

Victoria University Students' Administrative Council

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(416) 585-4473

Constitutional Amendments

June 15, 2018 Prepared by Jayde Jones, President.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #1

Current Chapter I

We, the students of Victoria College, having associated ourselves as the Victoria College Union (VCU) in the hope of bettering our student experience, hereby adopt this constitution. In so doing, we create a representative body which shall advocate for and advance the interests of the union, and which shall operate openly and democratically to ensure that our needs are met.

The Victoria University Students' Administrative Council (VUSAC) shall be committed to creating a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment for all members of the Victoria College community. In addition to promoting inclusivity, the representative body shall strive to eliminate inequitable practices both within its own institution and with regards to the broader Victoria College community by combating the systems of oppression in which they are rooted. This includes but is not restricted to overt and implicit instances of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and classism that affect our community.

Proposed Amendment

We, the students of Victoria College, having associated ourselves as the Victoria College Union (VCU) in the hope of bettering our student experience, hereby adopt this constitution. In so doing, we create a representative body which shall advocate for and advance the interests of the union, and which shall operate openly, **equitably**, and democratically to ensure that our needs are met.

The Victoria University Students' Administrative Council (VUSAC) shall be committed to creating a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment for all members of the Victoria College community. In addition to promoting inclusivity, the representative body shall strive to eliminate inequitable practices both within its own institution and with regards to the broader Victoria College community by combating the systems of oppression in which they are rooted. This includes but is not restricted to overt and implicit instances of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and classism that affect our community. **Furthermore, the VUSAC shall only fund student groups and initiatives which operate in accordance with the principles outlined in this mission statement.**

Rationale

Adding the provision that VUSAC only funds student groups which align with our stated equity goals provides a route for us to deny club funding or status to groups who promote inequitable practices or create inequitable environments.

Should be passed in July before club applications open in August.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #2

Current Chapter VII, Article 14, Section 2

S4) The Vice-President Student Organizations:

- a) Shall be a returning student at Victoria College.
- b) Shall serve as a voting member of the Executive.
- c) Shall be an official working liaison between the Council and its levy receivers.
- d) Shall be an official working liaison with all Victoria College clubs.
- e) Shall, in the summer, facilitate the process of club (re)-application and ratification.
- f) Shall be a voting member of the Budget Steering Committee.
- g) Shall be the Chair of the Cat's Eye Advisory Board, as per the Cat's Eye Operating Policy.
- h) Shall organize at least two meetings a year (one per term) with the clubs executive.
- i) Shall organize and chair a minimum of one meeting for all club heads per academic year.

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- g) Shall be the Chair of the Cat's Eye Advisory Board, as per the Cat's Eye Operating Policy.
- h) Shall organize at least two meetings a year (one per term) with the clubs executive.
- i) Shall organize and chair a minimum of one meeting for all club heads per academic year.
- j) Shall be a voting member of the Budget Steering Committee.**

Rationale

Having the best awareness of the needs and priorities of student groups, it seems appropriate that the VPSO bring this knowledge into conversations about allocation of funds to said groups.

Should be passed in July before the Budget Steering Committee begins meeting in August.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #3

Current Chapter VIII, Article 15, Section 1

S1) The Commissioners shall consist of the Academic Commissioner, the Arts & Culture Commissioner, the Commuter Commissioner, the Equity Commissioner, the Scarlet & Gold Commissioner, and the Sustainability Commissioner.

Proposed Amendment

S1) The Commissioners shall consist of the Academic Commissioner, the Arts & Culture Commissioner, the Commuter Commissioner, the Equity Commissioner, **the Mental Wellness Commissioner**, the Scarlet & Gold Commissioner, and the Sustainability Commissioner.

