

THE ELECTION PROCEDURES
OF THE
Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto
Metropolitan

Last Revision: March 2024

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

Table of Contents

Section 1: General Policies	3
Section 2: Chief Returning Officer	4
Section 3: Election Committee	4
Section 4: Eligibility of Candidates	6
Section 5: Nominations	7
Section 6: Candidates Meeting	7
Section 7: Slates/Teams	8
Section 8: Campaigning	8
Section 9: Volunteers	10
Section 10: Electronic and Social Media	10
Section 11: Violations of Election Procedures	12
Section 12: Campaigning and Election Complaints	13
Section 13: Voting Days	15
Section 14: Election Results	15
Section 15: Amendments	16
<i>Appendix A</i>	17

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

Section 1: General Policies

- 1.1 Elections of the Board of Directors shall take place by secret ballot
- 1.2 Each position on the ballot shall list each candidate alphabetically by last name in addition to the option “DECLINE TO VOTE”
 - 1.2.1 In the event that an Executive Director only has one (1) candidate, it will list the options “YES”, “NO” and “DECLINE TO VOTE”.
 - 1.2.2 All Program directors if running uncontested will have to go through a “YES”, “NO” and “DECLINE TO VOTE” ballot.
 - 1.2.2.1 Uncontested for the each program director role shall be calculated by the CRO each election year
- 1.3 All members are entitled to one (1) vote in all USSTM Elections
 - 1.3.1 No member shall be allowed more than one (1) vote
- 1.4 The election procedure shall be completed no later than the second-last Friday of March.
- 1.5 The election procedure shall coincide with the normal practices of the University as established by the Election Procedures Committee.
- 1.6 Any student enrolled in a co-op or study abroad program with a work/study term in the upcoming academic school year may only run for a Program Director position.
- 1.7 Only students from their respective programs may vote for their Program Director; for example, only students in Financial Mathematics may only vote for the Financial Mathematics Director.
- 1.8 No candidate running for a position shall have any support external to Toronto Metropolitan University. Support in this context includes but is not limited to: donations, monetary support, and human resources
- 1.9 The Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan will organize a central website, forum or communication platform where all candidates will be invited to post a short biography

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 1.9.1 The Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan will determine no less than one (1) and no more than three (3) questions that all candidates will have the opportunity to answer, and their answers will be posted on said communication platform
- 1.10 The Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan will host an Executive Debate or discussion forum to all executive candidates. This sessions may happen in person, online or both.

Section 2: Chief Returning Officer

- 2.1 Abbreviated as “CRO” – shall be selected by the Executives and ratified by the Board of Directors from the outside of the Membership to oversee the conduct of the election for the incoming Board of Directors
- 2.2 The CRO shall chair the election committee and shall be responsible for all electoral procedures and organization
- 2.3 The CRO shall verify eligibility of all candidates as outlined in the Constitution, By-Laws and Election Procedures.

Section 3: Election Committee

- 3.1 The elections committee is an independent, volunteer body, made up of the CRO, and two non-candidates USSTM members chosen by the CRO
- 3.2 Decisions that can be brought before the Election Committee can include:
 - 3.2.1 Formal decisions involving disqualification and/or demerit points that can be appealed to the Election Committee by a candidate in the election.
- 3.3 Appeals shall be considered in the following manner:
 - 3.3.1 Prompted by a formal, written appeal from the candidate to the CRO requesting an appeal of the decision made by the CRO, a meeting of the Election Committee will be called;
 - 3.3.2 The candidate must state the reason why they believe an

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

appeal is warranted and why they believe the original decision should be overturned.

3.3.2.1 The Election Committee will review the request for an appeal and determine if it is eligible for consideration.

3.3.2.2 If the Election Committee determines the appeal is eligible for consideration, they will convene a meeting within 72 hours of the appeal request. At this meeting, the candidate will have the opportunity to address the committee, the committee may at its discretion invite other individuals to the meeting

3.3.3 Candidates shall NOT attempt to contact members of the Election Committee directly

3.3.4 At the invitation of the CRO of the Election Committee, anyone with relevant information can make a presentation

3.3.5 If a party fails to appear before the committee, they forfeit their right to appear before the committee again on that matter

3.4 The election committee shall make and communicate a decision in the following manner:

3.4.1 The motion before the Committee will be to overturn the CRO's decision, on which members will vote either yes (to overturn) or no (to uphold the decision);

3.4.2 Following the meeting, the EC shall render a decision within 24 hours; and,

3.4.3 Once the EC makes a decision, it will be final and not open to be appealed again. The EC will ensure detailed reasons are given when decisions are made.

