

# **POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT UNION**

## **CONSTITUTION**

Simon Fraser Student Society

### **Section 1: Name**

**1** The name of the organization is the Political Science Student Union (PSSU), hereafter referred to as the “Union”. It is constituted as a Departmental Student Union as defined in the Simon Fraser Student Society By-Laws.

### **Section 2: Membership**

**2** Automatic membership in the Union is extended to all majors, minors, and honours students in the Department of Political Science, as well as all students currently enrolled in at least one Political Science course or a course equivalent to a Political Science course at Simon Fraser University.

### **Section 3: Purposes of the Union**

**3** The purposes of the Union shall be to: represent the students in the Department of Political Science; be open to connections with the wider community, both SFU and non-SFU; engage with other faculties and clubs to build recognition; hold events with other clubs and unions to increase our awareness; connecting with the Political Science community, open to collaborate with the SFU community and community beyond SFU to facilitate connections; foster an environment of inclusivity, equity and respect for diversity within the Union.

### **Section 4: Definitions**

**4A Department:** shall mean the Department of Political Science

**4B Good Standing** shall mean a student currently declared in the Department of Political Science, or a student currently enrolled in at least one Political Science course at Simon Fraser University.

**4C Impeachment** shall mean the removal of an Officer from office as outlined in this Constitution.

**4D Officer** shall mean a member of the Political Science Student Union’s Executive

**4E Proper Notice** shall mean advertising of at least one (1) week in advance and one (1) post on all of the Union’s social media channels.

**4F Union** shall mean the Political Science Student Union.

### **Section 5: Executive Meetings**

**5A** Quorum for Executive meetings shall be fifty (50) percent of Officers.

**5B** All motions at Executive meetings shall be decided by a simple majority vote, and each member of the union shall be entitled to one vote on each motion.

**5C** Executive meetings are called at the discretion of the Chair.

**5D** An Executive meeting must be called if at least one-half (1/2) of all current Officers explicitly request a meeting to be convened.

**5E** Executive meetings shall be open to all members of the Union for the purposes of transparency. However, only Officers are entitled to vote at Executive meetings.

**5F** Officers must send regrets to the Chair if they will be absent from an Executive meeting twelve (12) hours prior to the meeting, excluding cases of emergency.

### **Section 6: Composition of the Executive**

**6A** The Executive shall consist of all elected Officers, which includes the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Department Representative, SFSS Council Representative, Arts Representative, the Lower Division Representative, and two (2) Members-At-Large.

### **Section 7: Duties of Officers**

**7A President:** ensures that the requirements of this constitution are carried out; oversees all activities of the Union and its members; prepares agendas for and chairs Executive and General meetings, unless otherwise delegated by the President; ensures continuity between incoming and outgoing Executive teams, including ensuring the incoming President has a copy of this document; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the President from time to time.

**7B Vice-President:** take on the duties of the President should they resign, abandon office, or be impeached; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Vice-President from time to time.

**7C Secretary:** takes minutes for each Executive and General Meeting; ensures each Union Committee has a designated individual to take Minutes for that particular meeting; makes electronic copies of the Minutes available to the membership, being sure to highlight the results of any Elections or votes of the Allocation of Funds; provides a contact list of all Officers' names, phone numbers, and email addresses to each Officer; undertakes all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Secretary from time to time.

**7D Treasurer:** maintains a copy of all financial records of the Union, including records of all

funds received and spent; makes reports at General Meetings regarding the financial status of the Union; prepares budgets and proposals for funds and special grants as necessary; acts as a liaison between the Union and all sources of funding, including the SFSS; undertakes all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Treasurer from time to time.

**7E Department Representative:** represents the interests of Political Science students to the Department and serves as the main advocate for the Union to the Department; attends Department meetings and report activities to Executive meetings; fulfills other duties required by virtue of this position; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Department Representative from time to time.

**7F SFSS Council Representative:** represents the interests of Political Science students to the SFSS; attends SFSS Council meetings and reports activities to Executive meetings; fulfills other duties as outlined by the SFSS; regularly attend and report to Union meetings; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the SFSS Council Representative from time to time.

**7G Arts Representative:** represents the interests of Political Science Students to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS); represents the interests of Political Science Students to the Society of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS); attends FASS DSU meetings and reports activities to the Executive; fulfill other duties as outlined by FASS; regularly attend and report to Union meetings; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Arts Representative from time to time.

**7H Lower Division Representative:** there shall be one (1) Lower Division Representative; represents the interests of lower division students of the Union; this individual must be a lower division student; undertakes all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Lower Division Representative from time to time.

**7I Member-At-Large:** there shall be one (1) Member-At-Large position on the Executive; assist other officers in Union activities; acts as a liaison between the Executive and the membership; undertakes all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Member-At-Large from time to time.

**7J French Cohort Representative:** there shall be one (1) French Cohort Representative; represents the interests of the students of the French Cohort Program of the Union; to be eligible, this individual must be a French Cohort student; liaisons between BAFF and PSSU; attends BAFF meetings; translates PSSU posts to French wherever possible; undertakes all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the French Cohort Representative from time to time.

