

Elections Committee Terms of Reference

Definitions

Definitions herein shall have the same meaning as in the Association's bylaws. Should there be a discrepancy between this policy and the Association's bylaws, the Association's bylaws shall prevail.

“Active Member” means all persons registered as graduate students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies or as credit certificate and diploma program students at the University of Calgary who pay full- or part-time Association fees.

“Association” means The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Calgary.

“Board” means the elected members who make up the Board of Directors of the Association.

“Chair” means the appointed chair of an Association Standing Committee, selected through an interview process and overseen by a Board Member.

“Chief Returning Officer” or **“CRO”** means the Active Member elected by the GRC to organize and oversee the annual election of the Board and any necessary by-elections and referenda.

“Conflict of Interest” occurs when an individual or organization is involved in multiple interests, one of which could corrupt the motivation for an act in another.

“Conflict of Interest Policy” means the Association's Conflict of Interest Policy, as may be amended from time to time.

“Committee” means any one of the committees of the Association.

“Graduate Representative Council” or **“GRC”** means a group of Active Members from eligible departments as defined in the Association's bylaws

“Election Policy” means the Association's Election Policy, as may be amended from time to time.

“Eligible Voters” means all Active Members, excluding the Chief Returning

Officer, of the Association.

“Executive Officer” (EO) is a full-time staff member responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Association, the Executive Officer reports directly to the Board.

“Plebiscite” means a single question presented to Active Members for their opinion in relation to a specific issue facing the Association. A Plebiscite is an expression of opinion of Active Members and is used for decision making purposes only. A Plebiscite is non-binding to either the Board or the GRC.

“Referendum” means a question to be voted on by Active Members related to establishing or increasing fees not covered in the Association’s Bylaws. Results of Referenda are binding upon the Association.

“Staff Member” means all persons employed by the Association in a paid capacity, whether full-time, part-time, term certain, or contract.

“Subcommittee” means any one of the subcommittees of the Association.

“Vice Chair” is an Active Member selected by the Board to carry out the duties of the Chair should the Chair be unable to perform their duties as required, or other duties as delegated by the Chair.

Statement of Purpose

The Elections Committee shall:

1. Take on projects, from time to time, by a majority vote of the committee members that focus on student engagement and outreach regarding the Association elections;
2. Run events and activities to increase candidate and voter turn-out and engagement;
3. Support the CRO in organizing a public forum during the campaign period of the general election; and
4. Support CRO in duties outlined in the Association bylaw and the Election Policy.

Authority

The Elections committee was established by the Board in accordance with Association bylaw.

Last Reviewed: May 2023

Board Approval Date: June 2023

The Committee has the delegated authority to act autonomously as described below, on the condition that decisions made, or actions taken under this delegated authority are reported to the EO:

1. The Committee may spend money as allocated by the Board;
2. The Chair may appoint Active Members to the Committee to meet desired outcomes; and
3. Other duties as required to meet the mandate of the Committee.

Timeline

The timeline for the Elections Committee shall be as follows:

1. The Elections Committee is a standing committee of the Graduate Students' Association that runs continuously throughout the calendar year;
2. The Graduate Representative Council shall elect the CRO in the April GRC meeting, as outlined in the Association bylaws, for the upcoming year;
3. Elections Committee member selection shall occur in the Spring term;
4. The Elections Committee shall meet a minimum of once per month per academic term or more if deemed necessary by the CRO; for the purposes of this Terms of Reference, the Spring and Summer terms will be counted as a single academic term; and
5. The CRO will submit a year-end report at the end of their term to the EO and GRC.

Chair

The CRO shall be the Chair of the Elections Committee

Responsibilities of the CRO

The responsibilities of the CRO include, but are not limited to:

1. Complying with all CRO duties outlined in the Association Bylaws
2. Recording all decisions and recommendations made by the Committee by keeping a detailed set of minutes of all meetings, which will be submitted to the President, EO and GRC in a timely fashion;
3. Delegation of duties by appointing a member of the Committee should they be unable to carry out said duties;
4. Communicating all relevant material to the Association as required, through the EO and GRC

5. Submit the annual CRO report by March 31st to the EO, which includes:
 - 5.1.1. Action items of the Committee;
 - 5.1.2. Committee Meeting Minutes;
 - 5.1.3. List of After-Action Reports in progress;
 - 5.1.4. Completed After-Action Reports;
 - 5.1.5. Year-to-date Committee budget;
 - 5.1.6. Number of hours per week spent on Committee business; and
 - 5.1.7. Other material deemed relevant.
6. Other duties as required based on the specific nature of the committee.

Responsibilities of Members

The responsibilities of the members include, but are not limited to:

1. Familiarize themselves with the Committee's role in the Association;
2. Members of the Nominations Committee will serve for a twelve (12)-month term;
3. Attend and actively participate in Committee meetings;
4. Should a committee member miss more than two committee meetings, they may be removed from the committee at the discretion of the Chair. Quorum will adjust accordingly until this member has been replaced.
5. Contribute time, knowledge, skill, and expertise to the fulfillment of the Committee's responsibilities;
6. Undertake work necessary to implement the Committee work plan;
7. Thoroughly understand the GSA Elections policy;
8. For the duration of their term, the Committee members shall be Active Member and remain impartial in any association elections;
 - 8.1. Should a member decide to run for an elected position, they must resign from their current position before December 15th prior to the Election cycle. Notice must be provided, in writing, to the CRO;
 - 8.2. Committee members are ineligible to be nominated for an elected position after the date listed above.
9. Members of the Committee will be excluded from running in the Association general elections, by-elections, Plebiscites, and referenda

Membership

1. Membership of the Committee shall be composed of:
 - 1.1. The CRO (voting);

Last Reviewed: May 2023

Board Approval Date: June 2023

- 1.2. No fewer than four (4) Active Members of the Association(voting); All members will be selected in an application and interview process conducted by a minimum of two of the positions below:
 - 1.2.1. the CRO
 - 1.2.2. Executive Coordinator
 - 1.2.3. Executive Officer
- 1.3. The Executive Coordinator (non-voting)
- 1.4. The Executive Officer (non-voting)
 - 1.4.1. The EO may delegate this authority to another Staff Member

Quorum

1. Quorum shall be called at the beginning of each meeting.
 - 1.1. Quorum shall consist of a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the total members
 - 1.1.1.1. One of whom must be the CRO

Budget

1. The budget of the Committee shall be determined by the Board and approved by the Financial Standing Committee;
2. The CRO can request a change to the budget through a formal request to the Board.

Review and Evaluation

1. The Elections Committee Terms of Reference shall be reviewed every year. Changes to the document must be approved by the Board.
2. The relevance of the Committee shall be reviewed by the Committee every year at the discretion of the Board and the CRO.

Non-Compliance

1. Any violation of the Association's Conflict of Interest Policy, Volunteer Agreement, Computer and Network Use Policy, or Confidentiality Agreement shall be referred to the CRO for adjudication;
2. Matters concerning the performance of a Committee member shall be handled internally by the CRO, in consultation with the EO and any delegate staff members. After consultation, the Chair has the authority to issue a written warning or to replace the Committee member as needed;

3. Matters concerning the performance of a CRO shall be handled according to the procedure outlined in the Association's bylaws.

Approval and Interpretation

1. Any changes to the Committee Terms of Reference requires Board approval. All procedural requirements outlined in this document are interpreted by the CRO. Any procedural changes must be approved by the CRO;
2. Disagreements with the CRO's decisions may be brought forward to the Judicial Review Board;