



Concordia University of Edmonton

Students' Association

CSA ELECTIONS & REFERENDUM

CONCORDIA STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Concordia University of Edmonton

Edmonton, Alberta

February 2017

Policy: CSA Elections

Category: Organizational Policies

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RATIONALE

Elections and referenda should be fair, open, and transparent. This policy is designed to meet those requirements in a way that provides equal and maximum opportunity to participate.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Campaign Materials** are materials used by a candidate and all those acting on his/her behalf in campaigning.
2. **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
3. **The Chief Elections Officer (CEO)** is charged with responsibility for ensuring that the elections and referenda proceed according to bylaws and policy.
4. **A Candidate** is a qualified person who seeks to obtain an elected position or a person who seeks and registers with the CEO a specific outcome for a referendum question.

5. **Election/Election Period** is the time period from the day the election nominations open until the election results become official

EXPECTATIONS

Item I – Election Dates

1. Elections for Executive and General Council positions must be held in February/March each year. Dates are determined by the Executive Council each May and June for the following year.
2. The date of the election is publicized at least two (2) weeks prior.
3. If there so requires, all other election or referenda dates are determined by General Council.

Item II – Eligibility

1. To be eligible to hold a position on Executive or General Council, a student must:
 - 1.1. Be a CSA member;
 - 1.2. Be a student enrolled at Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE) at the time they apply for office;
 - 1.3. Have achieved a grade point average of at least 2.0 and satisfactory standing at the end of the previous semester of post-secondary studies and maintain it throughout the entire academic year of office;

- 1.3.1. In the event of the ineligibility of an Executive or General Council representative, the General Council will appoint a qualified person as per policy;
- 1.3.2. If the student's GPA and transcripts match the CSA's requirements for eligibility, and are from another accredited post-secondary institution in Alberta and they are now enrolled at CUE, they will be considered eligible in the election process;
- 1.3.3. All Executive and General Councilors must allow the Executive Director access to their transcript at the beginning of each semester to ensure academic eligibility;
 - 1.3.3.1. Failure to allow the Executive Director access will automatically deem the individual academically ineligible.
- 1.4. Be available for job shadowing, transition training, and be available to participate in the Year End Retreat;
- 1.5. Obtain the signature of the Dean of Students, indicating that the nominee is a student of Concordia University of Edmonton (CUE) in good standing with the institution;
- 1.6. Obtain a signature from Student Accounts to show that the nominee has no outstanding charges to his/her name;
- 1.7. Obtain the signatures of 50 CSA General Members endorsing the individual for nomination;
- 1.8. Obtain a signature from the Registrar's Office in order to confirm that the nominee is in good academic standing
 - 1.8.1. If the student meets the criteria in Item II 1.3.2., they must provide their transcripts to the CSA Executive Director in order to obtain a signature to

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complete their nomination form.

2. Members of the CSA may only nominate eligible students for the General Council Program Representative position within the nominee's respective program.
3. Members of the CSA may nominate eligible students from any program for positions on the Executive Council.
4. A student may be nominated for only one (1) office in each election. Each nominee must complete an official Nomination Form and submit it to the Executive Director and/or CEO at the All Candidates Meeting before the nominee is accepted as a candidate for office.

Item III – Chief Elections Officer (CEO)

1. All elections officials are required to sign a pledge of impartiality in the performance of their duties.
2. The CEO is the Executive Director of the Concordia Students' Association.
 - 2.1. The Executive Director may hire a student as acting CEO in consultation with the President and subject to General Council approval.
3. Authority:
 - 3.1. The CEO has the ability to take disciplinary action on candidates violating policy, which may include but is not limited to the removal of the candidate's name from the ballot.
4. Responsibilities:

- 4.1. The CEO is responsible for ensuring the operation of open, fair, and impartial elections in accordance with bylaws and pertinent policy;
- 4.2. The CEO is responsible for submitting a report to the General Council subsequent to each election confirming the results of the election, reporting the processes used and giving suggestions for future improvements;
- 4.3. The CEO may appoint staff as needed in consultation with the President;
- 4.4. The CEO will receive complaints, interpret Election policies and procedures of the CSA pertinent to the operations of elections and make judgments binding on the CSA for the implementation of those policies and procedures;
- 4.5. The CEO will confirm the General and Executive Council election dates;
- 4.6. Spending Authority – in addition to normal finance procedures, the Executive Director has authority over the expenditure of CSA funds budgeted for costs associated with the operation of elections.

