



Concordia University of Edmonton

Students' Association

ELECTIONS & REFERENDUM POLICY

CONCORDIA STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY OF EDMONTON

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

2022-2023

Concordia Students' Association
Election & Referendum

Policy: CSA Elections & Referendum

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Index	Page
1.0 General Provisions	2
2.0 Governing Authority	4
3.0 Election Dates	5
4.0 Eligibility	6
5.0 Nominations	7
6.0 Campaign	9
7.0 Voting	12
8.0 By-Election	13
9.0 CSA Unions	14
10.0 Post-Election	15
11.0 Referendums	16

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

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. **Electoral Returning Officer (ERO)** 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.
- 1.1.5. **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.
- 1.1.6. **Election/Election Period** is the time period from the day the election nominations open until the election results become official.
- 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.
- 1.1.9. **Social Media** is any social media and/or professional platform in which the candidate has an account.

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

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

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.

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 Councilors 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.

Concordia Students' Association
Election & Referendum

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 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.

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

Concordia Students' Association
Election & Referendum

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

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. At all times:**
 - 4.2.1.2. Be a CSA member.
 - 4.2.1.3. Be a student enrolled in at least sixty percent (60%) of a full course load at Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE).
 - 4.2.1.3.1. In extenuating circumstances this requirement may be waived via a General Council vote.
 - 4.2.1.4. Shall only represent the Faculty, Faculties, or After-Degree they are currently enrolled in, if they are not an Executive Councilor.
 - 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.
 - 4.2.1.8. At the time of nomination:**
 - 4.2.1.9. Be a student enrolled in at least sixty percent (60%) of a full course load at Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE) in

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

the Winter semester at the time they apply.

- 4.2.1.10. Have maintained a minimum 2.0 GPA while attending Concordia University of Edmonton at the time of application.

5.0 Nominations

5.1. Purpose

- 5.1.1. This policy is designed to help the CSA and the ERO 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 Councilors cannot nominate other CSA Members for positions and must get a non-Executive/General Councilor 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 by the time and date determined by the ERO that includes:
- The Nomination form
 - Which includes the name and signature of the person who is making the nomination,
 - Twenty five (25) 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 at the time of nomination,
 - A signature from CUE VP Student Life and Learning acknowledging the nominee is in good standing with CUE,
 - The nominee's signature acknowledges that they are enrolled in at least sixty percent (60%) of a full course load at Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE) in the Winter semester at the time they apply.

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

- Summary of Campaign rules.
- 5.2.4. When picking up the nomination package, the nominee and ERO, plus one Executive Councilor, 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 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.

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 and demonstrate reasonable judgment.
- 6.2.2. Candidates shall not knowingly campaign nor knowingly allow anyone else to campaign for them outside of the campaign period.
- 6.2.3. Candidates must attend at least one of the All Candidates meeting as well as all election events;
 - 6.2.3.1. Failure to do so may result in disqualification as determined by the ERO.
- 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:

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

The Bolt News, the Concordia Students' Association, Clubs and Unions', 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.
- 6.2.5. Candidates will not disburse to students any items that do not directly comply with the policies:
 - 6.2.5.1. Candidates are not permitted to give any food/beverages/consumables/gift cards to students as a part of their campaign;
 - 6.2.5.2. Candidates may only place or distribute campaign material in the following locations pending approval by the ERO and Concordia Administration:
 - 6.2.5.2.1. On CSA approved bulletin boards.
 - 6.2.5.2.2. Clear glass that does not impede safety through reduced visibility.
 - 6.2.5.2.3. On tables or chair trays located in the following common areas
 - 6.2.5.2.3.1. Tegler
 - 6.2.5.2.3.2. Alumni Hall
 - 6.2.5.2.3.3. The Allan Wachowich Centre for Science, Research, and Innovation
 - 6.2.5.2.3.4. Ralph King Athletic Centre
 - 6.2.5.2.3.5. Library basement
 - 6.2.5.3. Only the ERO may approve alternate locations. The following locations are not permitted under any circumstances:
 - 6.2.5.3.1. CSA offices or spaces
 - 6.2.5.3.2. The Cafeteria
 - 6.2.5.3.3. Classrooms
 - 6.2.5.3.4. Offices or Student Service locations
 - 6.2.5.3.5. Library study spaces
 - 6.2.5.3.6. Bathrooms
 - 6.2.5.3.7. Student lockers
 - 6.2.5.3.8. Laboratories

