

Student Government End of the Year Report: Secretary (2021)
Submitted by: Caroline Lesch (2020-2021)

General Tasks:

My main tasks in this position focused on tracking attendance and record-keeping. I maintained an attendance spreadsheet for all meetings, office hours, and retreats throughout the year, working with committee chairs to keep track of committee attendance. This responsibility also required communication with members of the body regarding absences and scheduling conflicts. Record-keeping focused largely on meeting minutes, resolutions, and executive orders. These documents needed to be correctly formatted and then disseminated amongst the Student Government body and any other directed recipients. Record-keeping required consistent updating through email and the Student Government Google Drive. I also submitted semester rosters, keeping a spreadsheet with contact information for each member of the Student Government body.

Tools for Success:

- Resolution email list:
 - Spreadsheet is divided between administration, faculty, and organizations, and should be regularly updated with any new contacts
- Shared Drive:
 - This is shared with all members of the body and is a place to keep track of important documents -- minutes, resolutions, governing documents, etc.
 - New members should be added to the Shared Drive as they are elected/appointed to ensure everyone has access to shared information
- Minutes templates:
 - Secretary should make a copy of the meeting agenda and use this as the outline for minute-taking
- President's signature and StuGov letterhead:
 - These should be inserted in every resolution and executive order document that is sent out, along with the date passed and the vote distribution (if applicable)
- Attendance spreadsheets:
 - Attendance should be divided between general body meetings, office hours, committee meetings, and executive committee meetings
 - Google has attendance templates that are customizable and easily highlight and tally absences
- A folder with all the necessary documents will be shared with our next secretary; they are also more than welcome to contact me with questions!

My Experience:

My experience was perhaps different from past secretaries due the impacts of COVID-19 during this school year. Because of quarantines and isolations, as well as the general strains of a global pandemic, more flexibility was required when approaching attendance. I maintained consistent communication with members regarding absences and sent reminders of attendance policies within the Standing Rules, but was also willing to work with individual members on a case-by-case basis. Keeping in consistent communication with individual members of the body, and encouraging them to do the same, helped me continue to monitor attendance while also making accommodations for the unavoidable challenges of a global pandemic.

Suggestions:

Consistency is key in this role. Most secretarial tasks are easiest when spread throughout the week. Check in with office hour logging on a daily basis, and bring up any attendance issues as soon as they are brought to your attention. Update your contact list, Shared Drive, and attendance spreadsheet whenever you get new information. Doing this makes sure things don't pile up and keeps you (and the body!) organized.

Don't be afraid to reach out for help and advice. The rest of the Executive Board is a fantastic sounding board for any issues that come up with attendance. Ask resolution sponsors for any emails you are unable to find on the dissemination list -- it's sometimes difficult to find certain contacts on Google, and asking someone who actually wrote the resolution might save you a lot of time and frustration.

And finally, as the pandemic continues into the 2021-2022 school year, I recommend continued flexibility in regards to attendance. Though fewer students may be quarantining due to rising vaccination rates, we have learned over the past year that situations can change drastically over short periods of time. If and when attendance issues come up, offer understanding first; most problems can be solved with a bit more communication.