

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS'
UNION 

PROCEDURAL POLICIES
Elections and Referenda

Part 3 of 3

ELECTIONS & REFERENDA PROCEDURES

ELECTIONS & REFERENDA IN-GENERAL (POLICY #1)

Date of Last Amendment: December 20, 2012

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy shall be to outline the general rules and procedures of elections and referenda more specifically than outlined within the Students' Union By-Law.

Section 1: Compliance

- 1.1 Elections & Referenda shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution, policies and resolutions of the Students' Union.

Section 2: Passage

- 2.1 Elections are passed by plurality and a simple majority shall pass referenda.

Section 3: Electoral Officers

- 3.1 The Chief Returning Officer (CRO), hired by the Board of Directors of the Students' Union, shall oversee the general conduct and execution of elections and referenda on behalf of the Board of Directors and shall fulfill these duties with all due diligence and impartiality.
- 3.2 The Assistant Chief Returning Officer, Elections Team and a Head Deputy Returning Officer (HDRO) Brantford shall be hired by the end of December
- 3.3 The Assisting Chief Returning Officer shall act in the capacity of the Chief Returning Officer when determined necessary by the Chief Governance Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Section 4: Annual General Meeting Date Selection

- 4.1 The Annual General Meeting of the members of the Students' Union shall be held near the end of January or the beginning of February in the cities where the offices of the Students' Union are situated.
- 4.2 The Board of Directors may, where circumstances justify, and then only when approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors, postpone the Annual General Meeting of the members of the Students' Union.

Section 5: Meeting Notification

- 5.1 Members of the Students' Union shall be given at least thirty (30) days notice of the Annual General Meeting.

- 5.2 The Chief Returning Officer shall make all reasonable efforts to inform members of each meeting.

Section 6: Referendum Questions

- 6.1 The Board of Directors must approve all questions that are to be put to the students in a referendum.
- 6.2 A committee of the CGO, the CEO, and the COO shall review and present all referendum questions to the Board no later than the last meeting of the fall semester.
- 6.3 The Board of Directors will be the final arbiter of the reasonableness of all referendum questions.
- 6.4 Referenda questions must be received by the Board prior to its last meeting of December.
- 6.5 The Board of Directors is responsible for informing their constituents about the referenda questions prior to the opening of nominations and the deadlines for submission of questions as per section.
- 6.7 Referenda shall include the following:
- 6.7.1 Date of implementation,
 - 6.7.2 Specific information as to which members it applies to,
 - 6.7.3 Any associated costs and inflationary costs,
 - 6.7.4 How the fee is to be applied,
 - 6.7.5 Any applicable information specifically regarding former referendum questions of a similar nature.

Section 7: Open Forums

- 7.1 The Elections Team shall organize at least one (1) open forum per campus where all candidates and/or parties shall have an opportunity to talk and answer questions posed by members of the corporation.
- 7.2 The CRO shall appoint a moderator for each open forum who shall not be any of the following:
- 7.2.1 A Director of the Board;
 - 7.2.2 A member of the Appeals Committee
 - 7.2.3 An Elections Team member;
 - 7.2.4 A candidate running for election or a party chair supporting either side of a referendum question.

ELECTIONS & REFERENDA PROCEDURES

VOTING & BALLOTS (POLICY #2)

Date of Last Amendment: December 5, 2013

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rules for voting and ballots for elections & referenda.

Section 1: Means of Voting

- 1.1 Voting shall be conducted by electronic ballot hereafter referred to as “ballot”.
- 1.2 Voting shall be conducted for a minimum of thirty-six (36) hours, and must include the hours from 8:00am to 8:00pm.
- 1.3 Members shall vote by secret ballot.

Section 2: Polling Stations

- 2.1 Polling stations may be located in the Concourse of the Fred Nichols Campus Centre, the Science Building, the School of Business & Economics, the Peters Building, the Aird Building, the Bricker Academic Building, Brantford Student Centre, and RCW Building as deemed appropriate by the Chief Returning Officer
 - 2.1.1 A Deputy Returning Officer, or the Chief Returning Officer, shall be located at each polling station throughout the meeting of the members.
 - 2.1.2 The polling area shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet in all directions from the ballot boxes.
 - 2.1.3 It shall be at the discretion of the Chief Returning Officer to expand the dimensions of a polling area beyond those specified in section 2.1.2.

