

TITLE: ELECTORAL ELIGIBILITY

Policy No.: B2510

Category: Council and Self-Governance

Effective Date: TBA

Please note: The following policies give an overview of expectations. However, policies will be revised in the Fall 2017; Where policies herein contradict the LSU Bylaws, the LSU Bylaws will prevail. Please refer to LSU Bylaws for further information on electoral eligibility.

1.0 POLICY

Members seeking electoral eligibility for an Executive or designated Representative position on Council will meet certain baseline requirements per Bylaw 9.5.1-9.5.3 or 9.6.1-9.6.3, respectively. Those seeking candidacy for these positions must complete and pass a fair pre-candidacy screening process that is intended to satisfy the membership that these baseline eligibility requirements are met. The eligibility screening process will be carried out by the Electoral Committee or one of its sub-committees, and adjudicated by an independent, third-party.

This eligibility screening process is simply to ensure that baseline requirements are met. The process is intended to include those who meet the requirements, not to screen for the best candidate or candidates. Accordingly, the outcome of the eligibility application will be either 'eligible' or 'ineligible' to apply for candidacy for the specific position. Members may appeal the decision of eligibility, but the outcome of the appeal process is final.

Members deemed eligible must also complete additional steps before they are considered official candidates for the election or by-election.

A concerted effort will be made to ensure a quick, confidential, transparent and fair process with minimal effort required on the part of the member seeking to stand for election.

2.0 RATIONALE AND PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 As a member-led organization Langara Students' Union (LSU) promotes a high level of Council competency and accountability. Bylaw 9.5.1-9.5.3 and 9.6.1-9.6.3 there are certain positions on Council that require a minimum baseline of experience, education or knowledge to competently fulfill the role.
- 2.2 All members on LSU Council are paid a stipend for their service per Policy B2052, *Stipends and Timesheets*. Additionally, Executive Board Members and designated Members-at-Large, have duties over and above those who serve as, General Members-at-Large. Council withholds stipend payments for expectations not met, so it is in applicant's best interest to have a working knowledge of the portfolio area to ensure they will receive payment for their service. Also, it is

in Council's best interest to have the work performed on-time and in a satisfactory manner.

- 2.3 Those elected to Council serve for one Academic term only, thus it is important that elected members quickly grasp the role and start serving the membership. While General Member-at-Large positions do not require a specialized area of knowledge or experience, the positions of Officers and Advisors on Council have operational duties that require a certain degree of familiarity with the roles and duties associated with those positions.
- 2.4 This Policy provides greater detail about the general eligibility requirements set out in Bylaw
- 2.5 This Policy clarifies the eligibility screening process and appeal procedures to help members determine steps required to successfully seek candidacy.

3.0 SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 Scope

This Policy applies to LSU members who wish to declare their candidacy for election on Council as an Executive member or designated Member-at-Large (Aboriginal Students' Representative, for example). Those who wish to become candidates for a General Member-at-Large position do not have to go through the eligibility screening process.

This Policy applies to the eligibility screening process only. Policies B2500 and B2520 respectively deal with elections/by-elections and candidacy/campaigning and apply to all members who would like to seek election on LSU Council.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 Designated Members-at-Large

Reporting to the Vice President Internal and Council, they develop and implement programs, services, activities and initiatives that create a welcoming environment for, and promotes the education, awareness and inclusion of, issues impacting students who may otherwise face discrimination or barriers to successful social inclusion and integration. Designated Members-at-Large serve year-round. The three elected designated Members-at-Large are the International Students' Representative, Aboriginal Students' Representative, and the Diversity & Inclusion Representative.

3.2.2 Application and Applicant

The 'application' refers to the documentation submitted as well as the completed and signed forms as may be required at the time of application. This may include a resumé, curriculum vitae (or similar), cover letter, list of references, and any other documentation provided. Likewise, the member submitting the application is referred to as the 'applicant.'

3.2.3 Councillor

Councillors are all the elected, voting members of Council and are responsible for attending Council meetings, responsibly exercising their vote, and serving on at least two Committees of Council. Council members serve only when Council is in session, which is usually October through April, unless special meetings are called.

3.2.4 Electoral Committee

The Electoral Committee is a standing committee of Council with the roles, composition and powers as set out in Policy B2025, *Electoral Committee Terms of Reference*.

3.2.5 Executive Director

The Executive Director (ED) is the only hired employee of Council and is excluded from the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The ED is responsible for leading all LSU operations and supporting Council members who have programming, service and project portfolio duties. Staff report to the ED, unless Council opts to not hire an ED, in which case Council is supported directly by Staff.

