



Constitution

of the

Political Science Students Association

of Concordia University

Adopted at the January 2020 General Assembly

Definitions

Accreditation Act. The Act Respecting The Accreditation And Financing of Students' Association.

Companies Act. PART III. Legal Persons or Associations Having No Share Capital, Constituted or Continued by Letters Patent.

Elections. Process of electing the PSSA Executive and the Chairperson. There are two types of Elections: By-elections and General Elections.

Executive. A team of seven elected Officers charged with the day-to-day operations of the PSSA. Includes the: President, Vice-President of Internal Affairs, Vice-President of External Affairs, Vice-President of Finance, Vice-President of Academics, Vice-President of Student Life, and Vice-President of Marketing.

General Assembly. Meetings where all members can vote. The highest decision-making body of the PSSA. There are two types of General Assemblies: General Assemblies and Special General Assemblies.

Officer. All encompassing term to refer to members of the Board of Directors and the Executive.

ASFA. The Arts & Science Federation of Associations, of which the PSSA is a member association.

Board. Refers to the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors. A team of five Officers charged with overseeing the Executive, Subsidiaries, and the Book of Policies. Includes the: Chairperson, President, Advisory Director, First-Year Director, and ASFA Councilor.

Book of Policies. Separate document that compliments the Constitution. Outlines the policies of the PSSA.

Subsidiary. Subsidiaries are sub-associations of the PSSA. Subsidiaries with Official Status receive funding from the PSSA. There are two types of subsidiaries: Societies and Committees.

Quorum. The minimum amount of members required to be in attendance to make binding decisions.

Referendum. The process by which a question is put on the ballot during an Election.

Simple Majority. A vote which is passed with 50% + 1 of those in attendance. All motions may pass by simple-majority vote, unless otherwise specified.

2/3rds Majority. A vote which is passed with 2/3rds of those in attendance, rounded up if necessary.

University Day. Any day excluding Saturdays, Sundays, statutory holidays in the Province of Québec, and other holidays during which the University is closed.

SECTION A: GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 1 Name

- 1.1 **English.** The English name of the association is the “Political Science Students Association of Concordia University”. The abbreviation is PSSA.
- 1.2 **French.** The French name of the association is the “Association Étudiante de Science Politique de l’Université Concordia.” The abbreviation is AÉSP.

ARTICLE 2 Objective

- 2.1 The three objectives of the PSSA are ...
 - 2.1.1 **Representation.** Represent members, defend their rights, and promote their interests.
 - 2.1.2 **Community.** Organize events to bring together the undergraduate political science community.
 - 2.1.3 **Opportunity.** Prepare the leaders of tomorrow by providing opportunities for academic, professional, and social growth.

ARTICLE 3 Members

- 3.1 All students enrolled in the Department of Political Science of Concordia University are members of the PSSA. This includes majors, minors, specializations, honours, and the Human Rights program.
- 3.2 The following privileges are extended to PSSA members exclusively:
 - 3.2.1 **Voting.** Members can vote in General Elections, By-Elections, Referenda, and General Assemblies.
 - 3.2.2 **Office.** Members can run for and hold office on the Executive and the Board of Directors.

SECTION B: EXECUTIVE

ARTICLE 4 Objective

- 4.1 The Executive is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the PSSA. The Executive is tasked with determining the yearly direction and budget of the PSSA with the consent of its members.

ARTICLE 5 Composition

- 5.1 The Executive consists of seven Officials ...
 - 5.1.1 President.
 - 5.1.2 Vice-President of Internal Affairs.
 - 5.1.3 Vice-President of External Affairs.
 - 5.1.4 Vice-President of Finance.
 - 5.1.5 Vice-President of Academics.
 - 5.1.6 Vice-President of Student Life.
 - 5.1.7 Vice-President of Marketing.

ARTICLE 6 Executive Meetings

- 6.1 **Executive Authority.** The Executive make decisions in Executive Meetings. Decisions are final and must be respected by the President. The President is solely tasked with making decisions on behalf of the Executive in-between Executive Meetings.
- 6.2 **Calling Meetings.** Executive Meetings are called by the President with at least two University Days of notice. Meetings can alternatively be called by a petition of two (2) members of the Executive submitted to the President in writing.
- 6.3 **Presiding Officer.** The President presides over Executive Meetings. Another Executive may be elected to preside in their absence.

