

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS'
UNION 

2024 ELECTION POLICY

Effective: 16 October 2023

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DEFINITIONS

- a) **Academic Year** - The period beginning with the Fall semester, and progressing through the Winter and Spring/Summer semesters.
- b) **Active Campaigning** - Any act where a vote is solicited by the candidate or their Executive and General Campaign Teams.
- c) **Candidate** - Any individual running for an elected position available to students of Wilfrid Laurier University and members of the Students' Union.
- d) **Election** - The formal process of electing or being elected, in this context the Students' Union elections.
- e) **Elections Committee** – The group of individuals overseeing the general conduct and execution of elections on behalf of the Board of Directors. Chaired by the Chief Returning Officer, membership includes the Deputy Returning Officer (Brantford), and Assistant Returning Officer (if applicable), with full-time staff support provided by the Director, Policy Research and Advocacy. The Chief Governance Officer supervises the Chief Returning Officer and the elections process.
- f) **Election period** - The days when candidates are campaigning for elected positions.
- g) **Endorsement** - The act of giving obvious public approval or support of another candidate.
- h) **Executive Campaign Team** - The leadership team supporting a candidate, including the candidate, their campaign manager, the official agent, and the scrutineer(s).
- i) **General Campaign Team** - The group of members a candidate assembles to assist with campaigning.
- j) **Executive Leadership Team** - The Students' Union President and their Vice-Presidents and Associate Vice Presidents.
- k) **Member** - Students registered in an undergraduate program at Wilfrid Laurier University, enrolled in at least 0.5 course credits, and have paid all applicable fees.
- l) **Nominee** - A person seeking candidacy during the Students' Union elections.
- m) **Nomination** - The process through which a member seeks to become a candidate for an elected position or Referendum Chair
- n) **Promotional Materials** - All materials used in the promotion of a candidate containing their name, likeness, image or brand.
- o) **Referendum Chair** – The individual nominated to promote a “Yes” or “No” vote for a specific referendum question.
- p) **Referendum Team** – The group of members officially assisting a Referendum Chair while campaigning.
- q) **Scrutineer** - The individual selected by a candidate to observe the process of vote collection and tabulation.
- r) **Social media platforms** - Any internet-based technology, websites, and mobile applications which enable users to create and share content and/or participate in social networking.
- s) **Voting period** - The days when members are able to cast their votes.

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline the rules for elected student positions with the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union and the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors and Senate. Each member must adhere to each of the following regulations and procedures, which expand on the instructions for elections established by the Constitution of the Students' Union.

1. ELECTION OFFICIALS

- 1.1. The Chief Governance Officer supervises the Chief Returning Officer and the elections process.
- 1.2. The Chief Returning Officer is hired by the Students' Union Board of Directors, and will oversee the general conduct and execution of elections on behalf of the Board of Directors.
 - 1.2.1. The Chief Returning Officer will chair the Elections Committee, which is composed of the Deputy Returning Office (Brantford), and any others as determined by the Students' Union Board of Directors.
 - 1.2.2. The Director, Policy Research and Advocacy will serve as the full-time staff support to the Elections Committee.

2. ELECTED POSITIONS

- 2.1. The members of the Students' Union will elect:
 - 2.1.1. One (1) President of the Students' Union;
 - 2.1.2. Twelve (12) members to the Students' Union Board of Directors;
 - 2.1.2.1. At least two (2) members must be elected from each campus in which the Students' Union operates.
 - 2.1.3. Undergraduate student representative(s) to the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors, subject to available seats as per the *Wilfrid Laurier University Act*;
 - 2.1.4. Undergraduate student representative(s) to the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate, subject to available seats as per the *Wilfrid Laurier University Act*;

3. REFERENDUM QUESTION SUBMISSION

- 3.1. The Students' Union will inform the members of their right to submit referendum questions no less than thirty-five (35) days prior to the last regularly scheduled Students' Union Board of Directors' meeting of the fall semester.
- 3.2. Referendum questions must be submitted no less than five (5) business days prior to the last regularly scheduled Board of Directors' meeting in December;
- 3.3. Referendum questions must include:
 - 3.3.1. The purpose and rationale for the question;
 - 3.3.2. The cost of any associated fee;

- 3.3.3. Any inflationary costs and how they will impact the fee;
- 3.3.4. A date of implementation;
- 3.3.5. Eligible voting members;
- 3.3.6. If the fee is intended to be compulsory, the justification for mandatory participation;
- 3.3.7. Any impact on previously approved referendum questions.