Section 4: Eligibility of Candidates

Eligible candidates must be full-time undergraduate science students enrolled within the Faculty of Science at Toronto Metropolitan University, and must be in clear academic standing as defined by the University.

4.1 Presidential Candidates

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

4.1.1 Nominees for the President must have no less than one full year of experience on the USSTM Board of Directors by the time they take office.

4.1.1.1 A Member without the required experience seeks to run for President, they must request an exception meeting with the Board of Directors. At the exception meeting, the nominee shall present their qualifications and grounds for an exception. The Board will vote on the exception, passed by a simple majority; the minutes of this meeting must be made public.

4.1.1.2 Members which run as Co-presidents must request an exception meeting with the Board of Directors. At the exception meeting, the nominee shall present their qualifications and grounds for an exception. The Board will vote on the exception, passed by a simple majority.

4.1.2 Presidential candidates must be planning on returning to full time studies for the year they would be in office. They also cannot be on internship or co-op during the Fall or Winter semester of their year in office

4.2 Vice-Presidential Candidates

4.2.1 Nominees for the positions of Vice-President Operations, Vice- President Finance, Vice-President Communications, Vice- President Events, Vice-President Equity and Vice-President External must be from the Membership.

4.2.2 Vice-Presidential candidates must be planning on returning to full time studies for the year they would be in office. They also cannot be on internship or co-op during the Fall or Winter semester of their year in office.

4.3 Director Candidates

4.3.1 Nominees for the Program Directors must have completed two academic semesters in the department they are

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

nominated to represent by their position's anticipated start date.

Section 5: Nominations

- 5.1 Nominations for positions shall only be from the Membership
- 5.2 Each nomination should list the full name and student number of the nominator, along with the full name of the candidate and the position they are being nominated for.
- 5.3 Self-nominations shall be allowed from the Membership.
- 5.4 Notice for nominations shall be given no later than the first week of March and nominations shall be open for at least one (1) week; campaigning shall commence shortly after the closing of nominations and shall be open for at least five (5) days. Voting days may overlap with the campaign period of five (5) days and must open for at least two (2) days.
- 5.5 The CRO shall coordinate nominations such that all completed nomination forms are received either in person or via email.
- 5.6 Nominees shall be confirmed as eligible candidates when they have met the required threshold of nominations:
 - 5.6.1 For Executive positions, the nominee must be backed by fifty (50) nominators to become an eligible candidate; not including themselves if self-nominated
 - 5.6.1.1 For Executive positions with co-candidates, each member must be backed by fifty (50) nominators to become an eligible candidate; not including themselves if self-nominated. In addition there can be a maximum of twenty (20) common signatures between the members.
 - 5.6.2 For Department Director positions
 - 5.6.2.1 For all programs with enrollment numbers less than or equal to 250 students must be backed by fifteen (15) nominators to become an eligible candidate; not including themselves if self-nominated.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

5.6.2.2 For all programs with enrollment numbers between 250 and 500 students must be backed by twenty (20) nominators to become an eligible candidate; not including themselves if self-nominated.

5.6.2.3 For all programs with enrollment numbers greater than 500 students must be backed by thirty (30) nominators to become an eligible candidate; not including themselves if self-nominated.

5.7 Confirmed candidates shall only run for one (1) position. The candidate shall confirm which position they shall run for with the CRO by the nomination deadline

Section 6: Candidates Meeting

6.1 All candidates or an authorized representative of each candidate, must attend the Candidates Meeting in its entirety, or arrange to meet with the CRO in person within twenty-four (24) hours of the meeting.

6.2 For an authorized representative to be valid, they must possess a signed statement from the nominee that the representative has the authority to act on their behalf for the duration of the meeting.