- 6.4 **Minute Taker.** The Minute Taker is elected by the Executive from the Executive. The Minute Taker will keep track of key arguments brought forward, all motions, and vote count.
- 6.5 **Quorum.** Quorum is four (4) or fifty percent (50%) of sitting members, whichever is higher.
- 6.6 **Voting.** All members of the Executive have one equal vote, including the presiding officer of the meeting.
- 6.7 **Motions and Resolutions.**
 - 6.7.1 Motions and resolutions that are duly passed with a simple-majority are binding on the entire Executive.
 - 6.7.2 Motions and resolutions passed without quorum or that are in contradiction with the Constitution or Book of Policies are considered unduly passed and are non-binding.

ARTICLE 7 Budget

- 7.1 **Board.** The Executive will present a draft of the budget at the September Regular Board Meeting. The Board may make suggestions to the budget. The Board does not vote on the budget.
- 7.2 **General Assembly.** The Executive will present a final draft of the budget at the September General Assembly for approval by the members.

ARTICLE 8 Reports

- 8.1 **Monthly Reports.** Executives will submit monthly reports to the Board of Directors, summarizing their accomplishments and plans.
- 8.2 **General Assemblies.** Executives will submit reports to the Chairperson before the September and January General Assemblies for presentation.
- 8.3 **Final Report.** Executives will submit a final report to the Board at the end of their mandate, which must be formally accepted by the Board and presented at the April General Assembly.

ARTICLE 9 Additional Measures

9.1 **Additional Powers.** Any powers that are not delegated in this Constitution or the Book of Policies shall fall under the purview of the Executive, until the Board resolves to delegate the powers to another body.

SECTION C: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ARTICLE 10 Objective

- 10.1 The Board of Directors meets monthly to provide oversight of the PSSA, to set policies regulating the organization, and to ensure the budget is being respected. They will ensure that the Executive acts within the Constitution and Book of Policies.

ARTICLE 11 Composition

- 11.1 The Board of Directors consists of five Officials...
- 11.1.1 Chairperson.
 - 11.1.2 President.
 - 11.1.3 ASFA Councillor.
 - 11.1.4 First-Year Director.
 - 11.1.5 Advisory Director.

ARTICLE 12 Board Meetings

- 12.1 **Calendar.** A public calendar of all Board Meetings for the mandate shall be published by June 1st by the Chairperson for all Regular Members to see.
- 12.2 **Open to Members.** Board Meetings are open to all Regular Members.
- 12.3 **Regular Meetings.** Board Meetings are called by the Chairperson on the first Tuesday of every month, with the exception of the months of May and December. The agenda for a Regular Board Meeting must be submitted to the Board members at least three (3) University Days in advance.
- 12.4 **Special Board Meetings.** Special Meetings can be called by a petition of two (2) members of the Board or a petition signed by at least twenty-five members submitted to the Chairperson in writing. The agenda for a Special Board Meeting must be included with the petition. The agenda may not be amended. The agenda for must be submitted to the Board members at least two (2) University Days in advance.
- 12.5 **Chair.** The Chairperson presides over Board Meetings. Another member of the Board may be elected to preside in their absence.

- 12.6 **Minute Taker.** The Minute Taker is elected by the Board from the Board. The Minute Taker will keep track of key arguments brought forward, all motions, and vote count.
- 12.7 **Quorum.** Quorum is three (3) or fifty percent (50%) of sitting members, whichever is higher.
- 12.8 **Voting.** All members of the Board have a vote, with the exception of the Chairperson who may only vote in the case of a tie.
- 12.9 **Motions and Resolutions.**
- 12.9.1 Motions and resolutions that are duly passed with a simple-majority are binding on the PSSA, in addition to its Board, Executive, and subsidiaries.
- 12.9.2 Motions and resolutions passed without quorum or that are in contradiction with the Constitution or Book of Policies are considered unduly passed and are non-binding.
- 12.10 **Closed Session.** A Board Meeting may enter closed session by a 2/3rds majority vote. Only Board members may be present in a closed session meeting. Exemptions may be waived for individual members by simple-majority vote.

