



Concordia University of Edmonton

Students' Association

ELECTIONS & REFERENDUM POLICY

CONCORDIA STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY OF EDMONTON

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

2018-19

Concordia Students' Association
Election & Referendum

Policy: CSA Elections & Referendum

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1.0 General Provisions

1.1. Definitions

- 1.1.1. **By-Election** is when another election to fill elected offices that are or have become vacant.
- 1.1.2. **Campaign Materials** are materials used by a candidate and all those acting on his/her behalf in campaigning.
- 1.1.3. **Campaigning** is the process undertaken by a candidate seeking election whereby that candidate seeks to promote his or her desire to hold office, and what he or she intends to do if elected to office. Campaigning also encompasses the process undertaken by a candidate who seeks to influence the outcome of a particular referendum question.
- 1.1.4. **Candidate** is a qualified person who seeks to obtain an elected position and has passed the nomination stage or a person who seeks and registers with the ERO a specific outcome for a referendum question.
- 1.1.5. **Election/Election Period** is the time period from the day the election nominations open until the election results become official.
- 1.1.6. **Electoral Returning Officer** is an active member of the CSA elected by the General Council to organize and oversee the annual election of the Executive Council and any necessary by-elections.
- 1.1.7. **Referendum** is a general vote by the electorate on a single question that has been referred to them for a direct decision.
- 1.1.8. **Union:** Are identified by their distinctive population and represent academic faculties at Concordia. Unions are directly responsible to the CSA VP Finance and General Council, and are governed by the CSA's By-laws and policies.

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1.2. Applicable Legislation and Bylaws

- 1.2.1. All policies and procedures of Concordia Students' Association (CSA) are subject to the provisions of Alberta's *Societies Act* (as amended), CSA Objects, and the CSA Bylaws. If there is a conflict between the provisions of any CSA policy or procedure and the provisions of the *Societies Act* or CSA Objects or CSA Bylaws, then the provisions of the *Societies Act* or CSA Objects or CSA Bylaws shall prevail.
- 1.2.2. The policies and provisions herein shall apply to:
 - a) All elections, by-elections, and referendums held by the CSA.
- 1.2.3. The policies and provisions herein are subject to change without notice to CSA members. It is up to the CSA members to ensure that they are aware of any changes to this policy.

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2.0 Governing Authority

2.1. Electoral Returning Officer (ERO)

2.1.1. Is elected each academic year by the General Council, is a current Active CSA member, and commits to a twelve (12)-month term, as described by Bylaw 15.3.

2.1.1.1. The ERO may request the assistance to help fulfill all the duties that are required.

2.1.1.1.1. Anyone assisting the ERO must remain impartial and must help enforce the CSA bylaws, policies, and procedures.

2.1.1.1.2. Those that can assist the ERO are the following:

- Executive Director,
- CSA General/Executive Councillors that will not be running, or have a conflict of interest with anyone in the election,
- Any CSA General Member that will not be running, or have a conflict of interest with anyone in the election.

2.1.2. The ERO shall be impartial to all members and accountable to the General Council for proper conduct of electoral processes.

2.1.3. The ERO must enforce all CSA bylaws, policies, and procedures that apply to an election or by-election.

2.1.4. The ERO is responsible for reviewing and making disciplinary actions during the election if an event takes place requiring such actions.

2.2. General Council (GC)

2.2.1. Is responsible for ratifying the election results from all elections and referendums.

2.2.2. Is responsible for selecting the Electoral Returning Officer at the

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first General Council meeting of the year.

2.3. Executive Council (EC)

- 2.3.1. The Executive Council is responsible for the marketing and communication of the Election, By-Election, and/or referendum as well as the positions that are open.
- 2.3.2. The Executive Council is responsible for selecting the appropriate voting platform and any payment necessary for it to be used.

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3.0 Election Dates

3.1. Purpose

- 3.1.1. This policy is designed to give insight to Executive and General Councils to set up election dates.