3.2.6 Good Academic Standing (In)

'In good academic standing' means that the applicant is not on academic probation. Check with current Bylaws

3.2.7 Executive Board Members

Officers are elected, voting positions on Council who work very closely with the ED, if any, and Staff. Officers have oversight and managing duties and serve year-round, even when Council is not in session. Listed alphabetically, the Officers of LSU are the Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Secretary to Council, Student Affairs Officer and the Treasurer.

3.2.8 Professional Reference(s)

This term refers to individuals who the applicant has had direct employment or volunteer experience with, as with supervisors, managers and co-workers. Professional references can also include past teachers, school counsellors/advisors, youth group leaders or volunteers, or other similar individuals who have direct experience working/volunteering/teaching/mentoring the applicant.

3.2.9 Qualifying Period or Phase

The process of screening for eligibility is also referred to as the 'qualifying period' and the 'qualifying phase.'

3.2.10 Reference(s)

In this Policy 'reference(s)' refer to non-family individuals who are willing to act as professional or personal references for the applicant.

3.2.11 Screening Committee

The Screening Committee refers to the Electoral Committee or designated screening group In accordance with current Bylaws.

3.2.12 Staff

Staff refer to those who are employed as Regular Staff under the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

4.0 REGULATIONS

4.1 Eligibility Requirements – General

Per Bylaw Article 9.5.1 i-v, all members must meet the following requirements, regardless of the position they seek:

- 4.1.1 LSU 'Member in Good Standing' as evidenced by the presentation of a valid Langara College Student Photo Identification Card and a current copy of their class schedule for verification purposes.
- 4.1.2 Langara student in good academic standing which may be verified by the Electoral Committee or designate upon the full completion and submission of the Academic Standing Form permitting the Union to verify academic standing with the College Registrar's Office.
- 4.1.3 Members of Council must be currently enrolled at Langara College.

4.2 Eligibility Requirements – Executive

In addition to the completion and signature of any forms as may be required at the time of application, applicants for eligibility for an Executive position must provide a current resumé or curriculum vitae (or similar) demonstrating knowledge or experience in at least one of the relevant functional areas for the position specified. The application must include the applicant's full legal name and two (2) professional references (non-family members) and one (1) academic reference that are current and verifiable. A simplified version of a resumé or curriculum vitae (or similar) is acceptable, but it should at least include paid or unpaid work, education (or studies) or any other experience-based familiarity with environments involving these functional areas:

- 4.2.1 Vice President Finance & Administration: economics, commerce, accounting, and financial management. The VP Finance & Administration works very closely with the Chief Financial Officer on Staff and the contracted Auditor. Thus, interpersonal communications, contracting, and collaboration are also high-value areas. However, the screening will satisfy that the applicant has adequate numeracy and a basic understanding or grasp of basic financial management concepts (such as balancing, budgeting, tracking and/or monitoring expenses, financial systems, reporting, and/or similar).

- 4.2.2 President: business administration, records management, project management, and governance. The President is also the Spokesperson for LSU so communications, public relations, media relations, governmental relations, political science, marketing, writing, social media and similar are also examples of valuable skill sets. However, the screening will simply satisfy that the applicant understands or grasps basic business administration processes (in areas such as record keeping, team building, collaboration, human resources, financial management, marketing, sales, and/or similar) and governance concepts (such as policy, rules of order, board participation, and/or similar).
- 4.2.3 Vice President Student Life: event planning, communications, counseling, project management, psychology, and education. Additional high-value areas include volunteering (volunteer recruitment, management and appreciation), interpersonal communications, promotions, team building, human resources, financial management, marketing, and leadership. However, the screening will simply satisfy that the applicant has the ability to plan and execute programs, services and activities for the membership.
- 4.2.4 Vice President Internal: activism or advocacy on ethical and social development issues relating to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, class, disability, age, gender, sex, and sexuality. This position also has significant leadership responsibilities with Advisors, so supervision, leadership, management, collaboration, team building, interpersonal communications and systems thinking are valuable areas of experience. However, the screening will simply satisfy that the applicant has the ability to understand complex social issues and develop services, programming and activities that will help promote inclusion and acceptance of human diversity.