ARTICLE 13 Standing Committees

- 13.1 The Standing Committees of the Board are...
- 13.1.1 **First-Year Committee.** Chaired by the First-Year Director. All first-year students are voting members.
- 13.1.2 **Advisory Committee.** Chaired by the Advisory Director. All past Executives of the PSSA are voting members.
- 13.2 **Reports.** The Committee Chairperson will submit monthly written reports on the committee's activities to the Board for presentation at Regular Board Meeting. If the committee has not met since the last Board meeting, then the Chair of the Committee will submit a written report indicating such.

SECTION E: GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ARTICLE 14 Objective

- 14.1 General Assemblies are meetings of the members. These deliberative assemblies are the highest decision making body of the Association. Any resolution properly adopted is binding on the PSSA including it's Executive, BOD, and subsidiaries.

ARTICLE 15 General Assemblies

- 15.1 **Calendar.** A public calendar of all General Assemblies for the mandate shall be published by June 1st by the Chairperson.
- 15.2 **Notice.** Members must be provided at least ten University Days notice of an incoming Regular and Special General Assembly prior to the meeting. The notice must include the date, time, and place of the meeting.
- 15.3 **Rights of the Members.** All members have the right to speak, propose motions, and vote on motions.
- 15.4 **Open to Members.** All General Assemblies are open to Regular Members.
- 15.5 **General Assemblies.** There are three General Assemblies within the mandate. These meetings will occur on the last Wednesday of September, January, and April. For financial purposes, the April General Assembly shall be considered the Annual General Meeting.
- 15.6 **Special General Assemblies.** Special General Assemblies can be called by the Chairperson, the President, or a petition of twenty-five (25) Members submitted to the Board in writing. The Special General Assembly will be called and held no more than ten (10) University Days following the presentation of the petition. The agenda must be included in the announcement of the General Assembly. The agenda cannot be amended.
- 15.7 **Chairperson.** The Chairperson of the Board presides over the General Assembly. A temporary chairperson may be appointed by a 2/3rds majority of the members.
- 15.8 **Minute Taker.** The Minute Taker will be appointed by the General Assembly. The Minute Taker will keep track of key arguments brought forward, all motions, and vote count. The Minutes shall be submitted to the Board for safekeeping.
- 15.9 **Quorum.** Quorum is twenty-five (25) or 1.5% of members, whichever is higher.

15.10 **Voting.** All members of the PSSA have a vote, with the exception of the Chairperson who may only vote in the case of a tie.

15.11 Motions and Resolutions.

15.11.1 Motions and resolutions that are duly passed with a simple-majority are binding on the PSSA, in addition to its Board, Executive, and subsidiaries.

15.11.2 Motions and resolutions passed without quorum or that are in contradiction with the Constitution or Book of Policies are considered unduly passed and are non-binding.

15.12 **Closed Session.** The General Assembly may enter closed session by a 2/3rds majority of members present. Only Members may be present in a closed session meeting. Exemptions may be waived for individual members by simple-majority vote.

SECTION F: ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

ARTICLE 16 Mandate

- 16.1 **Mandate.** The term of all elected officials in the General Election begins on May 1st of the year they are elected. The term of all elected and appointed members of the Executive and the Board shall end on April 30th of the subsequent year.

ARTICLE 17 Elections

- 17.1 **Elected Officials.** Eight offices are open to elections annually. The elected offices of the PSSA consist of: the President, the six Vice-Presidents, and the Chairperson of the Board.
- 17.2 **General Elections.** The elections shall be held annually before April 1st.
- 17.3 **By-Elections.** By-elections shall be held annually in the month of November if one or more elected offices are vacant.
- 17.4 **Vacancies.** Vacancies may be temporarily filled by an interim appointment by the President. The decision may be repealed by a 2/3rds majority of the Executive. By-elections shall occur for offices held by an interim appointee.
- 17.4.1 **Exception for the Chairperson.** In the case of the vacancy, the Chairperson shall be appointed by the Board of Directors, with a 2/3rds majority, for the remainder of the mandate.
- 17.5 **Affiliations.** Chairperson candidates cannot run affiliated with other candidates.

