & Company. She still actively engages with the University as a member of the Young Alumni Council and McIntire Young Alumni Council.

Contributors

Sarah Kenny, Student Council President 2017-2018
Alexander Cintron, Student Council Vice President for Administration 2017-2018
Katherine Brandon, Student Council Director of University Relations 2017-2018
Michael Horth, Student Council Chief Financial Officer 2017-2018
Nathaniel Donkoh-Moore, Student Council Administrative Assistant 2017-2018
Peter Baust, UJC Chair 2017-2018
Jordan Arnold, UJC Vice Chair for Sanctions 2017-2018
Devin Rossin, Honor Chair 2017-2018
Bryanna Miller, Student Member of the Board of Visitors 2017-2018

Appendix B: Select Organization Profiles

These organizations, while by no means exhaustive of all offerings at UVA, possess unique characteristics or governing structures that make them representative of the diversity of organizations on Grounds.

Student Government Association at UVA at Wise

Established in 1976, the Student Government Association at The University of Virginia's College at Wise was established upon the realization of the need for an effective student government for the purpose of articulation and implementing the views of the student body and of furthering the general welfare of the student body and of the College. More than 40 years later, the SGA continues to serve the College in the same capacity in which it was founded. The SGA generally tends to attract those students who have a passion for leadership, those who have the courage to initiate change and improvement, those who foster inclusivity, and those who promote a more unified student body.



Members of UVA-Wise Student Government Association

The organizational structure comprises an Executive Board of four students; a Senate of 19 – four students representing their respective classes and three who represent the student body “at large;” an International Senator; and The President’s Cabinet, which includes 4 students. The Executive Board and Senators are all elected by the student body. Subsequently, the elected President appoints his/her Cabinet. Additionally, these 28 total students are assigned to serve on nine different committees, each with distinct purposes that are focused toward the upkeep of the entire campus community. The SGA also has a staff advisor and a staff budget manager who assist with planning, creating reports, and providing general guidance to members when required. The SGA holds weekly meetings throughout the academic year that are open to anyone, and conducts these meetings using parliamentary procedure. Representatives of the SGA maintain a pleasant and enthusiastic environment that is constantly striving for success in its purpose.

Sustained Dialogue

Sustained Dialogue first came to the University of Virginia in 2001, when Priya Parker and Jackie Switzer began the group to improve understanding between groups at UVA, particularly in response to racial tensions on Grounds. Participants in Sustained Dialogue attend weekly meetings in groups of 15-20 and discuss social and political issues at UVA and in the world. Each dialogue is meant to tackle a challenging topic like race, gender, or mental health, in a safe and non-adversarial environment. The Sustained Dialogue chapter at UVA is one of 51 across the county. The first chapter began at Princeton, the alma mater of Harold Saunders, an American diplomat who

codified the Sustained Dialogue communications process after participating in peace processes in the Middle East throughout the 1970s.

The organization is led by an executive team of six members: a Chair, four Vice Chairs, and a liaison between Sustained Dialogue and PULSE, another dialogue-centric organization on Grounds. New moderators are selected each spring and trained each fall. Several hundred students participate every semester. Despite the large size of the organization, there is a lack of diversity among the students who choose to join. The groups generally reflect the demographics of the University, which means that a majority of the participants are white, female, and left-leaning politically. The lack of diversity limits the effectiveness of the dialogue. Another challenge



Members of Sustained Dialogue shown after a meeting.

facing the organization is striking the balance between creating a dialogue space that allows participants to feel safe and welcomed while also asking them to “lean into discomfort,” a common maxim in Sustained Dialogue groups.

Sustained Dialogue Chair Mary Russo believes that UVA students get caught in “the UVA bubble” far too often—they get “bogged down in their majors, extracurriculars, and small insular social circles” and therefore have a limited idea of what the student experience really is. Sustained Dialogue, then, gives students a chance to break out of those bubbles and learn about the experiences of their peers. According to Russo, “a nuanced understanding of one’s peers and community is critical to a healthy system of student self-governance, which must rely on empathy and consideration for the experiences of others.” By participating in Sustained Dialogue, students confront the diversity of experiences present on grounds and come to understand that their experience at UVA may be vastly different from that of others.

First Year Players

The roots of First Year Players extend back to 1977, when campus minister Ed Golden recognized a lack of opportunity for underclassmen to participate in drama at the University. He cast only first years in a production in a production of *Godspell* that was performed at St. Thomas Aquinas Church. In 1981, Golden turned the fledgling organization over to students. Today, First Year Players is the oldest student-run theater organization on Grounds and puts on a production performed entirely by first years or first year transfer students every semester.



