

Dimcevski's departure leads to 'unconstitutional' executive decision

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Following the resignation of Representative Sen. Alexander Dimcevski, the Undergraduate Student Government made an executive decision to shorten the public notice period for the newly opened representative senator seat from two weeks to one week.

This, however, was deemed unconstitutional by three members of the senate.

In a soft vote, Andrew Windsor, co-chair of the Constitutional Review Committee, Emma Jorgensen and Erica Yang voted against shortening the public notice period, which is when candidates can apply for the open seat. The three believed the decision would break the rules written in the USG Constitution. Based on the 10-3-0 result of the soft vote — as the senate never motioned to vote on the issue — the USG e-board made an executive decision to shorten the public notice period to a week.

According to Article VIII, Section 4 of the USG Constitution, "Prior to any vacancy being filled, there must be at least two (2) weeks public notice made and addressed to the Undergraduate Student Body."

If the senate were to follow the constitution, the two-week notice period would end on May 8, and a new senator would not join the table for a senate meeting until May 15 — the last senate meeting scheduled for this academic year.

"I find it abhorrent that our Executive Board would request a soft vote from our Senate to violate our Constitution. Worse is the fact that ten people knew they were agreeing to violate the Constitution and still soft-voted to do so, 10-3," Windsor said in a statement. "I am disappointed in everyone except

the three of us, as we stood up for the rule of law."

When reached out for comment about the decision, USG President Isabel Arias justified why the senate decided to provide a week's notice for the vacancy.

"The constitution isn't a perfect document and in this particular instance it did not make logistical sense to wait two weeks and therefore elect a candidate after finals are over and students have left campus or graduated.

If this had happened, many students who can apply now, would no longer be able to apply, and we felt this offered the greatest opportunity to our constituents whom we are always looking to serve," Arias wrote.

Executive Vice President Deryn Fleurima did not respond to a request for comment.

Dimcevski announced his decision to step down in a group chat with other senate members on April 24 at around 5:30 p.m. "right before the senate meeting was supposed to begin," Windsor said in a phone interview.

At approximately 7:30 p.m., when the senate was still discussing unfinished business, Windsor brought up Dimcevski's resignation to the senate.

At first, Arias brought up the idea of leaving the senate seat vacant. After that idea was rejected, she suggested electing two senators on May 1. "The other representative senator would fill the position left vacant following the resignation of former Vice President of Academic Affairs Suleman Aleem," Windsor said.

In response to the senators' protests about the decision being unconstitutional, Fleurima said that the senators could talk about the issue before making a final decision.

The main arguments in sup-

port of the one-week notice period were that the voting of two senators during one meeting instead of two would be more convenient. The two picks would then be able to sit in for at least two senate meetings.

On the other hand, the arguments for the two-week period were that the decision would follow the constitution, respect the constituents and ensure transparency. Furthermore, the person would still be in their position until June 30, when the administration is set to make a decision about social Greek Life.

The three senators who voted against having a one-week notice period said that the soft vote was only carried out to explore the support for the idea. No motion was made for an official vote. Therefore, the decision to shorten the notice period to a week was an executive decision made by the e-board.

As of press time, USG did not post on its Facebook page that a senator position was open, nor was the application link posted for students to apply. The last vacant position notice was posted on April 12, in reference to the seat left vacant by Aleem.

In a joint interview with Jorgensen and Yang, the two explained that USG does not intend to post a new form for the newly vacated senator position. Instead, two candidates will be picked from those who applied for the seat through the form posted on April 12, which is still open.

However, the USG Facebook page neither reposted the form since April 12, nor announced that prospective applicants should use the form posted on April 12. USG also did not announce that the senate would pick two senators from the April 12 form.

With the new decision in place, two candidates for senator will be



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Alexander Dimcevski was the eighth senator to resign from the Undergraduate Student Government. Two representative senator seats are currently open and up for election.

voted in during the May 1 meeting, allowing them to sit in on two senate meetings. They will hold their positions until the 2017-18 USG's end of term on June 30.

"It's unconstitutional," Yang said. "Who are we to break the laws that we have set for ourselves? So what's to say that we can't go just breaking any other ones whenever we feel like it?"

"Yeah, same thing. If we break one, who's to say that we can't break them all," Jorgensen added. "It brings up a bunch of questions. It's like, okay, if we let it slide once, USG has let it slide, so who's to say we can't let it slide again."

Article IX Section 1 of the USG constitution states that "Willful

violation of the provisions of this constitution" could be considered grounds for impeachment. However, all three senators said they do not think the decision will lead to anyone's impeachment, and do not believe there will be any repercussions for violating the constitution.

"I don't think there will be any repercussions," Jorgensen said. "People could bring it up, but I don't feel like the senate is super motivated to shuffle things around anymore than already has been done this year."

"We were in the minority, so there's not much that the senate as a whole can do about it," Yang said.

Dimcevski did not respond to *The Ticker's* request for comment.