Rationale

Mental health issues among university students have for a number of years been described as at crisis-level. On May 3, 2018 the Ontario government recognized this crisis and committed to providing an additional \$6 million to fund mental health services at post-secondary institutions, on top of the \$9 million already provided annually. Given such impressive, provincial-level results of student advocacy efforts, instituting a dedicated member of VUSAC responsible for advocating for more comprehensive and accessible mental wellness services for our students seems almost overdue. There is much to be done at the college-level with regards to connecting students with resources, sustaining discussions about wellness and stigma, and fighting for more, better supports to be available to the VCU.

On-campus precedent for such positions include the University of Toronto Student Union (UTSU)'s Mental Wellness Commissioner and Commission, the University College Literary and Athletic Society (UC Lit)'s Mental Wellness Commissioner and Commission, Woodsworth College Student's Association (WCSA)'s Mental Health Director, University of Toronto Engineering Society (EngSoc)'s Mental Wellness Director, and the Architecture and Visual Studies Student's Union (AVSSU)'s Commissioner of Health and Wellness.

Should be passed in July in order to take effect in time to be elected in Fall Elections.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #4

Current Chapter X, Article 19, Section 3

Currently lists the duty of the Scarlet & Gold Commissioner; should Amendment #3 pass it makes sense to continue with the alphabetized list of Commissioners and replace Section 5 with the Mental Wellness Commissioner, bumping Scarlet & Gold to Section 6 and Sustainability to Chapter 7.

Proposed Amendment

S5) The Mental Wellness Commissioner:

- a) Shall collaborate with other student organizations to organize mental wellness initiatives and programming for VCU members.**
- b) Shall publicly disseminate information about on-campus mental health resources and services available to VCU members;**
 - i. Shall arrange, in conjunction with the Communications Coordinator, to maintain an updated list of those resources on the VUSAC website.**
- c) Shall work with University administration, student societies, and other campus organizations to advocate for improvements to mental wellness services at Victoria College and the University of Toronto as a whole.**
- d) Shall prepare an annual report, to be published in February, outlining student student concerns and opinions regarding mental wellness services and policies at the University.**
- e) Shall host or collaborate on at least two (2) events per year which focus on mental wellness, stress relief, or more holistic student health and wellbeing.**
- f) Shall host or collaborate on at least one (1) event per year which aims to break down stigma regarding mental illness or to facilitate conversations about mental health.**
- g) Shall ensure council is aware of the particular concerns students experiencing mental illness have with regards to VUSAC's programming and services.**
- h) Shall, with the support of the Vice-President Internal, arrange at least one training session focused on mental wellness for the members of Council.**

Rationale

The spirit of Section 5a is taken from VUSAC's Academic, Equity, and Sustainability Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representatives at the UTSU, EngSoc, and UC Lit.

Precedent for Section 5b comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representatives at the UTSU, EngSoc, AVSSU, WCSA, and the UC Lit.

The spirit of Section 5c is taken from VUSAC's Academic and Equity Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representatives at WCSA and the UC Lit.

The spirit of Section 5d is taken from VUSAC's Academic, Equity, and Sustainability Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representative at AVSSU.

The spirit of Section 5e is taken from VUSAC's Arts & Culture Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representatives at the UC Lit and EngSoc.

The spirit of Section 5f is taken from VUSAC's Sustainability Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representative at the UC Lit.

The spirit of Section 5g is taken from VUSAC's Commuter, Equity, and Sustainability Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representative at the UC Lit.

The spirit of Section 5h is taken from VUSAC's Equity, Commissioner constitutional responsibilities. Precedent for this piece of the portfolio comes directly from the responsibilities of the mental wellness representative at WCSA.

Should be passed in July in order to take effect in time to be elected in Fall Elections.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #5

Current Chapter VIII, Article 16, Section 5

- S3) The Office Manager:
- a) Shall take accurate, detailed, and concise minutes of each VUSAC meeting.
 - b) Shall send a draft of each set of minutes to all VUSAC members, including staff members, with at least 72 hours following the end of each VUSAC meeting.
 - c) Shall finalize the draft of each set of minutes, following distribution to all VUSAC and assessor members and reception of feedback.
 - d) Shall be responsible for binding the year's minutes, allocating one copy to the VUSAC and another to the Archives at E.J. Pratt Library.
 - e) Shall be responsible for the management of the VUSAC Office space.