3.2. Policy

- 3.2.1. A general election of the Executive Council shall take place in the Winter semester of each year.
 - 3.2.1.1. Faculty Representatives shall be included in the general election, with the exception of the following After-Degree Representatives which are outlined in their Union constitutions:
 - 3.2.1.1.1. Education After-Degree Representative(s)
 - 3.2.1.1.2. Environmental Health After-Degree Representative(s)
 - 3.2.1.2. Special Student Group Representatives must apply for a seat on the General Council every academic year.
 - 3.2.1.2.1. Special Student Groups can be found in the CUE Recognized Student Group Policy.
 - 3.2.1.2.2. Special Student Groups are eligible to apply for one (1) seat as defined in Bylaw 9.5.3.
 - 3.2.1.2.3. Procedure for application of a student group can be found in the CSA General Council Recognized Student Group Application Form.
- 3.2.2. Announcement of the General Election will be at least twenty-one (21) days in advance and at most forty (40) days prior to the second Monday in March.
 - 3.2.2.1. Dates for the election can be selected in May/June of that academic year by the ERO with consultation with the Executive Council.
 - 3.2.2.2. Dates for by-elections must be selected by General Council

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and announced a minimum of fifteen (15) days in advance of the by-election voting day.

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4.0 Eligibility

4.1. Purpose

- 4.1.1. This policy is designed to let potential nominees know if they are eligible to run for office.

4.2. Policy

- 4.2.1. To be eligible to hold a position on Executive or General Council, a student must:
 - 4.2.1.1. Be a CSA member;
 - 4.2.1.2. Be a student enrolled at Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE) at the time they apply;
 - 4.2.1.3. Maintain a 2.0 GPA;
 - 4.2.1.4. Eligibility for Faculty and/or After-Degree Representatives is determined by the Faculty/Program they reside in;
 - 4.2.1.5. Not be on Academic Probation;
 - 4.2.1.6. Have no Academic Disciplinary cases against them in the current Academic Year;
 - 4.2.1.7. Have no Non-Academic Disciplinary cases against them.

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5.0 Nominations

5.1. Purpose

- 5.1.1. This policy is designed to help the CSA and the ERO to facilitate nominations.

5.2. Policy

- 5.2.1. Nominations must be open for a minimum of four (4) days.
- 5.2.2. Any CSA General Member can nominate or be nominated if they are eligible.
 - 5.2.2.1. Current CSA Executive and General Councillors cannot nominate other CSA Members for positions and must get non-Executive/General Councillor to nominate them if they desire to seek re-election for a different or same position.
- 5.2.3. Potential nominees must obtain a nomination package, and complete it before 4pm of the last nomination date, from the ERO that includes:
 - The Nomination form
 - Which includes the name and signature of the person who is making the nomination,
 - Fifty (50) signatures from CSA Members that endorse the nominees' candidacy,
 - A signature from CUE Student Accounts acknowledging the nominee has no outstanding fees or fines at CUE,
 - A signature from CUE Registrar Office acknowledging that the nominee has maintained the 2.0 GPA,
 - A signature from CUE VP Student Life and Learning acknowledging the nominee is in good standing with CUE, and
 - The nominees signature acknowledging that they are a current full-time student, and
 - Summary of Campaign rules.
- 5.2.4. When picking up the nomination package, the nominee and ERO, plus one Executive, must review the following:
 - Position Policy that they are being nominated for,
 - And all policies that pertain to that position,
 - Remuneration Policy for that position,
 - Highlight certain areas of the CSA Bylaws that pertain to that position,
 - Election & Referendum Policy,
 - The nomination package itself and where to go to get

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signatures.

- 5.2.5. Nominees shall not knowingly campaign nor allow anyone else to campaign for them during the nomination period.
- 5.2.6. Two (2) All Candidates Meetings will be set for the last two (2) days of the Nomination Period and all candidates must attend one;
 - 5.2.6.1. Absence from both meetings will result in disqualification.

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6.0 Campaign

6.1. Purpose

- 6.1.1. This policy is designed to inform candidates of how they are able to campaign during the campaign period.