Item IV – Nominations

1. The nomination period must be open for a minimum of four (4) business days.

Item V – Campaign

1. Nominees are required to adhere to the bylaws, policies, and procedures of the CSA, in particular to the code of ethics for student representatives.
2. Candidates will not campaign, nor will knowingly allow anyone to campaign on their

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behalf outside of the campaign period.

3. Candidates that do not attend the CSA Election speeches, debates, and an All Candidates Meeting will not be put on the election ballot.
4. Candidates will not use, or knowingly allow others to use, CSA or The Bolt News resources for campaigning;
 - 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.;
 - 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;
 - 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.
5. Candidates will not disburse to students any items which have intrinsic value beyond their campaigning function;
 - 5.1. Candidates are not permitted to give any food/beverages/consumables to students as a part of their campaign;
 - 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,

- Brochures,
 - Posters, and
 - Flyers.
6. Candidates may campaign in classrooms with prior approval of the instructor.
 7. A candidate may not incur costs of more than \$100 in their campaign;
 - 7.1. Candidates are required to maintain records of the amounts actually spent on campaign expenses including receipts, which must be submitted to the CEO;
 - 7.2. In-kind donations or assistance given to candidates must be accounted for in the expense claims;
 - 7.2.1. This includes but is not limited to: graphic design, photography, and specialty printing;
 - 7.3. Candidates that do not attend the speeches, debates, or an All Candidates Meeting will not have expenses reimbursed;
 - 7.4. Candidate expense records will be due to the CEO the day before Election Day;
 - 7.5. Upon submission of an expense report no further campaign expenses may be incurred by the candidate;
 - 7.5.1. Candidates found incurring extra costs or failing to return expense reports during campaign week will effectively remove a candidate from the ballot.
 8. Any campaign event that requires CUE's assistance will be done through the CSA. The CSA and the CEO have the ability to deem any event as inappropriate.
 9. Any materials that are to be distributed to students or put up for display must be

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approved by the CEO or their appointed designate;

- 9.1. Any candidate found distributing campaign material without submitting copies shall face disciplinary action from the CEO;
 - 9.2. The CEO has the right to refuse authorization of campaign materials for reasons of appropriateness and legality;
 - 9.3. Any and all campaign materials must be removed from campus before the voting day begins (effective 7 a.m. on the first voting day).
10. Campaign posters and banners will be placed in accordance with the requirements of the CUE's facilities department, as outlined by the CEO and/or their appointed designates. Any campaign material found posted on surfaces/areas expressly communicated as off-limits for posting shall be confiscated by the CEO.
 11. All posters, banners, and campaign materials must be 11" x 17" or smaller.
 12. The CEO will oversee the provision of candidate speeches and debates, and allow for membership to ask questions of the candidates. The CEO or their appointed designate will act as moderator.

Item VI – Voting

1. All voting is done online;
 - 1.1. If not done online the vote will be by secret ballot.
2. All General Members are eligible to vote in Executive Council Elections;
 - 2.1. General Members shall only be able to vote in elections for Program

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Representatives in the same program as the voter.

3. The CEO and their staff are responsible for determining the position of the polling station(s).
4. The CEO and their staff shall ensure that the polling stations provide voters with a booth that allows for votes to be made privately.
5. 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.
6. Any General Member of the CSA may appeal the election results to the CEO in writing no later than two business days after the last day of the election.
 - 6.1. In the event of an appeal, an Elections Grievance Board (EGB) will be established;
 - 6.1.1. The EGB is made up of the Executive Director, two General Councilors, and one Executive Councilor, to be chaired by the CEO.
 - 6.1.2. The decision of the EGB is final.

Item VII – Referenda

1. A question may go to a referendum only after it has been approved by the General Council.
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.

3. A referendum election must be at least two (2) weeks from the date of validation.
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.
5. The CSA Executive Council can decide by a vote to take one of three positions on a referendum question:
 - 5.1. Endorse the question and campaign in support, remain neutral on the question and refrain from campaigning, or denounce the question and actively campaign against.
6. Voting will follow the process as outlined in Election Policy Item V.

Item VIII – CSA Unions

1. In the case of CSA Unions, their elections are held in conjunction with, and adhere to, the policies of the CSA.
2. Where a program's Union Executive determines the program's General Council Representative and said representative is not automatically the Union President or elected by the Union membership in the CSA Election, the Union Executive determines the program representative at the Union's first Executive meeting following the CSA General Council Elections to be held no later than two weeks after the CSA Elections are completed;
 - 2.1. A Program Representative selected by a Union Executive must still qualify as per Item II above.