4. REFERENDUM QUESTION REVIEW

- 4.1. Prior to being included on the ballot, proposed referendum questions are assessed for compliance by the Wilfrid Laurier University Committee on Non-Tuition Fee Assessment.
- 4.2. The Students' Union Board of Directors is the final arbiter of all referendum questions asked during the Annual General Meeting and evaluates submissions based on the following principles:
 - 4.2.1. Questions must not violate any Canadian laws or the policies and procedures of Wilfrid Laurier University and the Students' Union;
 - 4.2.2. Question must not contradict any of the Students' Union's contractual obligations;
 - 4.2.3. Any proposed fees must adhere to the Protocol Agreement on Non-Tuition Fees between the Students' Union, Wilfrid Laurier University, and the Graduate Students' Association;
 - 4.2.4. Fees or programs established by referendum should not duplicate existing levies or services;
 - 4.2.5. Any fee proposed will be considered in relation to the total existing ancillary fee burden.

5. ANNUAL MEETING

- 5.1. The Annual Meeting of the members of the Students' Union shall be held in person immediately prior to the announcement of the election results.
- 5.2. The Students' Union Board of Directors may, where circumstances justify and when approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, postpone the Annual Meeting until March, as outlined by the Students' Union Constitution.
- 5.3. Members will be provided at least thirty (30) days' notice of the Annual Meeting.

6. ELIGIBILITY FOR NOMINATION

- 6.1. The nomination period shall be a minimum of fourteen (14) days.
- 6.2. Each member of the Students' Union will have the opportunity to vote for any candidate standing for election.

- 6.3. Each member of the Students' Union will have the opportunity to vote on referendum questions applicable to their registration status;
 - 6.3.1. Referendum questions may be limited to undergraduate students registered on a specific campus or enrolled in a specific program of faculty.
- 6.4. Each member of the Students' Union will have the opportunity to be nominated as a candidate for President, the Students' Union Board of Directors, the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors, and the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate, as long as they remain a member during the Fall and Winter semesters of the current academic year.
 - 6.4.1. As per the *Wilfrid Laurier University Act* an undergraduate student is not eligible for election to the Senate if they are a member of the faculty, staff, student body, governing body or senate of any other degree-granting university, college, or other institution of higher learning.
- 6.5. Each member of the Students' Union will have the opportunity to be nominated as a Referendum Chair, as long as they remain a member during the Fall and Winter semesters of the current academic year;
 - 6.5.1. For each referendum question there may be both one "Yes" campaign Referendum Chair and one "No" campaign Referendum Chair.
- 6.6. An undergraduate student enrolled in a co-operative education program has the opportunity to be nominated as a candidate for President, the Students' Union Board of Directors, the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors, and the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate, or serve as a Referendum Chair.
- 6.7. All directors of the Board, provided they are still members and are enrolled in courses for the entirety of the current academic year, have the opportunity to be nominated as a candidate for President, the Students' Union Board of Directors, the Wilfrid Laurier Board of Governors, and the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate.
 - 6.7.1. A director of the Board must declare a conflict of interest during the election period, and refrain from using their position to seek any nomination, or be elected to any position.
- 6.8. All members of the Executive Leadership Team, provided they are still members and are enrolled in courses for the entirety of the current academic year, have the opportunity to be nominated as a candidate for President, the Students' Union Board of Directors, the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors, and the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate;
 - 6.8.1. A member of the Executive Leadership Team must take a leave of absence from their role, or utilize vacation time during the election period;
 - 6.8.1.1. The departmental responsibilities of the Executive Leadership Team member seeking election will be reassigned at the discretion of the Students' Union President and Chief Executive Officer.
- 6.9. The following individuals are not permitted to be nominated as a Referendum Chair, or campaign for any referendum:
 - 6.9.1. A director of the Board not standing for election;
 - 6.9.2. An Appeals Committee member;
 - 6.9.3. An Elections Team member;
 - 6.9.4. A member of the Executive Leadership Team;

- 6.9.4.1. In cases where a referendum question impacts the financial position, or the operations of the Students' Union, a member of the Executive Leadership Team not seeking election may serve as a Referendum Chair, and are entitled to use Students' Union resources, so long as they follow budget limits and all provisions of the Election Policy.