6.2. Policy

- 6.2.1. Candidates are required to adhere to the bylaws, policies, and procedures of the CSA in particular to the code of ethics for student representatives.
- 6.2.2. Candidates shall not knowingly campaign nor allow anyone else to campaign for them outside of the campaign period.
- 6.2.3. Candidates must attend an All Candidates meeting as well as all election events;
- 6.2.3.1. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
- 6.2.4. Candidates will not use, or knowingly allow others to use, CSA or The Bolt News resources for campaigning;
- 6.2.4.1. This includes all CSA photographs and postings on websites, social media, and other web sources under the domain of the CSA, including but not limited to feeds that are operated by: The Bolt News, the Concordia Students' Association, etc.;
- 6.2.4.2. Any and all articles that are written about the candidate in The Bolt News for the election issue, other than the 150 words each candidate is granted through the CSA Election process, must be accounted for in campaign expenses;
- 6.2.4.2.1. The only exception to this rule is that candidates may use the photograph taken of them to be used in the Bolt News for the purpose of election promotions and the CSA election ballot for their campaign.
- 6.2.5. Candidates will not disburse to students any items which have intrinsic value beyond their campaigning function:
- 6.2.5.1. Candidates are not permitted to give any food/beverages/consumables to students as a part of their campaign;
- 6.2.5.2. Candidates may only distribute the following items to students during their campaign and must account for them in their campaign expense forms:
- Buttons,
 - Stickers,
 - Postcards,
 - Pins,

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- Brochures,
 - Posters, and
 - Flyers.
- 6.2.6. Candidates may campaign in classrooms with prior approval of the instructor.
- 6.2.7. A candidate may not incur costs of more than \$100 in their campaign;
- 6.2.7.1. Candidates are required to maintain records of the amounts actually spent on campaign expenses including receipts, which must be submitted to the ERO by 4pm MST the day before the first voting day;
 - 6.2.7.2. In-kind donations or assistance given to candidates must be accounted for in the expense claims;
 - 6.2.7.2.1. This includes but is not limited to: graphic design, photography, and specialty printing;
 - 6.2.7.2.1.1. In-kind donations are recorded as \$5 per photo.
 - 6.2.7.3. Candidates that do not attend an All Candidates Meeting and all election events will not have expenses reimbursed;
 - 6.2.7.4. Upon submission of an expense report no further campaign expenses may be incurred by the candidate;
 - 6.2.7.4.1. Candidates found incurring extra costs or failing to return expense reports during campaign week will disqualify the candidate from running.
- 6.2.8. Any campaign event that requires CUE's assistance will be done through the CSA. The CSA and the ERO have the ability to deem any event as inappropriate.
- 6.2.9. Any materials that are to be distributed to students or put up for display must be approved by the ERO or their appointed designate;
- 6.2.9.1. Any candidate found distributing campaign material without submitting copies shall face disciplinary action from the ERO;
 - 6.2.9.2. The ERO has the right to refuse authorization of campaign materials for reasons including but not limited to appropriateness and legality;
- 6.2.10. Campaign posters and banners will be placed in accordance with the requirements of the CUE's facilities department, as outlined by the ERO and/or their appointed designates. Any campaign material found posted on surfaces or areas expressly communicated as off-

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limits for posting shall be confiscated by the ERO;

- 6.2.10.1. Any and all campaign materials must be removed from campus before the voting day begins (effective 7 a.m. of the first day of voting).
- 6.2.11. All posters, banners, and campaign materials must be 11" x 17" or smaller.
- 6.2.12. The ERO will oversee the provision of candidate speeches and debates, and allow for membership to ask questions of the candidates. The ERO or their appointed designate will act as the moderator.

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7.0 Voting

7.1. Purpose

- 7.1.1. The purpose of this policy is to guide the ERO and CSA on how voting will take place during any election. The ERO must also take into consideration the bylaws as well as this policy.

7.2. Policy

- 7.2.1. All voting is done online;
 - 7.2.1.1. If not online, the vote will be done by secret ballot;
- 7.2.2. All votes shall be counted by the ERO and an appointed neutral third party.
- 7.2.3. All General Members are eligible to vote in Executive Council elections with one vote per member and no proxy votes;
 - 7.2.3.1. General Members shall only be able to vote in elections for Faculty Representatives in the same faculty as the voter where the General Member only has one vote per position with no proxy votes.
- 7.2.4. The ERO and their staff are responsible for determining the position of the polling station(s).
- 7.2.5. The ERO and their staff shall ensure that the polling stations provide votes with a booth that allows for votes to be made privately.
- 7.2.6. Each polling station will be operated by two election officials in the case of paper ballots or one election official in the case of electronic ballots.
- 7.2.7. The results shall be made public by 4 p.m. the afternoon of the last voting day.