6.2.1 If a candidate sends someone on their behalf, that representative is responsible for getting all of the information to the candidate. The candidate cannot say that because they missed the meeting, they did not know a rule or hear a piece of information

6.3 Any candidate who fails to attend or send an authorized representative to the Candidates Meeting, or fails to meet with the CRO, shall be disqualified from the election.

6.4 The topics at the Candidates Meeting shall include, but is not limited to:

6.4.1 The elections schedule and process established in the Elections Procedures; and,

6.4.2 The roles and duties of each Board of Director position.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 6.5 All candidates are responsible for understanding and abiding by all procedures and rules as discussed at the Candidates meeting

Section 7: Slates/Teams

- 7.1 No slates, teams or parties may be formed for the purpose of campaigning in the Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan elections. This applies to all positions that are up for elections
- 7.2 No individuals running in the election may informally form a slate, team or party.

Section 8: Campaigning

- 8.1 Campaigning may only be at the time and date specified by the CRO
- 8.2 Campaigns shall be paperless. This means that there shall be NO printed posters allowed in support of a candidate running for a position. Banners shall be excluded from this rule but must be approved by the CRO.
- 8.2.1 The USSTM may choose to have designated poster location(s), so that the membership has more opportunities to learn about each candidate. While still cutting down on paper waste.
- 8.2.2 In this case, candidates may email their poster to the CRO, the USSTM will cover the printing cost of two (2) posters per candidate, and the CRO will be responsible for putting up all posters in the designated location(s).
- 8.3 Candidates may spend a maximum of fifty (\$50) dollars of their own finances for all campaign purposes, which may include but is not limited to: content creation, non-paper give-aways, etc. Reimbursement is up to the Board of Directors every year.
- 8.3.1 All resources that are used in the election, even if these resources were originally acquired for other purposes, will be considered in this calculation. This includes resources from other elections.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 8.4 All non-traditional campaigning not mentioned herein must be approved by the CRO.
- 8.5 Any current member of the Board of Directors, committee member, chair, appointed position, and/or volunteer who decides to run for an elected position shall disassociate from all areas of their position relating to the Elections from the commencement of the nomination period.
- 8.6 It is the responsibility of the candidates that all campaign materials and/or advertisements conform to all policies and regulations of USSTM, the University, and with all municipal, provincial, and federal laws.
- 8.7 Restrictions regulating campaigning, that are unique to the following, shall be followed. It is the responsibility of the candidates to familiarize themselves with the different rules that govern each of the mentioned items:
 - 8.7.1 No campaigning of any form is permitted in the USSTM operated Science Lounge (KHE223), or any area that can be perceived to be under the jurisdiction of the USSTM, unless otherwise stated by the CRO;
 - 8.7.2 Campaigning within a classroom is forbidden without the expressed permission of its presiding faculty member(s). To campaign in a classroom, a candidate must obtain consent from the professor/lecturer before the start of the class; and,
 - 8.7.3 Campaigning is not allowed in the Library or within computer labs.
- 8.8 Candidates are not entitled to use in the campaign, any service or monies, conferred onto them by virtue of holding any position in any campus organization unless such services would still be available to them otherwise. This includes, but is not limited to, office supplies, equipment, advertising space, listservs, and staff.
- 8.9 Student clubs and course unions may, at their own discretion, endorse or support a candidate so long as they abide by the rules mentioned herein.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 8.9.1 All endorsements are the candidate's responsibility. If rules are broken, that error falls on the candidate.
- 8.10 No candidate shall be permitted to use either the USSTM logo, or the Toronto Metropolitan University logo/crest on their campaign material. Non-adherence will result in election demerit points, or disqualification; determined at the discretion of the Elections Committee

Section 9: Volunteers

- 9.1 Candidates are allowed to have volunteers assisting them during their campaigning, as long as they are from Toronto Metropolitan University
- 9.2 All volunteers must comply with the Election Procedures of will earn demerit points for their candidate
- 9.3 Misconduct of volunteers may not only have repercussions for the individuals involved, but may also result in demerit points, sanctions or disqualification for the candidate represented

Section 10: Electronic and Social Media

Electronic and social media may be used for campaigning as long as no campaigning is done through means of sending mass electronic mail through pre-existing lists. This is to ensure that mass, unwanted communications are not received by those who may not want to receive this information.