7. NOMINATION PACKAGES

- 7.1. Nomination packages must be made available to the membership no later than two weeks prior to the close of the nomination period.
- 7.2. The package should include the following:
 - 7.2.1. The date on which the nomination period ends;
 - 7.2.2. The date, time, and location of the All-Candidates meeting;
 - 7.2.3. A copy of the Election Policy;
 - 7.2.4. Descriptions of all positions open for election;
 - 7.2.5. A "Proof of Age Form," which must be completed by the nominee and their perspective agent, along with a copy of government-issued identification;
 - 7.2.6. A copy of the "Student Elections Candidates Code of Conduct" (See Appendix "A");
 - 7.2.7. A "Nomination Form" which must include the following completed requirements:
 - 7.2.7.1. A declaration of candidacy and acknowledgement of the policies governing Students' Union elections;
 - 7.2.7.2. At least twenty-five (25) signatures from members for a nominee seeking election for Students' Union President and Chief Executive Officer;
 - 7.2.7.3. At least ten (10) signatures from members for a nominee seeking election to the Students' Union Board of Directors;
 - 7.2.7.4. At least ten (10) signatures from members for a nominee seeking to be a Referendum Chair;
 - 7.2.7.5. At least ten (10) signatures from members for a nominee seeking election to the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors;
 - 7.2.7.6. At least ten (10) signatures from members for a nominee seeking election to the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate;
 - 7.2.7.7. An "Agent Form," which must be completed by the nominee and their prospective Agent, and authorizes that individual to act on behalf of the nominee when required;
 - 7.2.7.8. A "Scrutineer Form," which must be filled out and submitted by noon on the day prior to the opening of polls;
 - 7.2.7.8.1. Scrutineers must be members of the Students' Union not standing for election.
- 7.3. All nomination package components must be completed and submitted to the Chief Returning Officer via email at sucro@wlu.ca or dropped off at the SU Desk during operating hours before the close of the nomination period.

- 7.4. A member is not permitted to be nominated for both Students' Union President & Chief Executive Officer and Students' Union Board of Directors.

8. WITHDRAWAL OF NOMINATION

- 8.1. Any nominee or candidate may withdraw their declaration of candidacy or nomination by providing signed written notice to the Chief Returning Officer.
- 8.2. Any nominee or candidate who withdraws their declaration of candidacy prior to the conclusion of the nomination period will not be bound by elections policies.
- 8.3. Any nominee or candidate who withdraws their nomination after the conclusion of the nomination period must not publicly endorse any other candidate and must abide by this election policy until the conclusion of the election period.

9. RE-OPENING OF NOMINATIONS

- 9.1. If there are fewer than twelve (12) candidates for seats on the Board of Directors, those who submitted nomination forms by the deadline shall be acclaimed and nominations may be reopened for a period of five (5) days to fill the remaining spots.
- 9.1.1. If there are still fewer than twelve (12) candidates for the Board of Directors after the re-opening period, the issue will be referred to the current Board of Directors for direction.
- 9.2. If there are fewer nominations than the seats up for election on the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors, any candidate(s) who submitted a nomination by the deadline shall be acclaimed and nominations reopened for a period of five (5) days to fill any remaining spots.
- 9.3. If there are fewer nominations than the seats up for election on the Wilfrid Laurier University Senate, any candidate(s) who submitted a nomination by the deadline shall be acclaimed and nominations reopened for a period of five (5) days to fill any remaining spots.

10. SINGLE CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

- 10.1. In the event there is only one (1) candidate for President, a "Yes" or "No" vote will be held, with a simple majority required to pass.

11. AGENTS

- 11.1. Each candidate or Referendum Chair shall be entitled to one (1) Agent, who must be a member of the Students' Union.
- 11.2. An Agent is recognized as an official representative, and is empowered to operate on behalf of the candidate or Referendum Chair.
- 11.3. The following positions are ineligible from serving as a candidate's Agent:
- 11.3.1. A director of the board;

- 11.3.2. An Appeals Committee member;
- 11.3.3. An Elections Committee member;
- 11.3.4. A member of the Students' Union Executive Leadership Team
- 11.3.5. A candidate for election;
- 11.3.6. A referendum Party Chair;
- 11.3.7. A Scrutineer.