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

- 6.2.5.3.9. Outside school buildings
- 6.2.5.3.10. Athletic or recreational facilities
- 6.2.5.3.11. Dorms or student residences
- 6.2.5.3.12. Any religious or spiritual spaces
- 6.2.5.3.13. The Indigenous Knowledge and Research Centre
- 6.2.5.3.14. The BMO Centre for Innovation and Applied Research
- 6.2.5.3.15. The auditorium
- 6.2.5.3.16. Any location where the campaign material would damage paint or the surface of the material the materials are placed on
- 6.2.5.3.17. Any other location that has not been approved by the ERO
- 6.2.5.4. Candidates must use appropriate fastening devices for any campaign material as determined by the ERO.
- 6.2.6. Candidates may campaign in classrooms with prior approval of the instructor and ERO.
- 6.2.7. Candidates are required to have their social media and professional accounts in Public mode, as well as adding the ERO and CSA current ECs for the duration of the campaigning period.
- 6.2.8. Candidates may campaign using social media or electronic communications subject to the discretion of the ERO.
 - 6.2.8.1. Candidates may not purchase any forms of advertising, or spend any campaign funds, on social media.
 - 6.2.8.2. Candidates may not post or share any form of electronic material during the campaign period that is directly connected to the CSA or from a CSA account. This includes but is not limited too:
 - 6.2.8.2.1. Posting photos with CSA logos.
 - 6.2.8.2.2. Posting photos of the candidate engaged in activities wearing clearly visible CSA branded or distributed apparel.
 - 6.2.8.2.3. Using a CSA electronic distribution method, including social media accounts, to remind voters of the candidate's existing or prior role in the CSA.
 - 6.2.8.3. Candidates may design and host a personal website, with the prior approval of the ERO for the website design, name, and

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

content.

- 6.2.8.3.1. Website hosting and design costs shall be included in the campaign spending form.
- 6.2.8.4. Candidates may post copies of approved campaign materials on their personal social media accounts or websites.
 - 6.2.8.4.1. These must be posted only once per platform during the campaign period.
- 6.2.8.5. Candidates may directly contact potential voters using electronic means, as long as the communication follows Concordia's Code of Student Conduct.
 - 6.2.8.5.1. Candidates may continue a conversation started due to an approved direct message without consulting the ERO on each individual message.
- 6.2.8.6. Candidates may post a picture of themselves and a message to encourage voting, but may not explicitly encourage voting for them, without ERO approval.
- 6.2.9. Up to \$50 (Fifty Dollars) can be reimbursed upon approval of the expenditure form.
 - 6.2.9.1. Candidates are required to maintain records of the amounts actually spent on campaign expenses including receipts and the amount of campaign materials purchased, which must be submitted to the ERO and VP-Finance by 4pm MST the day before the first voting day;
 - 6.2.9.2. In-kind donations or assistance given to candidates must be accounted for in the expense claims;
 - 6.2.9.2.1. This includes but is not limited to: graphic design, photography, and specialty printing;
 - 6.2.9.2.1.1. In-kind donations are recorded as the market value of the item, subject to the previously listed maximums and the campaign budget limit.
 - 6.2.9.3. Candidates that do not attend at least one All Candidates Meeting and all election events will not have expenses reimbursed;
 - 6.2.9.4. Upon submission of an expense report no further campaign expenses may be incurred by the candidate;
 - 6.2.9.4.1. Candidates found incurring extra costs or failing to

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

return expense reports during campaign week will disqualify the candidate from running.