**7K Vice President External:** there shall be one (1) Vice President External; representing the interests of the Political Science Student Union to all other parties, serving as a liaison with outside parties; is responsible of coordinating response on behalf of the student union on all social media platforms and methods of communication, including but not limited: the PSSU Discord Channel, the PSSU official email account, the PSSU Instagram, and the PSSU Website communication site; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Vice President External from time to time.

**7L Vice President Events:** there shall be one (1) Vice President Events; are responsible for the coordination of social, cultural, and academic events for the members of the Political Science Student Union; coordinate with Vice President External, Vice President Marketing, External Coordinator, Events Coordinator and Marketing Coordinator to actively seek input from the students within the union on programming interests and feedback; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Vice President Events from time to time.

**7M Vice President Marketing:** there shall be one (1) Vice President Marketing; responsible for advertising Political Science Student Union Events, campaigns, and collaborations using all available mediums which includes but not limited to, the PSSU Discord Channel, the PSSU official email account, PSSU Instagram, and the PSSU Website communication site; responsible for organizing communication and marketing strategies pertaining to Political Science Student Union events, campaigns, and collaborations; to ensure accessibility and readability across all Political Science Student Union announcements and posts; to maintain and update Political Science Student Union branding and merchandise at the discretion of the membership; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to the Vice President Marketing from time to time.

**7N External Coordinator:** there shall be one (1) External Coordinator; responsible for all duties assigned to the Vice President External under this constitution; coordinate with the Vice President External to ensure that all the duties are fulfilled and completed without delay or fault; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to External Coordinator from time to time.

**7O Events Coordinator:** there shall be one (1) Events Coordinator; responsible for all duties assigned to the Vice President Events under this constitution; coordinate with the Vice President Events to ensure that all the duties are fulfilled and completed without delay or fault; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to Events Coordinator from time to time.

**7P Marketing Coordinator:** there shall be one (1) Marketing Coordinator; responsible for all duties assigned to the Vice President Marketing under this constitution; coordinate with the Vice President Marketing to ensure that all the duties are fulfilled and completed without delay or fault; undertake all other duties and responsibilities the Executive may delegate to Marketing Coordinator from time to time.

*\*The President, Vice-President, and Treasurer are all signing officers, any of whom are required to authorize the expenditure of Union funds, and to sign cheques or receipts for the purpose of refunding authorized expenditures.*

### **Section 8: General Meetings**

**8A** There must be at least one General Meeting per academic year.

**8B** Quorum for General Meetings shall be six (6) Officers.

**8C** All motions at General meetings shall be decided by a simple majority vote, unless it is a special resolution requiring otherwise, and each member of the Union shall be entitled to one vote on each motion.

**8D** General meetings are called at the discretion of the Executive by a two-thirds vote.

**8E** General meetings shall be open to all members of the Union.

**8F-1** Proper Notice must be given for any General meeting.

**8F-2** Proper Notice shall be defined as one (1) week in advance and one (1) post on all of the Union's social media channels.

### **Section 9: Special General Meetings**

**9A** Special General Meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive.

**9B** A Special General meeting must be called upon the delivery of a petition to the Executive of at least **6** members of the Union asking for a meeting to be convened.

**9C** In either scenario described in Section 9A and 9B, a Special General Meeting must be called within two (2) weeks.

### **Section 10: Union Committees**

**10A** Union Committees are a group of Union members that meeting separately from the Executive or General in order to organize and carry out a specific task or oversee a certain aspect of the Union.

**10B** Union Committees shall be created by the Executive.

**10C** Members shall be appointed to a Union Committee by the Executive.

**10D-1** Both Officers and general members of the Union are entitled to sit on Union Committees.

**10D-2** General members of the Union who sit on a Union Committee shall be members of the Committee as **Students-At-Large** .

**10E** Union Committees may be created as ad-hoc committees or standing committees.

### **Section 11: General Elections**

**11A** Any member of the Union is eligible to run in an Election for any position.

**11B** At the discretion of the Executive, elections shall take place via official SFU Web-Survey channels only, or at a General Meeting.

**11C** Terms of office for Officers shall be one year, May 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>.

11C (a). In accordance with the By-Laws of Simon Fraser Student Society (October 2020), sections 5, 6, and 10, the SFSS Council Representative will be elected for a term starting on May 1st and ending on April 30th of the following year. Elections for SFSS Council Representative shall be called in accordance with the PSSU's Constitutional electoral process and include a two-week notice period prior to the election date. The election may take place in-person, on Teleconferencing software approved by SFU, or asynchronously by Secure Web-Survey. The election shall take place on March 8th every calendar year.

**11D** Candidates must receive a plurality of votes to be elected to office.

**11E** In the event that there is only one candidate for a position, the candidate must receive sixty (60) percent of the vote to be elected into office.