4.3 Eligibility Requirements – Members-at-Large (*Designated*)

In addition to the completion and signature of any forms as may be required at the time of application, applicants for eligibility for an Advisor position must provide a current resumé or curriculum vitae (or similar) demonstrating knowledge or experience (lived, worked, or paid) in advocating for (or activism on behalf of) the constituency identified in the title of the designated Representative position. The application must include the applicant's full legal name and two (2) professional references (non-family members) and one (1) academic reference that are current and verifiable. A simplified version of a resumé or curriculum vitae (or similar) is acceptable, but it should at least include paid or unpaid work, education (or studies) or any other life or experience-based familiarity with issues impacting, or impacted by, constituencies listed in the title of the Representative position. Additionally:

- 4.3.1 Activism or advocacy on behalf of self or others who belong to the constituency identified in the title of the position sought must be demonstrated. Refer to the LSU Bylaws for more information.
- 4.3.2 Applicants must indicate a willingness and ability to serve and act year-round.

- 4.3.3 Applicants develop education, advocacy and awareness campaigns, programs, initiatives and services. Thus, planning and implementation skills in these areas are desirable (such as volunteer management, participation, engagement, marketing, communications, public relations, social media, budget development, program development/management, event planning, event participation, special topic research, advocacy campaign development, curriculum design, marketing and communications, promotions, committee participation, collaboration, team building, personal development, and/or similar). However, the screening process will simply satisfy that the applicant understands the special circumstances, barriers and challenges facing students of the constituency listed in the title of the position.
- 4.3.4 Life experience due to personal identity or experience is an acceptable standard, except in the case of Aboriginal Students and International Students, where applicants must be (respectively) an Aboriginal student, or an international student.
 - 4.3.4.1 However, regardless of identity or life experience, the applicant must make it clear how they have been an activist or advocate for their own self or on behalf of others and why this qualifies them to stand for election in the said position.

4.4 Eligibility Screening and Appeal Process

- 4.4.1 Applicants may apply for consideration of eligibility for more than one position at a time, provided the following conditions are met:
 - 4.4.1.1 Their cover letter indicates their desire to be considered for more than one position, and which positions they would like to also be considered for;
 - 4.4.1.2 The accompanying application documentation specifically addresses how they meet the criteria for each position.
 - 4.4.1.3 To keep paperwork to a minimum, applicants should avoid submitting separate application packages for each position they would like to be considered for. However, as long as submissions submitted separately mention their previous submission(s) and meet the other requirements of this policy, they will be considered.
- 4.4.2 The eligibility screening period will occur prior to the call for candidates.
- 4.4.3 The eligibility screening announcement will usually on the first day of classes, but never later than the third day that classes start in the fall semester. In the case of a by-election, the announcement will normally occur at least ten (10) days prior to the call for candidates for the by-election.
 - 4.4.3.1 The posting will include full information on where to find application policies, procedures and guidelines, the deadline date and time for

applications, and how to access help with the application process, including office hours, phone number and email address.

- 4.4.3.2 Full information on all electoral policies and roles and duties will be posted on the LSU website.
- 4.4.3.3 Members who want additional information or printed copies of the policies may make such requests at the front desk of LSU during regular office hours.
- 4.4.4 The deadline for applications for eligibility will be posted on the website and the poster announcing elections.
 - 4.4.4.1 Applications must be submitted and signed in hard copy by dropping of a printed application at the front desk of the LSU office. The time and date of drop-off will be verified by front desk staff if dropped off in person. Submissions without this verification may be considered invalid.
 - 4.4.4.2 Applicants must also complete and sign any forms as may be required at the time of application such as the Academic Standing form or permission forms to contact references.
- 4.4.5 The Screening Committee will convene at least twice to review applications; once to create the list of approved applications and develop the plan for dividing the tasks; and once to approve the eligibility decision list.
- 4.4.6 The Screening Committee will not comment on the relative strength of a member's application. The determination will simply be that a member is "eligible" or "ineligible."
 - 4.4.6.1 Decisions of eligibility or ineligibility will be based solely on the conditions listed in 4.1 – 4.4 of this policy, misconduct of the applicant, or based upon falsification of qualifications.
- 4.4.7 The Screening Committee will follow the instructions of the DRO or the CRO in finalizing this list and the other processes that follow internally.
- 4.4.8 The approved decision of the Screening Committee will be communicated to members using the email address provided on the application. Normally this communication is sent by the DRO. In no event will information on the eligibility decision of other members be communicated to individual members. That is to say that individual applicants are only privy to information on their own application decision, not on the outcome of other members' applications.
- 4.4.9 The Screening Committee will fully consider each submission based upon what is documented by the member. Failure to adequately document or make clear how

experience, education, or knowledge qualifies them for the position sought is not considered a legitimate reason for appeal.