12. ALL-CANDIDATES MEETINGS

- 12.1. An all-candidates meeting will be held following the conclusion of the nomination period and prior to the start of the campaigning period;
 - 12.1.1. Additional all-candidates meeting may be scheduled at the discretion of the Chief Governance Officer in consultation with the Chief Returning Officer.
- 12.2. Candidates must be notified at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of any changes in date, time, or location of any all-candidates meeting.
- 12.3. All candidates must be present, or represented by their agent, at any all-candidates meetings.
 - 12.3.1. If a candidate or their agent is not present at an All-Candidates meeting, they will be immediately disqualified.
 - 12.3.1.1. Disqualification for failure to attend an All-Candidates meeting where the date, time, or location was changed is subject to appeal.

13. CAMPAIGNING

13.1. General guidelines

- 13.1.1. Active campaigning will commence at 9:00am on the first day of the campaign period as communicated in the nomination packages and ends a half-hour prior to the opening of polling.
 - 13.1.1.1. While candidates or Referendum Chairs are not permitted to actively campaign during the voting period, digital campaign materials may remain in place so long as it is demonstrable that they were authored and posted or distributed prior to the end of the campaign period.
 - 13.1.1.2. The Chief Returning Officer, with the support of the Chief Governance Officer and the Elections Committee, and in consultation with the Director, Policy Research and Advocacy, will arbitrate any conflicts involving what may, or may not be considered campaigning.
 - 13.1.1.3. The decision made by the Chief Returning Officer, with respect to campaigning, can be appealed to the Appeals Committee by contacting the Chief Governance Officer.
- 13.1.2. Candidates are prohibited from using the assets of the Students' Union, or any Students' Union business to promote their candidacy.

- 13.1.2.1. In cases where a referendum question impacts the financial position, or the operations of the Students' Union, a Referendum Chair is entitled to use Students' Union resources, so long as they follow budget limits and all provisions of the Election Policy.
- 13.1.3. Candidates shall not use any employment or volunteer role with any external business or organization to promote their candidacy.
- 13.1.4. The following individuals are prohibited from campaigning or serving on the Executive or General Campaign Team for any candidate:
 - 13.1.4.1. A director of the board not standing for election;
 - 13.1.4.2. An Appeals Committee member;
 - 13.1.4.3. An Elections Committee member;
 - 13.1.4.4. A member of the Executive Leadership Team not standing for election.
- 13.1.5. Candidates who withdraw from the election are prohibited from campaigning on behalf of another candidate.
- 13.1.6. All candidates shall refrain from endorsing, supporting, or campaigning on behalf of another candidate running for any position.

13.2. Campaigning on campus

- 13.2.1. Campaigning is prohibited in the following areas:
 - 13.2.1.1. The Students' Union offices;
 - 13.2.1.2. The Office of the University Secretariat.
- 13.2.2. Candidates and Referendum Chairs are permitted to campaign in Students' Union business operations at the discretion of the relevant manager, and with the prior approval of the Chief Returning Officer.
- 13.2.3. The following rules as set out by the Department of Residence Life shall apply to any campaigning within residence buildings:
 - 13.2.3.1. All posters to be distributed within campus shall be provided to the Chief Returning Officer or their designate.
 - 13.2.3.2. No active or passive promotion of candidacy or a referenda stance will take place in any residence building unless at a Residence Life sanctioned event.
 - 13.2.3.3. Residence staff who decide to endorse or become part of an election campaign shall follow the guidelines established by the Department of Residence;
 - 13.2.3.4. No shirts, posters, flyers, or any type of public endorsement can be shown in residence, including the rooms of Residence Staff;
 - 13.2.3.5. Residence Life Staff and Students' Union Icebreakers are not to utilize their position to solicit first year student votes in, or outside of their residence buildings.
- 13.2.4. Candidates will limited to a maximum of four (4) hours of booked stationary campaigning (e.g. "boothing") per day, per campus;
 - 13.2.4.1. Candidates must register stationary campaigning times in advance as directed by the Chief Returning Officer.

13.3. Online campaigning

- 13.3.1. Candidates (including their Executive Campaign Team and General Campaign Team members) and Referendum Chairs are not permitted to make use of any privileged access to the social media accounts of any Students' Union businesses, committees, clubs, faculty associations, or third-party organizations for campaign purposes.
 - 13.3.1.1. In cases where a referendum question impacts the financial position, or the operations of the Students' Union, a Referendum Chair is entitled to use Students' Union resources, so long as they follow budget limits and all provisions of the Election Policy.
- 13.3.2. The distribution of campaign materials or vote solicitation by email is **NOT** permitted.
- 13.3.3. The Chief Returning Officer or their designate must approve in advance any third-party endorsements that will be communicated digitally.
 - 13.3.3.1. Candidate and Referendum Chair authorized social media accounts are not permitted to post any content other than the official Students' Union #LaurierVotes marketing content during the voting period. Existing content, authored during the campaign period, may remain posted on authorized candidate accounts during the voting period.
- 13.3.4. The Executive Campaign Team must make all reasonable efforts to ensure that General Campaign Team members follow the online campaigning guidelines.
- 13.3.5. Individual social media activity on accounts not declared for candidate use, including displaying support for campaign posts, sharing promotional material, or altering profile pictures is **NOT** considered campaigning.

