



University Students' Council of Western University

Elections Governance Committee Terms of Reference

Authority: Council	Date Ratified: 27 November 2019
Previous Amendments: November 26, 2015	Date Review: September 2018
	Next Review Date: September 2021
Review Committee(s): Governance & Finance Standing Committee, USC Council	
Delegates: Speaker of Council Associate Governance Senior Manager, Government Services	

1. MANDATE

- a. The mandate of the Elections Governance Committee (EGC) shall be:
 - i. Administer **Bylaw #2** and uphold its Vision and Principles.
 - ii. Oversee elections in accordance with the provisions of **Bylaw #2**.
 - iii. Develop and maintain a clear set of criteria and considerations to be used by the Committee when making decisions relating to elections.
 - b. The Committee may release Regulations detailing how **Bylaw #2** will be interpreted and applied during an election period. The Regulations shall be binding as though they were a part of the bylaws, provided that:
 - i. The Regulations are strictly consistent with the bylaws and any provisions therein;
 - ii. The Regulations are openly available to candidates at the start of nominations;
and
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- iii. The Committee recommends to the Agenda and Council Operations Standing Committee any bylaw amendments related to Regulations issued as soon as possible following the end of the polling period.
- c. Make recommendations to Council on all matters, including bylaw amendments that relate to USC Elections.
- d. Not seek office in an election, support any candidate, or endorse a position in a referendum. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the immediate removal from the Elections Governance Committee.

2. COMPOSITION

- a. The Elections Governance Committee shall be composed of:
 - i. The Chief Returning Officer (CRO), ex-officio, as chairperson, voting;
 - ii. The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), ex-officio, as vice-chairperson, voting;
 - iii. Up to nine (9), minimum five (5), undergraduate students of the University, voting;
 - iv. The Vice-President Governance and Finance, ex-officio, non-voting, resource; and
 - v. The Manager, Governance and Elections, non-voting, resource.

The Chief Returning Officer:

1. The following items will be publicized by the CRO on behalf of the Corporation for the purposes of each election period:
 - a. Call for nominations for USC elections, released alongside a nomination package that includes information about positions up for election, election related policies and procedures, the election calendar, and any election related forms and paperwork;
 - b. Update daily the elections website with the number of candidates for each position in the USC election as their nominations are processed, omitting the names of the candidates;
 - c. Announcement of the time and date for online balloting; and
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- vi. Announcement of the official results for USC elections.

3. STRUCTURE AND SUBCOMMITTEE

- a. The Elections Governance Committee shall have the following subcommittees and each subcommittee shall have the following membership:
 - i. Finance Subcommittee (at least 1 member); and
 - ii. Investigations and Violations Subcommittee (at least 5 members)
- b. The Finance Subcommittee and the Investigations and Violations Subcommittee shall each be chaired by a Manager as appointed by the Chief Returning Officer.
- c. Each subcommittee shall report to the Elections Governance Committee on a regular basis.
- d. The Elections Governance Committee shall have the final authority to approve any and all decisions unless specified in **Bylaw #2** or the Elections Governance Committee's written procedures.

4. MEETINGS

- a. Meetings shall be called by the CRO and be held at a location specified by the CRO:
 - i. For meetings held during the campaign period and voting period the CRO shall book space specifically for the Elections Governance Committee to hold meetings and all meetings shall be held in this space.
 - ii. For meetings held outside of the campaign period and voting period the CRO shall book space on a per meeting basis.
 - b. The CRO shall give the following notice to the Elections Governance Committee members prior to a meeting of the Elections Governance Committee:
 - i. During the campaign period and voting period the CRO shall give the members six (6) hours' notice.
 - ii. Outside of the campaign period and voting period the CRO shall give the members forty-eight (48) hours' notice.
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- c. All meetings of the EGC shall be closed to members of the public unless specifically invited by the CRO.
- d. The EGC shall produce reports and a record of decisions no later than forty-eight (48) hours following the end of the meeting and these reports shall be made available to the public.
- e. Quorum shall be a majority of the voting members of EGC:
 - i. Where the EGC fails to reach quorum, any items of discussion that require a decision shall be postponed to the following meeting.
 - ii. Any meeting of the EGC that fails to preserve quorum shall be subject to Section 4.4.1 above.
 - iii. In the event that a meeting fails to reach quorum the CRO shall inform all invited guests of this occurrence as soon as reasonably possible.

5. VOTING

- a. Unless otherwise specified, each voting member shall cast one (1) vote on a given question.
 - b. All questions shall be decided by a simple majority except in the following circumstances. The following decisions shall require a Two-Thirds (2/3) vote in favour:
 - i. A decision to disqualify a candidate.
 - ii. A decision to invalidate an election, referendum, or plebiscite.
 - iii. A decision to approve a series of regulations meant to augment the rules contained in **Bylaw #2**; and
 - iv. A decision to modify the elections calendar (i.e., campaign period, voting period, nomination period, etc.) insofar as such is permitted by **Bylaw #2**.
 - c. Unless a poll is called for a vote by a voting member, every question shall be decided by a show of hands. Where a poll is called, the voting member shall specify the method of polling to be used, being either a roll call or secret ballot. The call for a poll may be withdrawn.
 - d. Unless a poll has been called for, a declaration by the CRO that a recorded resolution has been carried or not carried is sufficient without proof of the number of votes in favour
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or against.

- e. All votes cast shall be tabulated by the CRO or designate(s).
- f. In the event of a tie, the CRO shall cast a vote to break the tie.

6. MINUTES AND RECORDS

- a. The Vice-Chair of the EGC, or appointed designate, shall be tasked with recording the minutes of EGC meetings.
 - b. A final draft of the minutes, and any or all reports of a given meeting shall be produced no later than forty-eight (48) hours following the conclusion of the meeting.
 - c. The CRO, or DRO, and another member of the EGC present at the meeting will sign off on any minutes before they are made available to the public.
 - d. A copy of all finalized minutes and reports shall be sent to the Senior Manager of Government Services immediately after they have been signed off on and the Senior Manager of Government Services shall maintain a file with the minutes of all meetings of the Elections Governance Committee.
 - e. The Senior Manager of Government Services shall also maintain an index of decisions made by the EGC for the purposes of establishing precedent and record-keeping.
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