- 4.4.10 The Electoral Committee may refuse or reject false submissions by members seeking eligibility. Furthermore, the committee may disqualify that member from seeking eligibility or candidacy in the future.
- 4.4.11 The Electoral Committee may deny a member's eligibility if there are irregularities at any point during the qualifying phase. Irregularities or misconduct occurring post-qualifying are dealt with under Policy B2520, *Campaigning and Candidacy*.
- 4.4.12 Once a member's eligibility is approved by the Electoral Committee and communicated to that member, that member is still not an approved candidate, but rather they are eligible for candidacy. It is the member's responsibility to take all additional required steps in order to satisfy the rules of Candidacy as outlined in Policy B2520, *Candidacy and Campaigning*.
- 4.4.13 LSU sincerely appreciates all members who are willing and able to serve the membership on Council. Denial of eligibility is not a punitive measure and those whose eligibility is rejected will be encouraged to run for election as a Council member or alternative position for which they qualify.

4.5 Correspondence, Conduct and Documentation

- 4.5.1 It is the member's responsibility to include a current email address and phone number on their resumé or curriculum vitae and regularly monitor email and phone for correspondence from the Screening Committee.
 - 4.5.1.1 Email sent by the Screening Committee and/or voice messages left will be considered 'delivered.' Failure of the applicant to pick up the message or check email is not normally considered a valid reason for appeal.
 - 4.5.1.2 Due to the extremely tight timeframes of the electoral cycle, applicants will be given a maximum of twenty-four (24) hours to respond to inquiries from the Screening Committee or its representative. Failure to respond to inquiries during the screening process will be considered as a withdrawal from the eligibility screening process and the member's application will be denied. This will be communicated to the email address provided.
- 4.5.2 The Screening Committee will normally check at least one of the references provided to verify the information provided by the member. Due to restricted time and resources, this means that the reference is available to talk to a member of the Screening Committee at a reasonable hour of the day, and that he or she must be able to easily communicate in English.

- 4.5.2.1 LSU does not guarantee making accommodations or adjustments for time zone and language differences.
- 4.5.2.2 If the reference check cannot occur, the member will be asked to provide an alternate reference or references. Failure to do so in the timeframe indicated in the email, conversation or voice message will result in denial of eligibility status.
- 4.5.2.3 If the applicant fails to provide the complete or correct contact information for the reference, the Screening Committee may deem the application incomplete and deny the applicant's eligibility.
- 4.5.3 Members wishing to appeal this decision will follow the additional steps outlined in their letter of decision from the Screening Committee and this Policy.
 - 4.5.3.1 In the event that the appeal process deliberations overlap with the nomination period of the elections or by-elections, the applicant must still meet posted nomination deadlines. This means that the applicant does not get additional time to collect nomination signatures.
- 4.5.4 All proceedings of the Screening Committee are strictly confidential and will proceed in compliance with the *BC Personal Information Privacy Act* and LSU's privacy and confidentiality policy and/or procedures. Furthermore, those serving as the individual or group responsible for screening will abide by Policy B1003, *Code of Conduct*, regardless of whether or not they are elected members of Council.
- 4.6 Appeals

Members who are denied eligibility status may appeal the decision within three (3) school days after the decision is communicated. Due to tight timeframes, appeals received after this time will not be considered.

 - 4.6.1 Appeals must be made in writing to the individual identified in the letter of decision sent by the Screening Committee.
 - 4.6.2 The request for appeal must include the reason(s) why the applicant is appealing the decision. Based on this alone, the CRO or designate will decide whether the appeal is valid and how and when it will happen. This information will be communicated to the applicant at the email address or phone number provided.
 - 4.6.3 All regulations of this policy pertaining to applicant conduct, correspondence, and documentation apply to the appeal process.
 - 4.6.4 The CRO or designate (usually the DRO) will communicate the final decision to the applicant. This decision is final and cannot be appealed.

4.7 Amendments to this Policy

4.7.1 ***Under review***

FACT SHEET

Relevant Dates

Approved: July 12, 2013
Effective: July 12, 2013
Review Date: April 1, 2014 (tentative)
Updated: TBA

History

July 31, 2013 Section 4.4.4.1 of this policy was updated to reflect current practices. Approved by Resolution of Council on July 31, 2013.
July 12, 2013 This is a new policy approved by Council resolution to support the updated Bylaws which came into effect on March 1, 2013.

Related Policy

- B2000 - 2011 Roles and Duties Policies for Directors
- B2025 Electoral Committee Terms of Reference
- B2500 Elections, By-elections and Referenda
- B2520 Candidacy and Campaigning
- B2530 Chief Returning Officer
- B2050 Stipends and Timesheets
- B1003 Council Code of Conduct
- B1005 Oath of Office
- B1006 Discipline

References and Acknowledgements:

Not applicable.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Position on Council: _____

Date: _____