8.0 By-Election

8.1 Purpose

- 8.1.1. This policy is designed to guide the ERO and CSA in the event of a By-Election.

8.2 Policy

- 8.2.1. All By-Election will follow the same outline and policy as the General Election except in the following ways:
 - 8.2.1.1. Nominations are open for four (4) days, campaigning will be shortened to five (5) days, and voting will happen for two (2) days.

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9.0 CSA Unions

9.1. Purpose

- 9.1.1. This policy is designed to inform CSA Unions on their elections and how Faculty Representatives apply to both the CSA and their Union.

9.2. Policy

- 9.2.1. Union elections are for their Union Executive, and not for the Faculty Representative.
 - 9.2.1.1. The Faculty Representative may run for a Union Executive position should they choose.
 - 9.2.1.2. CSA Members seeking an Executive role in the Election cannot run for a Union Executive position.
- 9.2.2. Unions can request to hold their elections at the same time as the CSA General Election;
 - 9.2.2.1. This request includes the use of the voting platform.
 - 9.2.2.2. These elections would include the election of their Union Executives which is separate from their Faculty Representative outlined in the General Councillors Policy.
- 9.2.3. Unions must hold an election every year;
 - 9.2.3.1. Union constitutions will determine whether a By-Election will be needed in the case of a vacant Union Executive position.
- 9.2.4. All Union elections must adhere to the Campaign Policy set forth by the CSA;

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10.0 Post Election

10.1. Purpose

- 10.1.1. The purpose of this policy is to help the ERO, CSA, and elected candidates after the vote has taken place.

10.2. Policy

- 10.2.1. Candidates that are successfully elected become the elected candidate until the ratification at the next available General Council meeting.
- 10.2.2. All candidates have two (2) business days after the results are made public to file an appeal with the ERO;
 - 10.2.2.1. If an appeal is filed, the ERO will convene the Judicial Board;
 - 10.2.2.1.1. The Judicial Board will release its findings and recommended course(s) of action within two (2) business days after convening. The ruling of the Judicial Board shall be final.
- 10.2.3. Elected Candidates must attend the rest of the General Council meetings until the end of the year (April 30) when they start their term;
 - 10.2.3.1. Elected Executives must be present for all Executive Council meetings until the end of the year (April 30) when they start their term.
- 10.2.4. At the next available General Council meeting, barring an appeal, the General Council must ratify the election results;
 - 10.2.4.1. All elected candidates must be present for the meeting, but leave the room during the vote in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order;
 - 10.2.4.1.1. All individuals that have a conflict of interest shall declare and leave the room during the vote in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
 - 10.2.4.2. Once the vote is taken, all elected candidates become (representative position title)-elect until their term starts on May 1 of that year.
- 10.2.5. All elected candidates must be present for any training designated by the outgoing position holder.

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11.0 Referenda

11.1. Purpose

- 11.1.1. This policy is designed to assist the ERO in the event of a referendum.

11.2. Policy

- 11.2.1. A question may go to a referendum only after it has been approved by General Council.
- 11.2.2. A question can also go to a referendum by petition which states the question and bears the signatures, names, and student identification numbers of 25% of the CSA's General Membership.
- 11.2.3. A referendum election must be held two (2) weeks or more after the date of validation;
- 11.2.3.1. The next business day after validation, the CSA must inform the General Members about the referendum.
- 11.2.4. A referendum is binding on the CSA when a simple majority of members, who are present and voting, vote in favor of the referendum question.
- 11.2.5. The CSA Executive Council can decide by a vote to take one of three positions on a referendum question:
- Endorse the question and campaign in support,
 - Remain neutral and refrain from campaigning, or
 - Denounce the question and actively campaign against.
- 11.2.6. Voting will follow the process outlined in Election and Referendum Policy for dates, voting, and campaigning.