



Society for Students with a Disability

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CONSTITUTION

NAME OF THE SOCIETY

- 1) The name of the Society is the Society for Students with a Disability.

PURPOSES OF THE SOCIETY

- 2) The purposes of the Society are to:
 - a) represent the interests of students with a disability at UVic;
 - b) promote the full and equal participation of students with a disability in all areas of university life;
 - c) raise awareness of the barriers and challenges faces by students with a disability and advocate for their removal;
 - d) prevent, expose, and eliminate institutional discrimination;
 - e) create anti-oppressive spaces where students with a disability can relax, socialize, and share experiences; and
 - f) be a constituency organization as defined by the Constitution and Bylaws of the UVSS.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY

- 3) The Society will strive to achieve the purposes stated in Article 2 by (among other things):
 - a) advocating for students with a disability within the UVic Community and beyond;
 - b) fostering greater awareness of the rights and interests of students with a disability at UVic through public education and information programs and activities;
 - c) organizing or sponsoring events if a social or educational nature for members and others;
 - d) collaborating with other constituency organizations and groups at UVic to achieve shared goals and objectives; and
 - e) supporting anti-oppression and social inclusion of marginalized people with disabilities.

THE SOCIETY'S LOGO

- 4) The Society's logo will be the design shown above and will be used, where appropriate, in all communications or publications of the society.

DISSOLUTION

- 5) On dissolution of the Society, any assets remaining after satisfaction of its debts and liabilities will be transferred to the UVSS and held by it in trust until such time as the Society is reactivated, or a new society is created in its place.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

- 6) The Society will not discriminate against any person on any ground set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the British Columbia Human Rights Code and will strive in all of its activities to promote respect for human rights, equity, and fairness.
- 7) The Society actively encourages the intersectional inclusion of all minorities such as racialized persons, low-income folks, gender non-conforming individuals, queer, and socially marginalized folks as outlined by the anti-discrimination policy.

BYLAWS

BYLAW #1: INTERPRETATION

- 8) In this Constitution and any Bylaws of the Society, the following definitions will apply:
 - a) “Administrative Council” the student member(s) of the SSD elected by SSD membership to oversee and manage the affairs and activities of that group.
 - b) “Campus” means the campus of UVic.
 - c) “GSS” means the University of Victoria Graduate Students Society.
 - d) “Incoming students” means any person who has received an admissions offer from UVic that is currently valid and who has not accepted an admissions offer from another institution.
 - e) “Returning students” means any former fee-paying member of the UVSS or GSS with the intent to return to accredited UVic classes within 18 months of their last semester as a UVSS or GSS member.
 - f) “Self-identify” to describe oneself as belonging to a particular group based on personal understanding or experience. In the context of disability, this term is often used for individuals who consider themselves disabled but may not have a formal diagnosis.
 - g) “Society” means the Society for Students with a Disability.
 - h) “Special resolution” means a resolution adopted by a majority vote of not less than 75% of eligible voters present at a meeting.

- i) “Students with a disability” means any person who self-identifies as someone with a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment that in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in the social and academic life of UVic on an equal basis with others.
- j) “UVic” means the University of Victoria.
- k) “UVic Community” means students, faculty, and staff of UVic and includes any constituency or other groups on campus.
- l) “UVSS” means the University of Victoria Students Society.
- m) For greater certainty, definitions including other grammatical forms of the same words and those words will be given a corresponding meaning.
- n) In accordance with the Society's gender-neutral practice, the pronoun ‘they’ shall be used in place of he or she in these Bylaws.

BYLAW #2: MEMBERSHIP

- 9) Membership in the Society will consist of Full Members and Associate Members.
- 10) Full Members of the Society include anyone who:
 - a) is a member in good standing of the UVSS or GSS at UVic,
 - b) and self-identifies as a person with a disability.
- 11) Associate Members include anyone who:
 - a) is an alumni member of the Society; or
 - b) is an incoming student who identifies as a student with a disability; or
 - c) is a returning student who identifies as a student with a disability; or
 - d) is a caregiver, care aid, or support worker to a UVic student (incoming or returning), community, or alumni with a disability; or
 - e) is a member of the UVic Community and is accepted by the Collective Council of the Society as an Associate Member.