- 6.2.10. The CSA and the ERO have the ability to deem any event as inappropriate.
 - 6.2.10.1. Any campaign event must be preapproved by the ERO.
 - 6.2.10.1.1. Any approval requests must be submitted in writing.
 - 6.2.10.1.2. Any approval confirmation or denials from the ERO must be provided in writing.
- 6.2.11. Any materials that are to be distributed to students or put up for display must be approved by the ERO or their appointed designate;
 - 6.2.11.1. Any candidate found distributing campaign material without ERO approval shall face disciplinary action from the ERO.
 - 6.2.11.2. The ERO has the right to refuse authorization of campaign materials for reasons including but not limited to appropriateness and legality.
 - 6.2.11.3. Any approval requests must be submitted in writing.
 - 6.2.11.4. Any approval confirmation or denials from the ERO must be provided in writing.
- 6.2.12. Campaign materials will be placed as outlined by the ERO, Concordia University of Edmonton, the Concordia University of Edmonton Faculties Department and/or their appointed designates. Any campaign material found posted on surfaces or areas expressly communicated as off-limits for posting shall be confiscated by the ERO;
 - 6.2.12.1. Any and all campaign materials must be removed from campus and all social media and/or professional platforms before the voting day begins (effective 7 a.m. of the first day of voting).
- 6.2.13. All campaign materials must be 11" x 17" or smaller.
 - 6.2.13.1. The ERO may determine smaller maximum dimensions for items which must be communicated to all candidates in an equitable fashion.
- 6.2.14. The ERO will oversee the provision of candidate speeches and debates, and allow for membership to ask questions of the

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

candidates. The ERO or their appointed designate will act as the moderator.

- 6.2.14.1. Candidates may not, under any circumstances, imply an endorsement from any institutional person, CSA employee, or CSA representative.
- 6.2.14.2. If a candidate does imply an endorsement the moderator may immediately interrupt them to correct the candidate and remind the candidates and audience of the campaign rules.

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 active 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 active 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.

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

- 7.2.7. The results shall be made public by 5 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.

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 Executives, and not for the Faculty Representative(s).
 - 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 must hold their elections at the same time as the CSA General Election;
 - 9.2.2.1. This 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 Councilors Policy.
- 9.2.3. Unions must hold an election every year;
 - 9.2.3.1. In the event of a vacant Union Executive position the Union

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

shall consult the CSA in order to run a by-election.

9.2.4. All Union elections must adhere to the Campaign guidelines set forth by the CSA.

9.2.5. After-degree Union elections shall follow their Union constitutions.

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 on CSA website and/or social media, to file an appeal with the ERO;

10.2.2.1. If an appeal is filed, the ERO will inform the CSA President who 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 shall make a reasonable effort, as determined by the General Council, to 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 shall make a reasonable effort, as determined by the Executive Council, to 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;

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

- 10.2.4.1.1. All individuals that have a conflict of interest shall declare their conflict 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 make a reasonable attempt to be present for any group training.
 - 10.2.5.1. In the event of conflict there will be a reasonable effort to ensure multiple training times are offered.
- 10.2.6. All elected candidates must make a reasonable attempt to be present for any training designated by the outgoing position holder.
 - 10.2.6.1. It is the responsibility of both the elected candidate and outgoing position holder to schedule an agreeable training date and time.
- 10.2.7. Elected candidates are required to attend the minimum amount of training required in their positional policies.
- 10.2.8. Elected candidates are required to have all of their social media and/or professional platforms set to public mode during their whole term as an elected official.

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. Referendums must follow the CSA Bylaws and applicable legislation.
- 11.2.2. A question may go to a referendum only after it has been approved by the General Council.
- 11.2.3. 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.
- 11.2.4. A referendum election must be held two (2) weeks or more after the date of validation;

Concordia Students' Association

Election & Referendum

- 11.2.4.1. The next business day after validation, the CSA must inform the General Members about the referendum.
- 11.2.5. 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.
- 11.2.6. The CSA General 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
- it.
- 11.2.7. Voting will follow the process outlined in Election and Referendum Policy for dates, voting, and campaigning.