Members of the First Year Players form their trademark “FYP” acronym. They are rarely referred to as anything but FYP on Grounds.

Although the cast is composed of entirely first years, older students are welcome

to any other position in the organization with the exception of the two stage manager positions, which also must be filled by first years. FYP is run by the production staff, an executive committee that oversees the organizational and monetary aspects of the

club. The technical director oversees the technical staff, and the pit director oversees the musicians (as all the show music is performed live). The director oversees all the artistic staff, which includes the vocal director and choreographer, as well as the cast.

Despite its complex leadership structure, the voice of every member, regardless of their position in the organization, has equal significance. For instance, each member votes to choose the producer, who heads the production staff. The average member also has the chance to choose the next musical FYP will put on and its director: the selection committee includes the producer and three other members of the production staff, as well as four spots open to anyone in FYP who applies. Producer Angelica Botlo believes that this egalitarian philosophy is what makes FYP embody the idea of student self-governance: “All the decisions are made by students. Everything we do to better the organization is based on the desires of the members themselves, not just leadership.” This egalitarian attitude extends to the social aspect of the group, as well. First years are treated as equals, and community is stressed.

The single largest issue facing FYP—and all student theater organizations at UVA—is a lack of space. FYP has an entire position on its production staff dedicated to reserving rooms for rehearsal, and must claim their performance space an entire year in advance. Although the search for space can be frustrating and resources are limited, Botlo believes that FYP will prosper as long as the organization continues to increase the quality of its productions and chooses bigger, harder productions that push the organization to grow.

The Black Student Alliance

In September of 1970, three University students created Black Students for Freedom, an organization with dual goals: to serve as a liaison between Black university students, and to rectify those policies and programs at the University and beyond that they saw as unjust. In 1972, the organization was renamed the Black Student Alliance. Former BSA President Bryanna Miller, 2018, sees the modern organization’s goals as tripartite. Firstly, the BSA voices the concerns of students. When an event occurs that affects the Black community, the BSA is constitutionally obligated to respond. Through an organic and consensus-driven process, the BSA works to create a statement that acknowledges the event and invites readers to react and respond. Secondly, the BSA seeks justice. “Beyond just saying, ‘Here’s the issue,’ we outlay solutions for administrators and students,” says Miller. Thirdly, the BSA tries to create a sense of community for the University’s Black students through social events and functions.

Although there are fewer than a thousand four hundred Black students across all of UVA eight undergraduate schools, creating programming that is relevant for all of them is one of the biggest challenges currently facing the BSA. Miller, recognizing the diversity of the University’s Black population, notes that the BSA must be “sensitive to race **and** class **and** origin.” An increasing number of Black organizations on Grounds (the Office of African American Affairs recognizes 25 student organizations



Members of the Black Student Alliance (BSA) pose in the Newcomb Ballroom

with a Black focus) means that the BSA is competing for membership more than ever before. But Miller doesn't see this negatively: "We can narrow our scope, we don't have to be an umbrella organization, we can focus on what we choose. It's a challenge and an opportunity."

Although as a CIO, the BSA has no faculty oversight, the organization does work closely with the administration. For example, the BSA has partnered with the University to find ways to encourage students from predominantly Black high schools across Virginia to apply to the University and choose to attend after they've been accepted. Miller sees this as fitting--BSA members can "have a broader view of the school at the operational level," and they become "stewards of the University."

In the future, the BSA will have to cope with an ever-increasing number of Black CIOs and Black experiences. The executive board of 2016-2017 ran on a platform of transparency, and has worked to revive the social, communal aspect of the BSA. Miller believes that the community aspect of the organization will continue to be vital, even if the political aspect becomes less important over time.

The Sloane Society

The Sloane Society was founded in 1999 as a way for medical students to develop a variety of historical, anthropological, literary, and artistic perspectives. The group was named for Sir Hans Sloane, a physician and member of the Royal Society in London whose large collection of historical and natural artifacts started the British Museum. Today, the Sloane Society "serves as a creative outlet for some students, a place to learn something new that's not related to science for others, and an open forum for discussion of topics outside of medicine for many," according to President Janice Park.

