

University and Government Relations Committee Terms of Reference

Parent Policy:	Union Bylaw
Related Documents:	N/A
Approval Authority:	Students' Legislative Council
Passed:	October 21, 2008 (66.39)
Amended:	August 29, 2023



1 Definitions

- (1) In this document:
 - (a) “**Confidential Information**” refers to personal, financial, and strategic information which reasonably will not be made available to the public when providing minutes, meeting agendas, or reports. This includes, but is not limited to, human resources matters, award applications, hardship and funding requests, club or union finances, and information that may affect the interest of the Students' Union, such as details of policies or agreements which have not yet been finalized; and
 - (b) “**Union Policy**” is defined per the Union Bylaw as “the collection of properly approved policies and procedures enacted by the Students' Legislative Council or its delegate.”

2 Establishment

- (1) The Union Bylaw establishes the University and Government Relations Committee as a standing committee of the Students' Legislative Council under these terms of reference.
- (2) The University and Government Relations Committee is delegated the roles, responsibilities, authorities, and procedural obligations set out in these terms of reference.

3 Membership

- (1) The University and Government Relations Committee comprises the following members:
 - (a) the President (ex-officio, chair);
 - (b) Vice President Academic (ex-officio);
 - (c) Vice President Internal¹ (ex-officio);
 - (d) Vice President External (ex-officio);
 - (e) At least one member of the SU Student Services department (ex-officio, non-voting);

¹ The executive positions of Vice President Student Life and Vice President Operations and Finance remains in place until the executive position of the Vice President Internal come into effect after the 2024 SU General Election.

- (f) At least one member of the SU Marketing and Communications department (ex-officio, non-voting); and
 - (g) SU staff leads upon request (ex-officio, non-voting); and
 - (h) General Manager or designate (ex-officio, non-voting).
- (2) The membership of an ex-officio member automatically ends when they cease to hold the position by virtue of which they are a member of the committee.

4 Chair Responsibilities

- (1) The chair is responsible for:
- (a) providing leadership to committee members, to enable the execution of the committee's role and responsibilities;
 - (b) presiding at committee meetings; and
 - (c) acting as the spokesperson for the committee and its work, including to the Students' Legislative Council and elsewhere, as may be appropriate or required.
- (2) In the event of a vacancy of the chair, the committee may appoint another voting member to act as the chair.

5 Member Responsibilities

- (1) Members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the role of the committee and adhering to these terms of reference and any other applicable **Union Policy**.
- (2) Members are bound by conflict-of-interest provisions in the Union Bylaw.
- (3) Members are expected to:
- (a) participate actively in the work of the committee, and make sufficient time for their duties as a member;
 - (b) make every reasonable effort to attend all meetings of the committee;
 - (c) participate actively, professionally, and respectfully in meetings of the committee, including by sharing their perspectives and insight, expressing opinions, asking questions, and providing constructive feedback in discussions.
- (4) If a member breaches their obligations and responsibilities under these terms of reference, the chair may initiate the process for disciplinary action against them in line with applicable Union Policy or Students' Union Human Resources policies and procedures.

6 Role, Responsibilities, and Authorities

- (1) The role of the committee is to assist the Students' Legislative Council in shaping the strategic decisions of the SU on its relationship with the University and the three orders of government.
- (2) The committee is responsible for:
 - (a) Acknowledging that decisions made by university and government officials greatly affect students and that there is a considerable amount of information and protocol to be learned and understood;
 - (b) Recommending to SLC the strategic direction of the SU regarding University and government relations and the SU's position on tuition and other important student affairs;
 - (c) Sharing relevant information amongst elected officials on matters related to the relationship between the Students' Union, Graduate Students' Association, University of Calgary, and all three orders of government;
 - (d) Providing institutional memory and support for incoming elected officials;
 - (e) Coordinate the individual efforts of elected officials and executives related to university and government relations in a cohesive and professional manner; and
 - (f) Providing an informed response regarding:
 - (i) How the university makes decisions;
 - (ii) How government and university decisions may affect post-secondary students; and
 - (iii) Policies and positions that may be taken by any municipal, provincial, or federal lobby group of which the SU is a member.
 - (g) advising and discussing important and confidential information from the University and government bodies relating to undergraduate students;
 - (h) conducting an annual review of the University and Government Relations Committee Procedures.
- (3) The committee does not have the authority to make decisions, except where expressly indicated by a resolution of the Students' Legislative Council, or in **Union Policy**, including these terms of reference.