ARTICLE 18 Appointments to the Board

- 18.1 **ASFA Councilor and First-Year Director.** The Chairperson appoints the ASFA Councilor and the First-Year Director by the last Wednesday of May. The First-Year Director must be in their first year of study at Concordia at the time of their appointment. The Chairperson is tasked with appointing a replacement should a vacancy arise. The decision may be repealed by a 2/3rds majority of the Executive.
- 18.2 **Advisory Director.** The President appoints the Advisory Director by the last Wednesday of May. The Advisory Director must be a past Executive of the PSSA.

The President is tasked with appointing a replacement should a vacancy arise. The decision may be repealed by a 2/3rds majority of the Executive.

- 18.3 **Ratification.** All appointments to the Board must be ratified by the members at the next General Assembly following their appointment.

ARTICLE 19 Referenda

- 19.1 **Referenda.** Referendum questions may be added to the ballot during the General Election and By-Election. A question may be brought to referendum by the President, the Chairperson, a simple majority vote at a General Assembly, or by a petition of twenty-five (25) members submitted to the Board in writing.

ARTICLE 20 Restrictions

20.1 **Concurrent Positions.**

- 20.1.1 No individual may simultaneously hold more than one office on the Board or the Executive.
- 20.1.2 No individual may hold an office on both the Executive and the Board.
- 20.1.3 Executives and Board Members shall not hold an office within a subsidiary.

- 20.2 **Chairperson.** In order to ensure the utmost standard of neutrality, the Chairperson may not hold any executive office within a Concordia related organization, including but not limited to: the Arts & Science Federation of Associations and the Concordia Student Union.

- 20.3 **Automatic Resignation.** Should it be found that an Executive or Board Member has violated these restrictions, they shall be immediately considered resigned from all offices within the PSSA without prejudice.

SECTION H: SUBSIDIARIES

ARTICLE 21 Objective

- 21.1 The purpose of subsidiaries is to provide Political Science students with the opportunity to organize to accomplish an objective and to explore and participate in specific fields of interest within political science.

ARTICLE 22 Types of Subsidiaries

- 22.1 There are two types of subsidiaries...
- 22.1.1 **Societies.** Societies are governed by an Executive Team for the purpose of organizing events to promote a distinct field of study within the discipline of political science.
- 22.1.2 **Committees.** Committees consist of a group of students for the purpose of achieving a goal for the students of political science.

ARTICLE 23 Operations of Subsidiaries

- 23.1 **Subsidiary Constitutions.** Subsidiaries shall have a constitution that exists within the Book of Policies. The constitution shall lay out an objective and an Executive structure with explicit responsibilities. The constitution may be modified at any time by the Board.
- 23.2 **Accountability.** Subsidiaries shall report to the Board of Directors. A designated leader of the subsidiary shall submit a monthly written report on the subsidiaries accomplishments and plans to the Board.

ARTICLE 24 Appointment to Subsidiaries

- 24.1 **Mandate.** The term of all subsidiary officials shall end on April 30th following their appointment.
- 24.2 **Appointment by General Assembly.** All subsidiary offices shall be advertised as open for election at the April General Assembly. All members are permitted to nominate themselves. All members present at the General Assembly are permitted to vote for candidates. The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot.
- 24.3 **Appointment by the Chairperson.** All vacant subsidiary offices following the April General Assembly shall be appointed by the Chairperson in collaboration with any

subsidiary officials appointed at the General Assembly. The decision may be repealed by a 2/3rds majority of the PSSA Executive.