Proposed Amendment

- S3) The Office Manager:
- a) Shall take accurate, detailed, and concise minutes of each VUSAC meeting.
 - b) Shall send a draft of each set of minutes to all VUSAC members, including staff members, **and all those who are recorded as having spoken at the meeting within** at least 72 hours following the end of each VUSAC meeting.
 - c) Shall finalize the draft of each set of minutes, following distribution to all VUSAC and assessor members and reception of feedback.
 - d) Shall be responsible for binding the year's minutes, allocating one copy to the VUSAC and another to the Archives at E.J. Pratt Library.
 - e) Shall be responsible for the management of the VUSAC Office space.

Rationale

Usually done anyway but should be codified to ensure everyone who has spoken, not just VUSAC members, have the chance to confirm they were accurately recorded before the minutes are approved and archived.

Should be passed in July so as to formally take effect for the August meeting and all subsequent.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #6

Current Chapter XIII, Article 21, Section 2

- S2) In the Spring, the following members shall be elected:
- a) President
 - b) Vice-President External
 - c) Vice-President Internal
 - d) Vice-President Student Organizations
 - e) Academic Commissioner
 - f) Arts & Culture Commissioner
 - g) Commuter Commissioner
 - h) Equity Commissioner
 - i) Scarlet & Gold Commissioner
 - j) Sustainability Commissioner
 - k) All members of the VCC
 - l) All members of the VUS
 - m) All members of the BoR

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 - e) Academic Commissioner
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 - g) Commuter Commissioner
 - h) Equity Commissioner
 - i) Mental Wellness Commissioner**
 - j) Scarlet & Gold Commissioner
 - k) Sustainability Commissioner
 - l) All members of the VCC
 - m) All members of the VUS
 - n) All members of the BoR

Rationale

Should the Mental Wellness Commissioner amendments (#3 and #4) pass, the position should regularly be elected in Spring elections with all other Commissioners.

Should be passed in July so the Constitution is coherent if the above Mental Wellness Commissioner amendments (#3 and #4) pass.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #7

Current Chapter XIII, Article 21, Section 5b

- S5) Nominations:
- a) All nominations shall be made on the form of nomination supplied by the CRO.
 - b) Nominations shall be signed by the nominee and by a minimum of ten (10) nominators who are members of the VCU.
 - c) Nominations for fall elections are to open in the first week of classes and close at the end of the second week, with elections held prior to the fourth Friday in the academic year.
 - d) Spring Elections are to be completed by end of March.

Proposed Amendment

- S5) Nominations:
- a) All nominations shall be made on the form of nomination supplied by the CRO.
 - b) Nominations shall be signed by the nominee and by a minimum of ten (10) nominators who are members of the VCU, **with the exception of Executive and First Year Councillor candidates.**
 - i. Nominations for First Year Councillor positions shall be signed by the nominee and by a minimum of five (5) nominators who are members of the VCU.**
 - ii. Nominations for Vice-President positions shall be signed by the nominee and by a minimum of fifteen (15) nominators who are members of the VCU.**
 - iii. Nominations for President shall be signed by the nominee and by a minimum of twenty-five (25) nominators who are members of the VCU.**
 - c) Nominations for fall elections are to open in the first week of classes and close at the end of the second week, with elections held prior to the fourth Friday in the academic year.
 - d) Spring Elections are to be completed by end of March.

Rationale

One way to address the concern of first year representation is by lowering the number of signatures required for them to nominate themselves for election to the position of First Year Councillor. At the same time, it seems appropriate to increase the number of signatures required for someone to run for a position on the Executive given the increase in responsibility for the overall wellbeing of VUSAC, its operations, its relationship with other bodies, and its service to students.