7 Meetings

- (1) The committee will meet when a meeting is called by the chair, General Manager or designate or if two other Executives request a meeting.

- (2) The General Manager or designate is responsible for distributing notice of committee meetings, including the date, time, and location of the meeting, an agenda, and any other relevant supporting materials for the meeting within 24 hours before the scheduled meeting time.
- (3) The accidental omission to send notice of any meeting to, or the non-receipt of any notice by, anyone entitled to notice does not invalidate any proceedings at a meeting.
- (4) Quorum for committee meetings is:
 - (a) a majority of voting members;
 - (b) the chair; and
 - (c) the General Manager or designate.
- (5) The chair is responsible for the orderly conduct of committee meetings and may consult with the most recently published version of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* for guidance.
- (6) If means of participation in a meeting virtually or by telephone are made available, members may participate in the meeting through those means, be considered as present at the meeting, and may vote through those means.
- (7) Meetings of the committee are closed to the public.
- (8) At the discretion of the chair and the General Manager or designate, guests may be invited to attend and participate in discussion during committee meetings.

8 Voting

- (1) Only voting members of the committee may move, second, and vote on motions, and each voting member is entitled to one vote.
- (2) All decisions of the committee, except where otherwise specified, require approval by majority vote.
- (3) Votes will be conducted by a show of hands, voice vote, unanimous consent, or, where necessary to maintain confidentiality, secret ballot administered by the General Manager or designate.

9 Resolutions in Writing

- (1) A resolution in writing passed by a majority of voting members, including by email or other method of recorded written response, is valid as if it had been passed at a committee meeting.
- (2) Resolutions in writing are only to be used for simple, straightforward motions, or when it is not reasonable or possible to call or wait for a committee meeting, and should be used rarely.
- (3) The committee may approve a resolution in writing electronically, according to the following process:

- (a) the General Manager or designate will distribute the resolution and an electronic poll, such as by email or digital ballot, to voting members, including a reasonable deadline by which they must cast their vote;
- (b) the General Manager or designate may extend the deadline to cast votes once, by up to seven days;
- (c) voting on the resolution will end after the deadline or any extension thereof;
- (d) a majority of voting members must respond to the poll (either indicating a vote or abstention), otherwise the resolution does not pass, but may be tried again;
- (e) if the resolution receives the required votes by the end of voting, the resolution is passed;
- (f) if the resolution does not receive the required votes by the end of voting, it does not pass;
- (g) the General Manager or designate must tally the votes and inform the committee of the outcome, and include the result in the minutes of the next regular committee meeting.

10 Records

- (1) The General Manager or designate is responsible for:
 - (a) preparing and distributing meeting materials, including an agenda, at least 48 hours in advance of a regular committee meeting;
 - (b) preparing meeting minutes; and
 - (c) providing other administrative supports to the committee, including the preparation and maintenance of committee documents and records.
- (2) Committee records may be requested by contacting the chair or the General Manager or designate in writing, who shall provide the requested documents, subject to redaction or withholding for confidentiality or compliance with applicable law, within 10 business days, if available.

11 Reporting

- (1) The chair is responsible for providing a monthly written report on committee activities to the Students' Legislative Council.

12 Review and Amendment

- (1) The Governance and Oversight Committee is responsible for reviewing these terms of reference at least once every three years.
- (2) Amendments or repeal of these terms of reference requires the approval of the Students' Legislative Council by majority vote.

History:

- October 21, 2008 (Students' Legislative Council): Approved and enacted.
- September 28, 2010 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended
- August 28, 2012 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended.
- March 4, 2014 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended.
- February 23, 2016 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended.
- May 9, 2017 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended.
- November 5, 2019 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended.
- August 29, 2023 (Students' Legislative Council): Amended.