14. EXPENDITURES

- 14.1. Candidates for Students' Union President are limited to expenses, sponsorships, and gifts-in-kind totalling seven hundred dollars (\$700).
- 14.2. Candidates for the twelve (12) Students' Union Board of Director positions are limited to expenses, sponsorships, and gifts-in-kind totalling one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150).
- 14.3. Candidates for the University Board of Governors and Senate are limited to expenses, sponsorships, and gifts-in-kind totalling fifty dollars (\$50).
- 14.4. Referendum Chairs are limited to expenses, sponsorships, and gifts-in-kind totalling four hundred and fifty dollars (\$450).
- 14.5. Candidates and Referendum Chairs will be reimbursed by the Students' Union for one hundred percent (100%) of their campaign expenses, unless maximum allowable limits are surpassed.

- 14.6. Candidates pursuing multiple elected positions are restricted to the largest expenditure limit allocated to any of the positions for which they hold a nomination.
 - 14.6.1. This restriction does not apply if a candidate is simultaneously a Referendum Chair.
- 14.7. Candidates are required to submit receipts in order for campaign materials to be approved and received.
- 14.8. It is the candidate's responsibility to monitor their expenditures.
 - 14.8.1. Upon request, all candidates must be able to report their total expenditures to the Chief Returning Officer, or their designate.
- 14.9. A candidate's expense limit will be increased commensurate to the cost of any demonstrable damaged or missing campaign materials.

15. PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

15.1. General guidelines

- 15.1.1. The Chief Returning Officer or their designate must approve in advance all promotional material used for campaigning, regardless of medium.
 - 15.1.1.1. The Chief Returning Officer will rely on the Students' Union Elections Policy, the Student Elections Code of Conduct, the Wilfrid Laurier University Non-Academic Student Code of Conduct, Wilfrid Laurier University Poster Regulations, and all other relevant University policies and applicable laws when approving promotional materials.
 - 15.1.1.2. Candidates may submit promotional materials for early approval after the all-candidates meeting prior to the campaign period but may not release them or officially begin campaigning until active campaigning begins.
- 15.1.2. On all promotional materials candidates are required to include:
 - 15.1.2.1. #LaurierVotes branding;
 - 15.1.2.2. The position for which they are a candidate;
 - 15.1.2.3. "Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union" or a colloquialism approved by the Chief Returning Officer;
 - 15.1.2.4. "Wilfrid Laurier University," if a candidate is running for a position on the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors or Senate.
- 15.1.3. The use of trademarks, registered trademarks, and/or copyrighted does not imply endorsement for a candidate.
- 15.1.4. Any explicit endorsements must first be registered with the Chief Returning Officer before being included on promotional materials.

15.2. Promotional materials on campus

- 15.2.1. Before displayed, all physical promotional materials must be approved by the Chief Returning Officer.
 - 15.2.1.1. This includes all material utilized for candidate outreach at display booths or other forms of member interaction.

- 15.2.2. A physical poster limit will be listed in the nomination packages at the discretion of the Chief Returning Officer prior to the commencement of the campaign period.
- 15.2.2.1. Candidates pursuing multiple elected positions are restricted to the highest physical poster allocated to any of the positions for which they hold a nomination.
- 15.2.2.2. In the case where two or more names, photographs, personal likenesses, or brands appear on promotional material, each candidate will be deemed to have contributed to their physical poster limit.
- 15.2.2.3. All candidates and Referendum Chairs must submit a detailed poster location list to the Chief Returning Officer, or a member of the Elections Committee within twenty-four (24) hours of placement.
- 15.2.2.4. Before displayed, all physical posters must receive the appropriate permission and stamp from the Chief Returning Officer, or their designate, and the relevant authorized campus partner:
- 15.2.2.4.1. Residence buildings – Manager of Residential Services and Housing Office;
- 15.2.2.4.2. Waterloo Athletic Complex – Athletic Complex Office;
- 15.2.2.4.3. All other university buildings – Office of Students Affairs.
- 15.2.2.4.4. The placement of all physical posters must adhere to the following guidelines:
- 15.2.2.4.5. No physical promotions material may be distributed or posted off campus;
- 15.2.2.4.6. Masking tape must be used to attach poster to brick walls);
- 15.2.2.4.7. Only thumb tacks or staples may be used to attach promotional materials to bulletin boards.
- 15.2.3. All physical promotions material must be removed one hour following the end of voting.