ARTICLE 25 Establishment of a New Subsidiary

- 25.1 **Written Request.** A member must submit a formal request in writing to initiate the creation of a subsidiary. The request must include the objective and Executive structure of the subsidiary. It must be identified as a Society or a Committee.
- 25.2 **Presentation.** The member must make a presentation to the Board of Directors at a Regular Board Meeting. Following the presentation, the Board will vote on granting the subsidiary probationary status.
- 25.3 **Probationary Status.** The subsidiary will spend one year on probationary period. The subsidiary will not be provided a budget from the PSSA. Probationary period will start on the date in which probationary status approval is granted.
- 25.4 **Requirements for Official Status.** Subsidiaries that have sent one representative to all three General Assemblies and provided monthly reports to the Board of Directors shall be considered for official status.
- 25.5 **Official Status.** A subsidiary that has been on probationary status for one year and fulfilled the requirements shall be brought to the upcoming General Assembly for approval. If approved, it will be added to the list of subsidiaries. It will then have the rights and responsibilities granted to Subsidiaries in this Constitution and Book of Policies.
- 25.6 **Revocation Process.** If a subsidiary fails to fulfill its obligation to uphold its objective, the Board of Directors may bring revocation of official status to the next General Assembly or schedule a Special General Assembly. Should official status be revoked, the subsidiary shall begin a year of probationary period starting the day that the official status was revoked.

SECTION G: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

ARTICLE 26 Types of Removal from Office

- 26.1 There shall be two methods of removal from an elected or appointed office within the PSSA and its subsidiaries ...
 - 26.1.1 Resignation.
 - 26.1.2 Impeachment.

ARTICLE 27 Resignation

- 27.1 **Letter of Resignation.** An Executive, Board Member, or subsidiary official may express their intention to leave office through a letter of resignation submitted to the Board.
- 27.2 **In Force.** The resignation shall be in force and irrevocable upon submission of the letter of resignation. The office previously held by the Executive or Board Member shall be immediately considered vacant.

ARTICLE 28 Impeachment of Board and Executive Officials

- 28.1 **Petition.** The signatures of fifty (50) Regular Members shall be submitted in writing to the Board.
- 28.2 **Calling the Meeting.** An Emergency Meeting of the Board shall be called after the reception of the signatures. The Board of Directors must call a Special General Assembly for the purpose of a trial.
- 28.3 **Reason.** Executive and Board Members may be impeached for dereliction of duties, misappropriation of funds or any severe violation of this Constitution or Book of Policies.
- 28.4 **Trial.**
 - 28.4.1 **Speaking Time.** Both parties shall be allocated an equal amount of time to present their case.
 - 28.4.2 **Removal Vote.** The Special General Assembly may remove the official from office by a 2/3rds majority. The accused may vote on their removal.
 - 28.4.3 **Chairperson Provisions.** The Chairperson may not preside as Chairperson over a Special General Meeting discussing their removal from office.

ARTICLE 29 Impeachment of Subsidiary Officials

- 29.1 **Resolution of the Board.** The PSSA Executive or the subsidiary Executive may send a formal request of impeachment to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may remove the subsidiary official from office with a 2/3rds majority. The decision may be appealed at a General Assembly.

SECTION H: BOOK OF POLICIES

ARTICLE 30 Objective

- 30.1 The Book of Policies is an additional governance document that compliments the Constitution. The purpose of the Book of Policies is to provide the opportunity to enact procedures that can be modified year-by-year to match the PSSA's changing needs.

ARTICLE 31 Function

- 31.1 **Format.** Policies must be clear, concise, and easy to read. Policies must be reasonably enforceable and implementable by the PSSA and should not cause undue divisions within the Political Science community at Concordia.
- 31.2 **Enactment of Policies.** Policies may be passed by the Board of Directors at a Board Meeting or by Members at a General Assembly or Referendum.
- 31.3 **Authority of the Members.** The members hold primary authority over the Book of Policies. The Members may overrule all decisions of the Board of Directors concerning policy.
- 31.4 **Expiration.** Policies expire two (2) years after they are enacted.
- 31.5 **Dates.** All Policies must have the date of enactment and expiry listed in the Book of Policies.

