

# **Constitution of the Political Science Student Union**

Simon Fraser Student Society

Canadian Federation of Students - local 23

Amended by general meeting: September 14, 2007

## **I. Name and Objectives**

1. The name of the union shall be "The Political Science Student Union," hereafter referred to as the "Union".
2. The objectives of the Union are as follows:
  - a. To provide an organization to represent the academic welfare and interests of its members both in the Department of Political Science (hereafter referred to as the "Department") and within the University Community.
  - b. To encourage and support discussion between members of the Union and Political Science faculty.
  - c. To stimulate and actively participate in political and social inquiry.
  - d. In the event of a conflict between this Union's Constitution and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Simon Fraser Student Society, the Union recognizes that the terms of the Simon Fraser Student Society Constitution and By-Laws will prevail.

## **II. Membership**

1. All declared Majors, Minors, and Honours students in the Department.
2. All students currently enrolled in at least one course in the Department.

### III. Executive Committee

1. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of:
  - a. President
  - b. SFSS Departmental Forum Representative
  - c. Treasurer
  - d. Communications Officer
  - e. The Departmental Committee Representatives
  - f. Assistant Communications Officer
2. All executives shall be Majors, Minors, Honours, or graduate students in the department.
3. All members of the Executive Committee shall be members in good standing of the Union as defined in Article II.
4. The powers and duties of the Executive Committee shall be to:
  - a. Convene all necessary meetings, given proper notice to the membership
  - b. Officially represent Political Science students
  - c. Ensure that the membership is kept informed of all matters affecting the union
  - d. Constitute the executive of the Union which shall conduct the day-to-day operations of the Union
  - e. Appoint members of the Union to undertake special projects as required
  - f. All members of the Executive Committee shall submit regular reports of their activities to the Union membership
  - g. All members of the Executive Committee shall fill out a form, drawn up by the executive, upon leaving office.

#### **IV. Duties of Officers**

1. The President shall prepare the agendas, and chair all General and Executive committee Meetings, and shall be responsible for the coordination and continuity of the activities of the Union, with the primary emphasis to be a liaison with the Department. The President shall be one of two signing officers.
2. The Treasurer shall maintain all financial records, maintain an archive of all electronic and paper records of the society, report on the financial state of the Union to the Executive and General Meetings, report regrets and absence of executives according to section VI.8, and present a budget at the General Meeting each semester. The Treasurer shall also be the second of two signing officers.
3. The Communications Officer shall be responsible for the maintenance and utilization of the Union e-mail lists, the maintenance and utilization of the PSSU website, and the maintenance and utilization of any other forms of Internet based projects the PSSU undertakes. The Communications Officer shall also be in charge of the technical aspects of teleconferencing meetings when appropriate.
4. The SFSS Departmental Forum Representative shall represent the interests of the Union on the Student Forum, submit written forum reports and present them at all General Meetings on the activities of the Student Forum; and take direction from the Union, and other duties as defined by SFSS Rules, Standing Orders, Administrative Policies and Issue Policies.
5. The Departmental Committee Representatives shall represent the interests of the Union in their particular committee, report regularly to the Executive and General Meetings, and take direction from the Union. The Departmental Committee representative must be able to attend departmental meetings regularly. Failure to do so is grounds for dismissal.
6. The Assistant Communications Officer shall assist the Communications Officer.

## **V. Meetings**

1. There will be a minimum of one General Meeting per semester.
2. Special General Meetings must be called whenever a petition containing the signatures of ten members of the Union is presented to the Executive.
3. The Executive may also call Special General Meetings.
4. At least seven days notice must be given to members of the Union in the form of a notice outside the Departmental General Office before a General Meeting may be called, and during that time there shall be a notice sent to the email list.
5. Quorum for a General Meeting shall be six members of the Union.
6. All motions (except motions of recall or constitutional amendments) at General Meetings shall be decided by a simple majority vote and each member of the union shall be entitled to one vote on each motion.
7. Executive Committee Meetings must be called if two members of the Executive request it.
8. Executive Committee Meetings shall be open to all members of the Union and the Chairperson shall make available all pertinent information relative to the time and place of such meetings.
9. All meetings of the Union shall be run as informally as is appropriate.

## **VI. General Elections and Terms of Office**

1. Terms of office for officers shall be one year, or until the first General Meeting of the fall semester.
2. Elections shall take place at the first General Meeting of the fall semester. The notice of meeting shall contain notice of elections. Nominations are open until the election is conducted.
3. Voting shall be by secret ballot, with the person receiving a majority vote being elected. If there is no majority, the person receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated, and a new vote shall be held.
4. In the event that a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, an election shall take place at the next General Meeting. Notice of this meeting shall include notice of election.
5. In the event that a vacancy occurs in the Departmental Committee Representative positions, the Executive shall appoint a replacement until the next General Meeting of the Union; at such time a replacement shall be elected.
6. The members may recall any person elected to represent them by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a quorate meeting called for this purpose. Notice of the meeting shall contain the purpose.
7. In the event that the Union's Forum Representative fails to fulfill the responsibilities required of an executive of the Union, the Union will petition Forum to remove the Representative by special resolution.
8. Absence from two consecutive Executive and/or General Meetings of the Union without sending regrets, or absence from four of the previous five Executive and/or General Meetings of the Union regardless of sending regrets will result in the position being considered to have been abandoned. When possible, meetings should be teleconferenced to provide maximum accessibility.

## **VII. By-Elections**

1. If positions become vacant, by-elections shall be held as soon as is feasible.
2. Dates of by-elections shall be determined by the Executive Committee subject to the Articles in Appendix II.

## **VIII. Amendments**

1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution must be submitted in writing to the Executive, which must call a General Meeting to consider such amendments and shall publish the proposed amendments with the notice of the General Meeting.
2. Amendments shall be adopted by a 2/3rds majority vote at the quorate General Meeting.

## **IX. Recall**

1. Conditions for commencing Recall:
  - a. Officers shall be subject to recall at any time upon presentation to the Executive of a petition signed by ten members of the Union, and showing just cause. Removal requires two-thirds approval at a quorate Special General Meeting.
  - b. Just cause includes, but is not limited to, behaviour that is contrary to the policies and objectives of both the Union and the Political Science student body.
2. Upon presentation of the petition, the Executive shall call a Special General Meeting.

## **X. Travel and Conference Funding**

1. The Union may grant funds to be used by students to offset expenses associated with conference attendance in accordance with Administrative Policy 12 of the SFSS.
2. All potential recipients of funding must either make an oral presentation to the executive committee or submit a one page request for funding prior to attending the conference. After returning from a given conference all receipts must be submitted to the executive who will then reimburse the agreed upon funds. All petitioners for funding are encouraged to make oral presentations instead of written reports as this increases the probability of the executive granting funding.
3. The Union shall make all applicants aware of the conditions of funding in accordance with Administrative Policy 12.