RIGHTS OF FULL MEMBERS

- 12) Full Members of the Society will have the following rights:
 - a) right to be nominated or self-nominate for open Council positions and to hold an Council role if successfully elected into that role;
 - i) UVSS staff are ineligible to be considered full members, regardless of whether they fulfil all other eligibility requirements for full membership.
 - b) to participate in and vote at Annual, Semi-Annual, and Special General Meetings of the Society;

- c) to attend meetings of the Council, other than in-camera sessions, and speak at such meetings;
- d) to become a voting member of Society committees;
- e) to obtain a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws;
- f) to obtain a copy of all Council minutes within 5 business days of requesting minutes, if no formatting accommodations are requested;
- g) to obtain, in a timely manner, a copy of any Council minutes or of the Constitution and Bylaws in alternative formats that are reasonably available;
- h) to have access to the financial records of the Society on giving reasonable notice to the Finance Director;
- i) to receive reasonable accommodations at Society events; and
- j) join in learning opportunities and workshops offered by and for the Society.

RIGHTS OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- 13) Associate Members will have the same rights as Full Members except for the right to vote in Annual, Semi-Annual, and Special General Meetings.
- 14) Associate Members may not be nominated or elected into council roles.

BYLAW #3: MEETINGS

SOCIETY FOR STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY RULES OF ORDER

- 15) Society for Students with a Disability [Rules of Order](#) will apply to any meetings of the Society unless otherwise provided in these bylaws.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS, SEMI-ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS & SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- 16) An Annual General Meeting will be held by the Society each year latest in February.
- 17) The following business will be conducted at the Annual General Meeting:
 - a) elections;
 - b) presentation of reports by members of Council and employees;
 - c) presentation of the annual financial report by the Finance Director or staff;
 - d) such other business as may be specified in an agenda for the meeting approved by the Administrative Council or, subject to other requirements of these bylaws, items may be added to the agenda by a majority vote of Members present at the meeting.
- 18) Notice of the date, time and place of an Annual General Meeting and the business to be conducted will be given to Members at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the meeting by:

- a) email where possible; and
 - b) posting the notice on the SSD's website and on notice boards on campus where possible.
- 19) A Semi-Annual General Meeting will be held by the Society each year latest in October.
- 20) The Following business will be conducted at the Semi-Annual General Meeting:
- a) elections for interim positions held by the individual until next Annual General Meeting;
 - b) presentation of reports by members of Council and employees;
 - c) presentation of financial report by the Finance Director or staff;
 - d) such other business as may be specified in an agenda for the meeting approved by the Administrative Council or, subject to other requirements of these bylaws, items may be added to the agenda by a majority vote of Members present at the meeting.
- 21) Notice of the date, time and place of an Semi-Annual General Meeting and the business to be conducted will be given to Members at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the meeting by:
- a) email where possible; and
 - b) posting the notice on the SSD's website and on notice boards on campus where possible.
- 22) Notice of the date, time and place of a Special General Meeting and the business to be conducted will be given to Members at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the meeting by:
- a) email where possible; and
 - b) posting the notice on the SSD's website and on notice boards on campus where possible.
- 23) Minutes of the meeting will be recorded in such a manner as Council may determine.
- 24) Voting at an Annual, Semi-Annual, or Special General Meeting by written proxy is permitted.
- 25) The quorum for the conduct of business at an Annual, Semi-Annual or Special General Meeting is 8 members present in person or by proxy.
- 26) A Special General Meeting may be called by:
- a) Council; or
 - b) a petition signed by not less than 25 members stating the purpose of the meeting and delivered to Council.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 27) Council will meet at such times as it may determine or, in the absence of established times, on notice from the Operations Director(s) supported by staff.
- a) In the case of a vacant Operations Director(s) position, two Council members may call a meeting to order.
 - b) In situations where urgent Council action is required, the Operations Director(s) may convene an emergency meeting of Council or send an email motion, notwithstanding Articles 28 and 29 outlined below, but subject to the following additional restrictions:
 - i) in email motions there must be no reasonable grounds to doubt the identity of any Council member responding;
 - ii) no proposals to amend the Constitution and Bylaws may be considered or voted upon by Council in an emergency meeting or email motion;
 - iii) neither the adoption nor the amendment of a written policy of Council may be considered or voted upon by Council in an emergency meeting or email motion; and
 - iv) Emergency meetings and email motions of the Council are not considered meetings of Council for the purposes of Article 27 of the Bylaws.
- 28) The times at which Council will meet and the business to be conducted will be posted on the Society's website and in its offices in advance of the meeting.
- 29) Notice of a meeting of Council and the business to be conducted will be given to members of Council at least 3 days in advance of the meeting.
- 30) Minutes of Council meetings will be recorded in such a manner as Council may determine.
- 31) The quorum for the conduct of business at a meeting of Council is $\frac{1}{3}$ of the current active Council membership, rounded up to the nearest integer of filled Council positions.
- 32) Voting at a Council meeting by written proxy is permitted.
- 33) In the case that a resolution must be resolved before the next scheduled Council meeting, the Operations Director(s) may hold an online vote over email or via another approved platform of Council communication.
- a) The email vote must include the motion, a short motivation, and a deadline by which the Council members are expected to vote:
 - i) The deadline by which Council members are expected to vote shall be no sooner than 36 hours after the motion is sent to the Council.