### **Section 12: Vacancies and By-Elections**

**12A** In the event that a vacancy occurs on the Executive, the Executive may appoint another member of the Union as an interim Officer for the balance of the Officer's term, or call a By-Election to fill a vacancy.

**12B** In the event that there are enough vacancies on the Executive that over 50% of Executive positions are unfilled, a By-election must be called.

### **Section 13: Summer Semester**

**13A** In the event an insufficient number of Officers are available during the Summer semester, the Union shall discharge all duties and resume official operations in the preceding Fall semester, or;

**13B** At the discretion of the Executive, an interim president and interim officers for the summer semester may be appointed through a two-thirds by the Executive.

**13C** Should the Union remain active during the summer semester (as described in Section 11B), Quorum shall be defined as three (3).

**Section 14: Resignations, Abandonment of Office, and Impeachment  
Resolutions, and Impeachment Proceedings**

**14A** Once any Officer ceases to be a member in good standing of the Union, their resignation shall be deemed to have been delivered and accepted by the Executive, and the position shall be declared vacant.

**14B** Should an Officer wish to resign, they must produce a resignation letter and provide it to the Executive. The resignation letter will then be ratified by the Executive, and the position shall be declared vacant.

**Abandonment of Office**

**14C** Absence from two consecutive Executive Meetings without sending regrets with adequate notice as defined by Section 5F to the Chair shall result in the position being considered to have been abandoned, and the position shall be declared vacant.

**Impeachment Resolutions**

**14D** A special resolution to impeach Officers may be introduced at an Executive meeting and shall pass if the resolution receives the support of two-thirds (2/3) of the Executive. Or;

**14E** A petition to impeach the Officer(s) in question is presented at an Executive meeting. The petition must contain the names, signatures and student numbers of **60** members of the Union.

**Impeachment Proceedings**

**14F** In either of the scenarios outlined in Section 14D and 14E, the Executive must then call a Special General Meeting within two weeks (according to the guidelines set in Section 7), where the resolution to impeach the Officer(s) shall be presented.

**14G** At this meeting, the Officer(s) subject to the impeachment vote shall have the opportunity to speak if they so wish. Members present shall also have an opportunity to speak as to why they support or do not support the resolution.

**14H** The Officer(s) shall be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present; the position shall be declared vacant thereafter.

**14I** If an Officer is impeached and removed from office, they are ineligible to run for Office for one academic year.

**Section 15: Allocation of Funds**

**15A** Votes to allocate funds for Union activities must take place at an Executive or General meeting.

**Section 16: Amendments**

**16A** This constitution may only be amended at a General Meeting of the Union.

**16B** This constitution may be amended by Union membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at a General Meeting.

### **Section 17: Dissolution**

**17A** This constitution shall not be altered except with the prior written consent of the Simon Fraser Student Society.

**17B** In the event that the Union becomes inactive, all assets of the Union revert to the Simon Fraser Student Society, to be held in trust for a minimum period of two years. For the purpose of this article, the Union shall be deemed inactive if the membership does not hold the minimum number of quorate general meetings as required by this constitution for two consecutive semesters.

**17C** If the Union is regenerated to represent the interests of students within the Department during this period, the trust shall be dissolved, and all assets shall be at the direct disposal of the Union.

**17D** If the trust has not been dissolved after two years, the Simon Fraser Student Society may redistribute the assets as it sees fit.

### **Section 18: Fundamental Principles of the Operation of the Political Science Student Union**

**18A-1** Members of the Executive of the Union must be familiar with the basics of democratic centralism, and Democratic Centralism shall be employed within any and all decisions at any level in the Union

**18A-2** The basic principles of democratic centralism shall be outlined as such:

- Any decisions within the Union shall be debated upon by the necessary organs, during which any member may speak whatever they feel necessary to come to a decision on the topic.
- A motion shall be carried forward and enacted as policy if it reaches 50% of the vote or more in favour of the motion.
- If a motion does not receive 50% of the voting bodies on either decision, debate shall continue.
- Once a decision is reached and policy created, all members are bonded to maintain solidarity in carrying out the policy, regardless of what their vote on the topic was.

**18B-1** The Union shall employ the ideas of the mass line in creation of all policy, in order to not separate the Union Executive from its members, and accurately represent the views of Political

Science Undergraduate Students.

**18B-2** The use of the mass line shall be broken down into the following steps:

- It is up to the executive to meet themselves amongst Political Science students and find what their grievances are and what they would like to see from the union. From this, a winnable goal(s) shall be identified with a basic plan of action.
- The Political Science Student Union shall gather forces capable to struggle for the goal(s) identified, and the subsequent creation of any special working groups or committees.
- The gathered forces must then enact a further basic plan and start acting upon it, which there will inevitably be a reaction to. This presents an opportunity to consult the masses on how the policy is working. If they support the policy, the policy should continue, if not, forces should be reconsolidated to change policy.
- Once a policy is fully enacted the process shall begin again from the beginning

*\*Constitutional Amendment on Oct 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022\**