Park describes the club as casual, and says that along with her two co-leaders, Brittany Smith and Moira Smith, she tries to plan at least one event--big or small--a month. Event in the past year have included "jam sessions" (1-2 hour long meetings where members bring their instruments to play and discuss music in general), a history talk about wartime medicine down in Historical Collections at the Health Sciences Library, and movie nights. In addition, says Park, "we were the main organization to help plan the UVA School of Medicine's first administration-approved Convocation of Gratitude to honor our anatomical donors."

The main challenge facing the Sloane Society is finding ways to ensure that their events are well-attended. Park has found that many medical students are unwilling to give up even an hour of potential study time.

Still, Park believes that Sloane Society has something to offer to time-strapped medical students: She notes that "balancing study time and taking breaks to do things that are still productive, just in a different way, can really enhance one's experience in medical school and beyond."

The Sloane Society varies greatly from year to year, as each successive President has the chance to shape the organization as he or she (or they, in the case of Park, Smith, and Smith) sees fit. Park forecasts that the Sloane Society will remain a

more casual organization, but says that the organization "is always open for new things to broaden our perspectives"!

Organization of Young Filipino Americans (OYFA)

"The Organization of Young Filipino Americans (OYFA) was founded in 1988 by a group of Filipino-American UVA students who strived to create an organization that spreads awareness of their culture while also celebrating a message of inclusivity throughout grounds and within their organization. While OYFA acts to heighten appreciation for the Filipino culture, its values have attracted a diverse group of students. OYFA's organizational structure comprises of an Executive Board, an Executive Council that holds 12 different committees with distinct purposes including representatives for the Filipino Intercollegiate Networking Dialogue (FIND). In addition to its leadership structure, OYFA has a family system and alumni network that promotes strong personal connections throughout the entire organization.



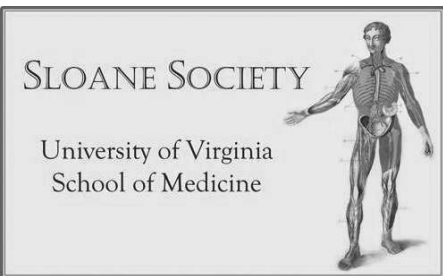
The entire OYFA organization assembled.

However, one of the chief characteristics of leaders within OYFA is their knack for efficiency and constant self-reflection. For example, if one were to attend an election meeting where their Executive Board and Council are chosen, one would be able to witness a rigorous election process for any candidate. Members of OYFA enjoy an environment that emphasizes having fun while also inheriting a work ethic of dedication and passion to ensure the organization's success. A key to OYFA's longevity as an organization is its inherent ability to pass down informal, institutional knowledge. OYFA is known for traditions such as its family system and annual culture show, Barrio, but its members are also committed to constant improvement. OYFA, as a model of self-government, is an illustration of how organizational structure and institutional knowledge serve to sustain an organization over the years and provide a distinct, yet inclusive, purpose on Grounds."

Inter-Sorority Council (ISC)

"The history of the Inter-Sorority Council (ISC) is closely associated with the efforts to open up educational opportunities to women at the University of Virginia. Amid rising public pressure and an impending lawsuit, the College of Arts & Sciences admitted women to its undergraduate program for the first time in 1970, effectively making the University co-educational. Many sororities and women's fraternities were chartered at the University in the years that followed. In keeping with the tradition of self-governance, these sorority women established the Inter-Sorority Council in 1975 to serve as the governing body of sororities on Grounds.

From its inception, the ISC elected its own leaders, developed its own policies, procedures, and programs, and sought to further the unifying mission of each sorority while also providing networks of academic and social support for the women of UVA. Today, the Inter-Sorority Council is the largest group of women on Grounds with over 2300 members in 16 sororities. Its leadership structure includes the Executive





Sorority members hosted a University March for Women in January 2017 after being denied the ability to leave recruitment week to attend the national Women's March on Washington.

Board (made up of 15 cabinet and chair positions), the Judicial Board (with one rep from each chapter), the Presidents' Council (which includes the ISC's president as well as all 16-chapter presidents), and the Representative Body (which is made up of one rep from each chapter). One of the most recognized functions of the ISC is overseeing the process of Recruitment that takes place each year; potential new members are invited to consider sorority membership through either Informal or Formal Recruitment. In the University's third century, the Inter-Sorority Council will continue to strive for excellence through the five pillars on which it stands: sisterhood, service, scholarship, support, and student leadership."