- ii) Deadlines may vary depending on operational need, but will be clearly communicated within the email.
- b) The number of votes received must reach quorum to be deemed valid to pass.
- c) The record of votes will be kept by the Operations Director(s) and shall be provided to a staff member to be shared with Members upon request or Director upon request.
- d) The online motion and the result of the vote shall be included in the minutes of the next Council meeting.

BYLAW #4: COUNCIL

COUNCIL

- 34) The Council of the Society will oversee and manage the affairs and activities of the Society.
- 35) The Council will consist of the following officeholders:
 - a) Operations Director(s);
 - b) Finance Director;
 - c) UVSS Constituency Representative;
 - d) Graduate Students Representative;
 - e) International Student Representative;
 - f) up to eight (8) Directors of Council at Large;
 - g) Outreach Director; and
 - h) Communications Director
- 36) Each member of Council will be entitled to one vote on any business motion. Votes shall be held through the SSD Rules of Order.

TERMS OF OFFICE

- 37) For the positions of Operations Director(s), Finance Director, Outreach Director, Communications Director, Graduate Students Representative, International Student Representative and Director of Council at Large, the term of office will be from the date of their election to the next Annual General Meeting or until they are removed from office or resign, whichever is first.
- 38) Where an office holder is appointed by Council under Article 45, they will hold office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Society or until they are removed from office or resign, whichever is first.

VACANCY OR RESIGNATION

- 39) If, following an Annual General Meeting a position on Council remains vacant or a position subsequently becomes vacant due to the removal or resignation of the incumbent, Council may hold a by-election at a Semi-Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting. By-elections shall be advertised to the membership two weeks in advance.
- 40) If the Operations Director(s) position remains vacant, an interim Operations Director(s) may be appointed by the Council at a Council meeting and may occupy this position for up to a month. A by-election must be called within 30 days.
- 41) A resignation by an office holder will be in writing and is effective on the date it is received by Council or the date specified in the notice of resignation, whichever is later.
- 42) Council members that do not attend three consecutive SSD Council meetings without sending prior regrets may lose their Council membership and Council status.

BYLAW #5: ELECTIONS

ELECTIONS

- 43) Elections for positions on Council will be conducted in accordance with these bylaws.
- 44) For the offices of Operations Director(s), Finance Director, Graduate Student Representative, International Student Representative, UVSS Constituency Representative, Director of the Council at Large, Communications Director, and Outreach Director, an election will be held at each Annual General Meeting of the Society.
 - a) Members elected to fill offices in accordance with Article 44 will take office immediately, with the exception of the office of UVSS Constituency Representative. The member elected as UVSS Constituency Representative will take office at the beginning of the term specified in the UVSS Constitution and Bylaws, unless the position of UVSS Constituency Representative was previously vacant or becomes so in the interim, in either of which cases the member elected as UVSS Constituency Representative will assume the office.
- 45) Elections at an Annual General Meeting will be conducted by a closed ballot. Self-nominations by candidates will be permitted. Election results will be reviewed by two impartial persons (Electoral Officer and Scrutineer, who are nominated during the meeting).

46) Where only one candidate is nominated for a position, they may be elected by acclamation.