ARTICLE 32 Renewal

- 32.1 **Renewal Process.** A policy may be renewed within a period of ninety (90) days before its expiry. If the policy is not renewed, it is considered invalid and unenforceable.
- 32.2 **Modification.** Policies in renewal period may be modified. The modified policy is not considered in effect until it is successfully confirmed by the Board of Directors, the General Assembly, or Referendum.

ARTICLE 33 Constitutional Supremacy

- 33.1 **Supremacy of the Constitution.** No Policy may come into conflict with the Constitution. Any Policy that does shall be considered invalid and unenforceable.

SECTION I: CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 34 Authority of the Constitution

- 34.1 **Supremacy.** The Constitution is the supreme governing framework of the PSSA. All motions and decisions of the PSSA, including, but not limited to, those made by the Board, the Executive, and the Subsidiaries, must be made in conformity with this Constitution.
- 34.2 **Conflict.** In the event of any conflict between this Constitution and any other document produced by the PSSA or a Subsidiary, including but not limited to the decisions of the General Assembly and the Book of Policies, this Constitution shall take precedence.
- 34.3 **Adjudication.** All disputes and appeals arising between Officers concerning the application or the interpretation of the Constitution may be referred to the Board of Directors for adjudication. A further appeal may be made to a General Assembly.

ARTICLE 35 Amendment Procedure

- 35.1 **General Assembly.** The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority at a Special General Assembly with fifty (50) members or three percent (3%) of members, whichever is higher.
- 35.2 **Referendum.** The Constitution may be amended by Referendum. The amendment may be brought to referendum upon presentation to the Board of a petition of one-hundred (100) members or six percent of members (6%), whichever is higher.
- 35.3 **Multiple Amendments.** In the event multiple changes are proposed, they must be voted on separately unless the Board of Directors determines they are interdependent.
- 35.4 **Exemptions.**
 - 35.4.1 **Names.** In the event that the name of an organisation or document referred to in this Constitution changes, this Constitution shall automatically be amended to reflect the change, and shall not require ratification of the membership, unless the name changes alter the spirit of this Constitution.
 - 35.4.2 **Formatting.** The formatting or presentation of this Constitution may be amended by a Special Resolution of the BOD, provided such modifications

do not materially affect the content or meaning of any of the articles in this Constitution.

SECTION K: ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 36 Legal Governance

- 36.1 The PSSA is governed by the Accreditation Act and the Companies Act, Chapter III. All decisions taken must respect the relevant articles in these laws.

ARTICLE 37 Parliamentary Procedure

- 37.1 All meetings shall be facilitated through the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 38 Signing Officers

- 38.1 The President, Vice-President of Finance, and the Chairperson are the three signing officers of the Association.

ARTICLE 39 Fiscal Year

- 39.1 The fiscal year shall run from May 1st to April 30th.

ARTICLE 40 Mediation

- 40.1 All disputes and conflicts, of an interpersonal nature between Executives and/or Directors must seek mediation from the Advocacy Centre of the Concordia Student Union or the Dean of Students Office. The Board of Directors must be notified of all ongoing mediation between Officers.

ARTICLE 41 Honorarium

- 41.1 Honorarium may only be awarded to members of the Executive and the Board within a General Assembly with quorum.

ARTICLE 42 Dissolution of the Association

- 42.1 The PSSA shall be dissolved by referendum if a simple majority of the entire membership votes for an explicitly stated question that defines the dissolution of the Association.

- 42.2 In the wake of dissolution, ownership of all documents, funds and assets will be transferred to an organization that represents political science students at Concordia University.

ARTICLE 43 Fee Levy

- 43.1 The creation and any changes to the Fee Levy of the association shall be sent to Referendum for adoption by the membership. The quorum for such a Referendum shall be one hundred and sixty (160) or ten percent (10%) of the membership, whichever is higher.

ARTICLE 44 Arts & Science Federation of Associations

- 44.1 The Association shall be a Member Association of the Arts and Science Federation of Associations (ASFA). Any duly passed resolutions or changes in rules and regulations of ASFA shall be ratified by the Board of Directors. Where there are inconsistencies with ASFA's Bylaws, Standing Regulations, and Policies, the PSSA's Constitution and Book of Policies shall take effect.