15.3. Digital promotions and social media

- 15.3.1. The distribution of campaign materials, digital promotion or vote solicitation by email is **NOT** permitted.
- 15.3.2. All social media platforms (accounts) intended for campaigning and promotional use must be declared, approved, and registered with the Chief Returning Officer, or their designate prior to use.
- 15.3.3. Candidates and Referendum Chairs are individually responsible for all content disseminated on registered social media platforms.
- 15.3.4. All social media content, whether written, audio, or video, must adhere to the Students' Union Elections Policy, the Student Elections Code of Conduct, the Wilfrid Laurier University Non-Academic Code of Conduct, and all other relevant University policies and applicable laws.
- 15.3.5. Social media platforms are not permitted to promote a potential candidacy or referendum question before they are approved by the Chief Returning Officer, and prior to the commencement of the elections period.

- 15.3.6. During the elections period all registered candidate and referendum social media platforms must be available publicly; Candidates and Referendum Chairs are not permitted to contact students or advertise their candidacy in pre-existing social media groups (e.g. Facebook group for Laurier Class of 20XX, Snapchat groups, subreddits, etc.).
- 15.3.7. Students have the right to request the removal of their photograph or likeness from any candidate or Referendum Chair's digital promotion or social media platform content.
- 15.3.8. Any sponsored social media posts must be pre-approved by the Chief Returning Officer, properly adhere to Election Policy expenditure guidelines, and scheduled to end prior to the start of voting days.

16. VOTING

- 16.1. Voting will be conducted for a minimum of thirty-six (36) hours;
 - 16.1.1. Voting will open at 8:00am on the first day of voting and close at 8:00pm on the last day of voting.
- 16.2. Voting will be conducted by electronic ballot.
- 16.3. Each electronic ballot will include:
 - 16.3.1.1. Separate sections for each distinct question asked;
 - 16.3.1.2. A list of the candidates running for each elected position;
 - 16.3.1.3. A question asking the voter to rank their preferred candidates for each elected position;
 - 16.3.1.4. Any referendum questions put to their membership, in the form of a "yes" or "no" question.
- 16.4. A ballot will be considered official upon submission.
- 16.5. An online ballot will be considered spoiled if the voter selects the spoiled vote option on the electronic ballot;
 - 16.5.1. Spoiled ballots will be counted towards quorum.
- 16.6. At the discretion of the Chief Returning Officer, polling stations may be located in the Concourse of the Fred Nichols Campus Centre, the Science Building, Lazaridis Hall, the Peters Building, the Aird, Building, the Bricker Academic Building, the Brantford Student Centre, and the RCW Building.
 - 16.6.1. The Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer, or an elections volunteer will be located at each polling station for the duration of the voting period.
 - 16.6.2. Polling stations must be located a minimum of ten (10) feet in all directions from the electronic voting device.
 - 16.6.2.1. The Chief Returning Officer has the authority to expand this minimum distance.
- 16.7. Scrutineers will be allowed to observe all voting areas, but is prohibited from interfering with each member's right to a secret ballot.
- 16.8. Scrutineers are permitted to observe the Chief Governance Officer produce the electronic ballot totals;

- 16.8.1. Scrutineers are not permitted to leave the location where the ballot tallies are produced until the Chief Returning Officer has publicly announced the official election results;
- 16.8.2. Scrutineers who divulge any elections results prior to the official announcement will sacrifice their candidate or Referendum Chair's expenditures reimbursement.
- 16.9. The Chief Governance Officer will cast a vote in writing prior to the opening of polls;
 - 16.9.1. The Chief Governance Officer will cast a separate vote for each position by ranking each candidate 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 Chief Returning Officer.
 - 16.9.2. The Chief Governance Officer will provide a copy of these ballots in a sealed envelope to the individual responsible for inputting the tie-breaking votes into the Single-Transferable Vote and Optional Instant Runoff Voting systems.
 - 16.9.3. Only in the case of a tie vote for an elected position will the Chief Governance Officer's vote be recorded.