BYLAW #6: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL

GENERAL DUTIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

47) The general duties and responsibilities of members of Council include the following:

- a) to be familiar with and adhere to the Constitution and Bylaws;
- b) to attend and participate in meetings of the Council;
- c) to perform the duties and responsibilities of their office, as set out in Article 47 of the Bylaws, diligently and to the best of their ability;
- d) to prepare and present a report at Annual General Meetings describing their activities for the preceding year;
- e) to support and assist in events organized or sponsored by the Society; and
- f) to communicate with Members.
- g) Council members must attend annually a mandatory formal onboarding and training, which will be organized by the Operations Director(s) and supported by staff. Everyone's training and onboarding is completed no later than one month after the AGM or from the time of their appointment to a council position.
- h) Council members must sign and return the Acceptance of Office Forms to the office staff for filing no later than one month after the AGM or from the time of their appointment to a council position.

OFFICE DESCRIPTIONS

48) The following office descriptions will apply to and be implemented by the Society and its office holders:

Operations Director(s)

The Operations Director(s) will be the Chief Administrative Council member of the Society, and, in that capacity, they will:

- a) act as chair at all meetings of the Society unless they delegate that responsibility to someone else, or unless they have resigned, and in the latter case, the Council may appoint one of its members to chair the meeting;
- b) be an ex officio member of all committees of the Society;
- c) represent the interests of and act as the principal spokesperson for the Society within the UVic Community and public at large;

- d) be the Administrative Council member with signing authority for financial and other business of the Society;
- e) be responsible for management and supervision of Society staff; and
- f) coordinate the activities of Council including calling meetings of Council when required; and
- g) be responsible for ensuring client confidentiality such that, in situations which so demand, staff will only share confidential information with the Operations Director(s) unless authorized by the Operations Director(s) to inform others.

Finance Director

The Finance Director will be the Chief Financial Officer and an Administrative Council member of the Society, and, in that capacity, they will:

- a) manage the financial affairs of the Society under the Council and staff's direction;
- b) ensure that the financial records of the Society are maintained in good order;
- c) produce budgets and financial statements for the Society and make them available to Council and Members on request;
- d) provide access to the financial records of the Society to Council and Members on request;
- e) be an Administrative Council member of the Society;
- f) prepare and present an annual financial report to Members at Annual General Meetings; and
- g) comply with all applicable financial policies of the Society and the UVSS in performing their duties.

UVSS Constituency Representative

The UVSS Constituency Representative will be the representative of the Society on the UVSS Council and in that capacity they will:

- a) be a UVSS member in good standing;
- b) perform the duties and responsibilities of a constituency organization representative on the UVSS Council in accordance with Bylaw 8 of the UVSS Constitution and Bylaws;
- c) represent and promote the interests of the Society on the UVSS Council; and
- d) report to the Council on their activities on the UVSS Council and ARC meetings unless they are prevented from doing so for reasons of confidentiality.
- e) The UVSS Constituency Representative will be the representative of the Society on the UVSS Board and an Administrative Council member of the Society.

Graduate Students Representative

The Graduate Students Representative will:

- a) be enrolled in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at UVic;
- b) represent and promote the interests of UVic graduate students with a disability on the Council; and
- c) Be the liaison between UVic graduate students with a disability and the Council.

Director(s) of Council at Large

The Director of Council at Large will:

- a) represent and promote the interests of UVic students with a disability in general on the Council; and
- b) assist the Administrative Council in the performance of their duties.

Outreach Director

The Outreach Director will:

- a) be the liaison between UVic students with a disability and the Council; and
- b) assist the Operations Director(s) in their role as spokesperson for the Society within the UVic Community and public at large.
- c) The Society may ratify the Outreach Director as an Administrative Council member at a Council Meeting with their consent.

Communications Director

The Communications Director shall be responsible for:

- a) taking minutes at all SSD Council meetings, unless otherwise delegated;
- b) ensuring that updated governing documents and Council meeting minutes are available to the regular membership in a timely manner.
- c) The Society may ratify the Communications Director as an Administrative Council member at a Council Meeting with their consent.

International Students Representative

The International Students Representative will:

- a) be enrolled at UVic as an international student;
- b) be the liaison between international students with a disability at UVic and the Council; and
- c) represent and promote the interests of international students with a disability.