- 10.1 Each candidate must send the CRO a list of the social media accounts that will be used. The platforms allowed are Email, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. The CRO must be added as a "friend" or equivalent where applicable to these platforms during the campaign timeframe.
- 10.2 Online content shall have no slander and must abide by University policy on non-academic misconduct. Candidates cannot buy advertisements, followers, likes, shares, views, or comments.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 10.3 Candidates are responsible for any and all dynamic material posted online and will be held responsible should the material contravene these procedures.
- 10.4 Email - Candidates may campaign through email if they have obtained a constituent's consent to email them about USSTM election related information. Constituents that signed up must have the option to opt out of the listserv at any point.
- 10.5 YouTube – Videos must add USSTMVOTES(yy) to the title and search tags. Videos must follow all the guidelines and rules outlined herein.
- 10.6 Facebook – Candidates may use their own private Facebook profiles to post campaign content. They will also be allowed to set up one (1) campaign Facebook page if desired; however, they must make the CRO an administrator of this page.
- 10.7 X – If used, private accounts must be set to public during the campaign period and each content post must hashtag #USSTMVOTES(yy). Twitter posts (tweets) do not constitute electronic mail as “followers” choose to follow your posts; however direct messages sent to followers concerning the campaign are considered a violation of the electronic emailing rule
- 10.8 Instagram – If used, private accounts must be set to public during the campaign period and each content post must hashtag #USSTMVOTES(yy). Campaign accounts may be created and must be set to the public.
- 10.9 Tiktok – If used, private accounts must be set to public during the campaign period. Campaign accounts may be created and must be set to public.
- 10.10 Discord – If used, CRO must be added to the server before publishing campaign material. If possible, please post to an isolated “Elections” Channel.

Section 11: Violations of Election Procedures

- 11.1 The CRO shall have the sole authority to administer the provisions of the Election Procedures.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 11.2 The CRO reserves the right to make rulings on issues and events not otherwise covered in these guidelines, or to add such rulings to supplement existing sections.
- 11.3 Allegations of violations of the Election Procedures or Candidate Guidelines shall be submitted to the CRO in writing. Such allegations must be made within forty-eight (48) hours after the incident occurred.
- 11.4 The CRO may lay charges of violations of campaign rules at their own initiative.
- 11.5 The CRO shall render a decision within forty-eight (48) hours in writing to the candidate(s) in question and the complainant, unless the complaint is time sensitive, in which case the CRO shall render a decision within one (1) business day. A complaint is deemed time-sensitive when the activity outlined in the complaint are ongoing. All rulings of the CRO shall be done in a fair and consistent manner.
- 11.6 It is the responsibility of the candidate to ascertain their position with respect to decisions made by the CRO regarding alleged violations committed by the candidate.
- 11.7 Where the CRO find there has been a violation of the Election Procedures, the CRO must tell the Board of Directors the details of the violation immediately.
- 11.8 Regarding penalties for violations the CRO may:
 - 11.8.1 Assign a demerit point penalty;
 - 11.8.2 Assign multiple penalties where the violation encompasses more than one offence; and,
 - 11.8.3 Disqualify the candidate from candidacy
- 11.9 Violations of the following nature will result in an automatic disqualification of a candidate
 - 11.9.1 Anyone improperly declared an eligible candidate;
 - 11.9.2 Failure to attend the Candidates Meeting;
 - 11.9.3 Any candidate spending over the maximum spending limit as outlined in the Elections Procedures;
 - 11.9.4 Intentional misrepresentation of campaign expenditures;