17. RESULTS

- 17.1. The following individuals may be allowed in the physical or digital results room:
 - 17.1.1. Chief Returning Officer;
 - 17.1.2. Chief Governance Officer;
 - 17.1.3. Deputy Returning Officer(s);
 - 17.1.4. Members of Elections Committee;
 - 17.1.5. Members of the Appeals Committee;
 - 17.1.6. Campaign Scrutineers;
 - 17.1.7. Director, Policy Research & Advocacy.
- 17.2. All appeals must be heard and ruled upon prior to the official release of the results.
- 17.3. In the event that a candidate is disqualified, the Students' Union Board of Directors shall make a ruling prior to the opening of the ballots.
- 17.4. The results will not be disclosed until they have been officially announced by the Chief Governance Officer

18. DEMERITS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

- 18.1. The Chief Returning Officer, with the assistance of the Chief Governance Officer and the Elections Committee, and in consultation with the Director, Policy Research and Advocacy, will be responsible for enforcing campaign regulations, and has the power to impose demerits against any candidate for violations of the Students' Union By-Laws, Elections Policy, the Student Elections Code of Conduct, the Wilfrid Laurier University Non-Academic Code of Conduct, and all other relevant University policies and applicable laws.
- 18.2. Demerits may be charged to a candidate for any violations committed by the candidate or Referendum Chair, their Agent, or their Scrutineer.

- 18.3. Demerits will be categorized as either minor, moderate, or major offences;
- 18.3.1. **Minor offences are worth one (1) demerit point and may include, but are not are not limited to:**
- 18.3.1.1. Promotional and digital material violations.
- 18.3.2. **Moderate offences are worth three (3) demerit points and may include, but are not limited to:**
- 18.3.2.1. Campaigning or promotion violations;
- 18.3.2.2. Formal campaigning on Election Day;
- 18.3.2.3. Campaigning within the restricted area around voting booths;
- 18.3.2.4. Distribution of unapproved campaign materials;
- 18.3.2.5. Repetition of minor offences;
- 18.3.2.6. Exceeding expenditure limits by up to ten (10) percent;
- 18.3.2.7. Endorsing or campaigning on behalf of a candidate running for another position.
- 18.3.3. **Major offences are worth five (5) demerit points and may include, but are not limited to:**
- 18.3.3.1. Slander, which means the verbal defamation of a character not based on proven fact;
- 18.3.3.2. Libel, which means written defamation of character not based on proven fact;
- 18.3.3.3. Abuse of campaign funds, including:
- 18.3.3.3.1. Exceeding the expenditure limit by more than ten (10) percent but less than twenty (20) percent;
- 18.3.3.3.2. Using campaign funds for non-campaign expenses.
- 18.3.3.4. Abuse of a candidate or Referendum Chair's position;
- 18.3.3.5. The use of email to email to campaign or solicit votes;
- 18.3.3.6. Endorsement of a candidate following withdrawal from the election period.
- 18.4. The Chief Returning Officer, with the assistance of the Chief Governance Officer and the Elections Committee, and in consultation with the Director, Policy Research and Advocacy, where necessary, may declare an act not explicitly described above as either a minor, moderate, or major demerit.
- 18.5. Written notice of any violation(s) will be provided to the candidate or Referendum Chair for review by 8:30am the next business day.
- 18.6. Notice of violation(s) on Election Day will be immediately provided to the candidate or Referendum Chair by a member of the Elections Committee.
- 18.7. **If a candidate or Referendum Chair receives seven (7) demerits**, they automatically forfeit fifty percent (50%) of their expenditures reimbursement.
- 18.8. **A candidate or referendum question may be disqualified under the following circumstances:**
- 18.8.1. The Chief Returning Officer will disqualify a candidate or referendum question if the campaign is charged with ten (10) demerit points.
- 18.8.2. The Chief Returning Officer will disqualify a candidate or referendum question if the campaign exceeds its maximum allowable expenditure limit by twenty (20) percent.