BYLAW #7: REMOVAL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

- 49) A member of Council who ceases to be eligible to hold their office will be deemed to have been removed from that office effective on the date they became ineligible.
- 50) A Council member may be removed from office by a special resolution of the Members at an Annual or Special General Meeting where;
- a) a council member may be asked to resign if they have engaged in unacceptable conduct, including but not limited to a violation of the UVSS Safer Spaces Policy, and when all other methods of resolution have been exhausted. Such a request must be made by unanimous agreement of the remaining council members.
 - b) Any discussion regarding potential resignation or removal shall be supported and guided by a neutral facilitator to ensure fairness and impartiality throughout the process.
 - c) The decision to request resignation shall be accompanied by a brief written statement outlining the reason(s) for the proposed action. This statement shall be provided to the council member no fewer than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting at which the matter will be discussed.
 - d) The process for removal or resignation of council members shall not be used to support one party in cases of interpersonal disputes. Bullying, excluding, or harassment of council members for such reasons is prohibited.
 - e) In accordance with Article 42, any council member who fails to attend three (3) consecutive SSD council meetings may lose their council membership and status.
 - f) At the next scheduled council meeting following the third absence, council or staff shall raise the matter for discussion. The council will review the circumstances surrounding the absences and the member's lack of communication, and may, by unanimous decision of those present (with quorum being met), vote to remove the council member from their position.
 - g) Following such decision, council or staff shall formally inform the individual, in writing, of their removal from council and provide the reason(s) for the decision.
 - h) This process is supported by the provisions outlined in the Acceptance of Office forms signed by each council member at the beginning of their term, including re-election, which affirm the responsibilities and expectations of the role, including attendance and participation.

BYLAW #8: PUBLICATIONS OF THE SSD

SOCIETY WEBSITE

51) The Society's website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok pages are official publications of the Society and the Council will determine what constitutes acceptable content for them. Council may delegate this responsibility as it sees fit to SSD Staff.

52) The Society website will contain, at a minimum:

- a) the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society;
- b) the annual report;
- c) a section for notices of upcoming meetings and events; and
- d) a section containing the minutes of meetings of the Society.

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

53) The Society will, whenever possible, provide any information regarding the organization and its activities in alternative formats.

BYLAW #9: STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SSD

COMMITTEES

54) Committees of the Society may be formed or dissolved by the Council at any time.

55) Members of committees are appointed by the Council and serve at the pleasure of the Council.

- a) All committees, working groups, and advisory Councils formed by the SSD Council must include at least one SSD Council member.
- b) The Council may declare a committee to operate in-camera, and any committee may declare itself to operate in-camera at any time.

56) Articles 54 through 55b do not apply to hiring committees, which will operate according to the provisions of the Collective Agreement between the UVSS and United Steelworkers Union and the UVSS Hiring Policy.

BYLAW #10: FINANCES OF THE SSD

EXPENDITURES OF THE SOCIETY'S FUNDS AND SIGNING AUTHORITY

57) No expenditures of the Society's funds may be made without the prior approval of Council unless:

- a) the expenditure is less than \$500; and

- b) the expenditure has been authorized by at least two persons with signing authority, one of whom is an Administrative Council member.
- 58) The authority for expenditures under \$500 without Council's approval under Article 57 may be restricted by Council at any time.
- 59) At least two (2) signatures by signing authorities, one of whom is a Council member, will be required for any financial business conducted by the Society including any contracts involving the expenditure of the Society's funds.
- 60) A monetary amount that covers at least 5000\$ of translation services at the current standard rate is set aside as part of the annual budget for any student with a disability to access any SSD event or SSD Council meeting.

BYLAW #11: AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

- 61) The Constitution and Bylaws of the Society may be amended only by:
 - a) a special resolution adopted at an Annual General Meeting of the Society; or
 - b) a special resolution adopted at a Special General Meeting of the Society called for the purpose of considering the amendment.
- 62) A proposal to amend the Constitution and Bylaws may be initiated by:
 - a) a Member of the Society where the Member delivers to the Council a petition signed by not less than fifteen (15) Members specifying the amendment to be made and indicating their support for the amendment; or
 - b) a resolution of Council.
- 63) Where an amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws is initiated under Article 18, at least fifteen (15) days in advance of any Annual or Special General Meeting to consider the amendment, the Council will:
 - a) provide a copy of the proposed amendment to Members by email where possible; and
 - b) post the amendment on the Society's website and in the offices of the Society and other places on campus.