Section 3: Secret Ballot

- 3.1 The electronic ballot shall be formatted, in general, as follows:
 - 3.1.1 The ballot shall be divided into separate sections for distinct categories of questions being asked of the voter.
 - 3.1.2 The ballot shall specify “You may rank up to _____() Candidates for the position of...” and will list the Candidates for the respective position(s).
 - 3.1.3 The ballot shall state any referendum questions and ask the voter to indicate either “yes” or “no”.
 - 3.1.4 A voter’s allowable choice(s) for each question and within each category as defined in Section 3.1.1 shall be clearly stated on the ballot.
- 3.2 A ballot shall be considered official upon submission.
- 3.3 A ballot shall be considered spoiled if the member has not selected any candidates.

- 3.4 Spoiled ballots, or sections thereof, shall count towards quorum but not towards any specific Candidate(s), referendum or other such questions.

Section 4: Tie-Breaking Vote

- 4.1 The Chief Governance Officer shall cast his or her vote in writing before the polls open.
- 4.1.1 He or she shall cast a separate vote for each position by ranking all the candidates in order of preference, sealing each ballot, if there is more than one, in a separate marked envelope, and delivering all the envelopes to the CRO.
- 4.1.1.1 He or she shall provide a copy of these ballots in a sealed envelope to the party responsible for coding the tie-breaking votes into the Single Transferrable Vote and Optional Instant Runoff Voting systems.
- 4.1.2 Only in the case of an equality of votes for a position shall the vote be recorded.

Section 5: Platforms

- 5.1 The Chief Returning Officer shall approve all platforms, provided that they meet the requirements of the Wilfrid Laurier University Code of Conduct and do not infringe upon the individual rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Section 6: Scrutineers

- 6.1 A Scrutineer shall be allowed to observe voting areas, but must respect the voter's right to secret ballot
- 6.2 Each Candidate or Party may have a Scrutineer present during ballot tallying.
- 6.2.1 The Chief Returning Officer must take reasonable measures to ensure that Scrutineers are trained.
- 6.2.2 Scrutineers are not permitted to interfere with the tallying process; they may observe, object if there is cause and appeal to the Chief Governance Officer for redress.
- 6.2.3 Scrutineers shall not leave the room where ballots are tallied until after the Chief Returning Officer has publicly announced the official results of the tally.
- 6.2.4 Should any Scrutineer(s) divulge any information related to the tally before the official announcement, the candidate or party whom they represent shall not be entitled to their reimbursement.

Section 7: Results

- 7.1 Only the CRO, CGO, elections executive, DROs, member of the Appeals Committee, and Scrutineers shall be allowed in the results room.
- 7.2 All appeals shall be heard and ruled upon prior to the opening of the results.
- 7.3 In the event that a candidate is disqualified the Board shall make a ruling prior to the opening of the ballots.
- 7.4 The results shall not be disclosed until they have been officially announced by the CRO.
- 7.5 A candidate shall not have the right to ask for a recount if he/she did not have a Scrutineer present for the opening of the result

ELECTIONS & REFERENDA PROCEDURES

APPEALS (POLICY #3)

Date of Last Amendment: December 5, 2013

Introduction:

The purpose of this section is to outline the eligibility of the composition of the appeals committee.

Section 1: Appeals Committee Membership

- 1.1 The Appeals Committee shall consist of the following:
 - 1.1.1 The Chief Governance Officer, who shall act as Chair;
 - 1.1.2 Two Directors, elected by the Board;
 - 1.1.2.1 Directors sitting on the Appeals Committee cannot be a member of any campaign teams;
 - 1.1.2.2 Directors sitting on the Appeals Committee cannot openly support any candidate or party;
 - 1.1.2.3 Directors sitting on the Appeals Committee cannot be running for election for any position in the election
 - 1.1.3 The Chief Returning Officer or their designate who shall sit ex-officio with a voice but no vote:
 - 1.1.3.1 In the case where an appeal involves an event that happened on the Brantford Campus, the Head Deputy Returning Officer: Brantford will sit in the place of the Chief Returning Officer as an ex-officio member with a voice but no vote.
 - 1.1.4 Two students at large:
 - 1.1.4.1 Student at large sitting on the Appeals Committee cannot be a member of any campaign teams;
 - 1.1.4.2 Student at large sitting on the Appeals Committee cannot openly support any candidate or party;
 - 1.1.4.3 Student at large sitting on the Appeals Committee cannot be running for election for any position in the election.