Should pass in July so as to take effect in the Fall Elections.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #8

Current Chapter XIII, Article 21, Section 6

I am proposing a new section, Section 6: Uncontested Elections, bumping By-Elections and Referenda to Section 7 and 8 respectively.

Proposed Amendment

S6) Uncontested Elections

- a) An election shall be considered an “uncontested election” if at the conclusion of the All-Candidates Meeting, it such that there are:
 - i. Three (3) or more Commissioner seats with only candidate; and/or
 - ii. Two (2) or more Executive seats with only one candidate; and/or
 - iii. Two (2) or fewer candidates for First Year Councillor; and/or
 - iv. Four (4) or fewer candidates for Upper Year Councillor; and/or
 - v. No candidates for any single Commissioner or Executive seat.
- b) In the case of an uncontested Spring Election, nominations shall be re-opened for a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of four (4) days.
- c) In the case of an uncontested Fall Election or By-Election nominations shall be re-opened for a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of six (6) days.
- d) In the case of any uncontested election, nominations shall be re-opened only for the positions which are uncontested. No campaigning from candidates in already contested positions shall be permitted until the extended nominations period closes and the campaign period officially begins.
- e) Should there be no new nominees at the end of the extended nominations period, there will be no further extension of this period.
- f) Beyond the extended nominations period, all other elections policies outlined in the Elections and Referenda Code shall be in full force and effect.
- g) Should the nominations period be extended, the campaign and voting periods shall not be unreasonably shortened. Their new dates shall be determined by the CRO in conjunction with the Elections and Appeals Committee.

Rationale

Introducing the ability to re-open nominations to solicit more candidates is taking a step toward ensuring VUSAC elections remain democratic, decision-making processes that ultimately benefit the electorate. Contested elections improve candidate’s ability to be effective representatives if

elected, stir more interested among the VCU and thus more representative decisions from their votes, and give voters a real choice.

Should pass in July so as to take effect in the Fall Elections.

This is an amendment I campaigned on in Spring 2018. Vice-President External, Devon Wilton, and Vice-President Internal, Nickolas Shyshkin, helped shape and clarify the language thereafter.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #5

Current Chapter VIII, Article 15, Section 5

S5) The Scarlet & Gold Commissioner:

- a) Shall be responsible for establishing a program of social events for all Victoria College students financed by the VUSAC.
- b) Shall be the chair of the Winterfest Chair Selection Committee.
- c) Shall be the chair of the Victoria Highball Committee.
- d) Shall be responsible for regular social programming in conjunction with Victoria student clubs, levies, residence councils, and/or external groups to Victoria College.
- e) Shall be responsible for hosting a social event in the first three (3) weeks of classes to welcome students back to school.
- f) Shall be responsible for planning and hosting a semi-formal event for all Victoria students to take place in first semester.
- g) Shall be responsible for planning and hosting Highball for all VCU students to take place in second semester.
- h) Shall be the Chair of the Highball Committee and responsible for the selection of its members.
- i) Shall provide assistance and advice when requested to other Victoria College groups hosting social events.

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- f) Shall be responsible for planning and hosting a semi-formal event for all Victoria students to take place in first semester.
- g) Shall be responsible for planning and hosting Highball for all VCU students to take place in second semester.
- h) Shall be the Chair of the Highball Committee and responsible for the selection of its members.
- i) Shall provide assistance and advice when requested to other Victoria College groups hosting social events.
- j) Shall sit on the Performing Arts Endowment Committee.**

Rationale

On the recommendation of the 2018-19 Scarlet & Gold Commissioner, Alexa Ballis, who was made aware that this is a responsibility expected of the Commissioner. Updating the Constitution to reflect that responsibility seems pragmatic.

Should be passed in July so that the Constitution is coherent with the duties being performed.