- 18.9. The Board of Directors, on the advice of the Chief Returning office and with a 2/3 majority vote, may disqualify a candidate or referendum question for a **severe infraction** that exceeds multiple major offences;
- 18.9.1. The Board of Directors must review the evidence of a severe infraction in public session and vote that the case for disqualification exists beyond a reasonable doubt;
- 18.9.2. A candidate or Referendum Chair facing a severe infraction disqualification will be provided with no less than twenty-four (24) hours' notice of the special meeting, for the purpose of preparing a defence.
- 18.9.3. In the event a disqualification recommendation is presented to the Students' Union Board of Directors on Election Day, the candidate in question will be given no less than one (1) hours' notice of the special meeting, for the purpose of preparing a defence.
- 18.10. At no point will any candidate be penalized due to an error in interpretation, or by failure of the Chief Returning Officer, or any member of the Elections Committee, or the Chief Governance Officer to execute their respective responsibilities/duties as outlined by the Elections Policy, or by failing to provide clear, accurate, unbiased and timely instruction or direction

19. APPEALS

- 19.1. **The Appeals Committee** will consist of the following:
- 19.1.1. The Chief Governance Officer, who will serve as committee Chair;
- 19.1.2. Two Directors of the Students' Union Board of Directors, elected by the Board;
- 19.1.2.1. Directors sitting on the Appeals Committee must not be a member of any campaign team;
- 19.1.2.2. Directors sitting on the Appeals Committee must not openly support any candidate or referendum campaign;
- 19.1.2.3. Directors sitting on the Appeals Committee must not be running for any elected position.
- 19.1.3. The Chief Returning Officer, or their designated who shall sit ex-officio with voice but no vote;
- 19.1.3.1. In the case of an appeal on the Brantford campus, the Deputy Returning Officer (Brantford) will be designated by the Chief Returning Officer to sit ex-officio with voice but not vote.
- 19.1.4. Two (2) students-at-large, with one representative from each campus on which the Students' Union operates.
- 19.1.4.1. Students-at-large sitting on the Appeals Committee must not be a member of any campaign team;
- 19.1.4.2. Students-at-large sitting on the Appeals Committee must not openly support any candidate or referendum campaign;
- 19.1.4.3. Students-at-large sitting on the Appeals Committee must not be running for any elected position.
- 19.1.5. When an appeal deals with an elected position on the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors or Senate, the University Secretary

and General Counsel, or their designate, have a seat and vote on the Appeals Committee.

19.2. To request an appeal of any decision or demerit awarded, a candidate or Referendum Chair must give written notice in hard copy to the Chief Returning Officer by 11:59pm the following business day.

19.3. Any disqualification will prompt an automatic appeal, to be heard by the Appeals Committee within a reasonable amount of time.

19.4. All decisions reached by the Appeals Committee are considered final, and will be communicated to the relevant candidate or Referendum Chair by such means as deemed appropriate by the Chief Returning Officer.

Appendix “A”

STUDENT ELECTIONS CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction:

The Student Elections Code of Conduct, as a component of the Students' Union Elections Policy, is intended as a guide for the election period. These guidelines should be viewed in addition to the Wilfrid Laurier University Non-Academic Code of Conduct, and all other relevant University policies and applicable laws. Violations of the Student Elections Code of Conduct are subject to the demerit system outlined in the Elections Policy, at the discretion of the Chief Returning Officer, the Chief Governance Officer and/or the Appeals Committee.

1. All Candidates running for an elected position, Referendum Chairs, their Agents, Campaign Teams, and Scrutineers shall:
 - 1.1. Be courteous, polite and respectful to the electorate, the Elections Committee, the Appeals Committee, those members currently holding elected positions, the staff of Wilfrid Laurier University and the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union, and their fellow candidates.
 - 1.2. Not harass or otherwise “aggressively campaign” towards any member of the electorate, regardless of whether or not they choose to exercise their vote.
 - 1.3. Refrain at all times from profanity, slander, derogatory statements, or disrespecting the electoral process.
 - 1.4. Never issue, condone or otherwise endorse offensive statements regarding an individual or group's creed, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, sexual identity, and commit to engage the electorate with a commitment to equality.
 - 1.5. Not use Students' Union resources for electoral purposes unless explicitly permitted to do so as outlined in the Elections Policy, or as mandated by the Appeals Committee.
 - 1.6. Respect the rules of all Students' Union business operations, including but not limited to the Turret, Wilfs, and Golden Grounds.
 - 1.7. Not campaign in the Students' Union offices or the Office of the Secretariat.
 - 1.8. Not purposefully engage in behaviour that would result in the issuance of a demerit, as outlined in the Elections Policy.

Remember that your campaign is a reflection of you as a person and your suitability as a Student Representative. Please exercise common sense and good judgment in making this election fair for all Candidates.