Asian Leaders Council (ALC)

The Asian Leaders Council (ALC) was reestablished in 2016 by leaders in the AAPA community who sought more representation for and collaboration among themselves. They bear the responsibility to serve the needs of their members, and enjoy the autonomy and creativity in deciding their own programs. In addition to the Chair and Vice Chair who serve to facilitate discussion and coordination, the Council includes the President and Vice President of 15 diverse organizations: alpha Kappa Delta Phi (aKD-Phi), the Asian Student Union (ASU), Chinese Student Association (CSA), Chinese Students and Scholars Society (CSSS), Indian Student Association (ISA), Japan Club (JC), Korean Student Association (KSA), Lambda Phi Epsilon (LFE), Mainland Student Network (MSN), Organization of Young Filipino Americans (OYFA), Pakistani Student Association (PSA), Sigma Psi Zeta (SYZ), Taiwanese Student Association (TSA), Thai Student Organization (TSO), and the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA)



Asian Leadership Council members after a weekly meeting.

Having key voices together in one room allows everyone to support each other and stay informed about the various issues that affect the community, such as their history and inclusion throughout Grounds. While there are strong personal friendships in the Council, meetings demonstrate respect through professionalism and diplomacy. For example, all of the organizations coordinate together to prevent Date Conflict, which is having major events on the same day, to encourage members to explore different perspectives. As a young coalition, the ALC continues evolving and improving its efforts to raise the AAPA community and develop its leaders. It remains dedicated to their success and happiness, and bears this mission in mind with every action that it takes.

The Mulholland Society

The Mulholland Society is UVA's medical school's governing body and it was founded in 1967 in order to specifically serve the needs of graduate medical students at the

university. Its entire membership consists of every medical student enrolled in the university but one of its most distinct features is that as the governing body of a school at UVA, it does not hold elections at the same time as other councils like College Council or the Engineering Council nor does it have the University Board of Elections handle their elections for their executive board and other leadership positions. The Mulholland Society is a unique creation of the School of Medicine, created by students for students, with a structure and processes divorced from other school councils.

The Mulholland Society has a tremendous number of committees and leadership posts within its organization that are specific to the School of Medicine, its students, and even their buildings. Positions such as the Lounge Manager and the Gym Manager serve to administer and oversee localized issues specific to medical school students. Within the Mulholland Society, there exist smaller class committees where first, second, third, and fourth year medical students elect their individual presidents and vice-presidents with the Mulholland Society's executive committee overseeing the whole of the organization. The Mulholland Society's success as a model of student self-governance is in its purpose of serving whole school students, managing issues from how to manage the gym to managing the concerns and activities of the respective classes of the School of Medicine.



Members of the Mulholland Society

Queer Student Union (QSU)

Queer Student Union (QSU) was founded in 1972, originally titled the Gay Student Union. In the following decade, it changed its name to the Gay and Lesbian Student Union until the early 2000's when it changed its name to the Queer Student Union as it is today. QSU, a recognized contracted independent organization, holds bimonthly meetings that hold educational meetings, teaching history and discussing contemporary developments in the LGBTQ community while also serving as a safe space for members of the LGBTQ community who may not be out to their friends or family. The changing leadership positions of QSU reflect the changing demands of the time and the readiness that QSU shows to act as advocacy organization for LGBTQ students. This past year, a position was created for the sole purpose of organizing and coordinating student activism, which has had much success in raising awareness for LGBTQ issues such as the Gender-Neutral Town Hall co-hosted with Student Council and the counter-chalking initiatives in the wake of transphobic and racist chalking in the spring of 2016.



Members of QSU pose in Newcomb after an event.

QSU's name change over the years and the recent formation of a position for activism on its executive board reflects the very nature of student self-governance as the students' needs and make up constitute the workings, purpose, and structure of

the organization. Students who sought a space that was inclusive for them and could be a refuge for others like them created an organization that would, in the following decades, serve as the focal point for LGBTQ students and continue to serve as a space for safety and eventually become a vehicle for advocacy as times began to reflect a changing population. And as the LGBTQ Studies program grows and develops, QSU bimonthly meetings may serve a different purpose in order to continue to reflect the needs that the LGBTQ population at UVA. As the years pass, QSU will continue the tradition of being a reflection of contemporary members of the LGBTQ community, a model of self-government.

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“Student self-governance is the essence of what Mr. Jefferson hoped to accomplish in the founding of this University. This University is ours and we are trusted to be its stewards and direct it in the direction we wish to see it go. It is a very optimistic proposition to allow students to govern themselves, but it is how UVA fosters a community of trust”.

Anonymous Student, 2017

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