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 11.9.5 Blatant discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, gender, age or mental or physical disability against another candidate. This includes but is not limited to: sexism, homophobia/queerphobia, transphobia, islamophobia, anti- Semitism, xenophobia, racism, ableism, and classism.
- 11.9.6 A candidate accruing one-hundred (100%) per cent or greater of their allowable five (5) demerit points limit is disqualified.
- 11.10 In the event a candidate with the most votes in any election is disqualified, the candidate with the second-most votes will be declared the successful candidate.
- 11.11 If a candidate is disqualified and they were the only candidate for that position, their position will be appointed by the new USSTM Board the following year by a 2/3 majority vote.
- 11.12 Candidates can be found in violation of the election procedures until the day they take office. The CRO can still assign demerit points after the announcement of the election results if new information comes to light. If receiving these demerit points mean a candidate has more than five (5), they are disqualified and the runner-up will get the position.
 - 11.12.1 Candidates cannot be disqualified after they take office

Section 12: Campaigning and Election Complaints

It is within the rights of all candidates and USSTM members to file complaints for perceived violations to the Elections Procedures.

- 12.1 All election related complaints regarding the conduct of another candidate or the person acting on behalf of a candidate must be filed formally, in writing format to the CRO. Once received, the CRO will conduct an investigation and make a ruling regarding the matter
- 12.2 Decisions impacting all candidates will be posted publicly, while decisions only impacting the individual making an inquiry will not.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

- 12.3 If a candidate is unsatisfied with a formal decision involving disqualification and/or demerit points, this can be appealed to the Elections Committee.

12.4 Demerit Point System

- 12.4.1 All candidates are afforded a maximum of five (5) demerit points, taking into consideration good faith errors.

12.4.1.1 All parties participating in this election, whether as candidates or volunteers are expected to be familiar with the Election Procedures.

12.4.1.2 Infraction by either candidates or volunteers will be dealt with equal consequence. An infraction by a volunteer or representative could result in demerit points or disqualification of all candidates represented by that person.

- 12.4.2 All candidates and their representatives are strongly cautioned against committing any of the following as these will result in immediate disqualification:

12.4.2.1 Harassment of candidates, USSTM members, volunteers, or any other community member.

12.4.2.2 Alleged misconduct should not and cannot be dealt with by the candidate or representative. Instead, complaints should be immediately directed to the CRO, or, depending on the misconduct, to Campus Security or Police.

12.4.2.3 Making threats to candidate, or intimidating voters.

12.4.2.4 Racist, sexist, homophobic or offensive language.

12.4.2.5 Libel, slander, and gross misrepresentation of other candidates. This does not bar a candidate from voicing an opinion on a matter, however matter represented as substantive or factual must have a basis in fact and must be in accordance with the general spirit of the code of conduct

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

12.4.2.6 Any action not deemed ethical, just, and/or democratic.

12.4.3 Candidates are strongly encouraged to engage their campaigning in a clean, positive and good faith manner. Demerit points will be issues at the discretion of the CRO with consideration to severity and frequency of infractions upon their investigation and verification. Candidates are encouraged to contact the CRO about a practice they are unsure about beforehand.

12.4.4 Examples of Permissible and Non-Permissible campaigning practices are outlined in Appendix A

12.4.5 In any situation where two members run for co-ownership of a role, the members will still have a combined demerit pool of 5. Violations committed by either member can result in disqualification for both parties.

Section 13: Voting Days

13.1 Online voting will take place during the allotted timeframe. Campaigning can occur on voting days, but candidates and their representatives may not campaign in Kerr Hall East in the area immediately in front, and on the walls immediately to the left and to the right of the USSTM operated Science Lounge (KHE223) door.

13.2 Candidates shall not watch any individual vote.

13.3 Candidates may vote for themselves.

Section 14: Election Results

14.1 The ballots shall be tallied by the CRO.

14.2 Ballot totalling shall begin once polls close on the last day during the allotted timeframe.

14.3 Candidates and Elections Committee members shall be emailed the results first. The results will be published later that same day via electronic and social media.

14.4 The results shall be posted in printed form within the USSTM operated Science Lounge (KHE223) no later than one (1) business day after the confirmation of the results.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

Section 15: Amendments

- 15.1 Amendments to these election procedures shall require a two thirds (2/3) majority vote at a USSTM Board Meeting.
- 15.2 Any motion for amendment may be made by the USSTM Board or the General Membership by a typed motion submitted no later than seven (7) days prior to a USSTM Board Meeting.

Election Procedures

Undergraduate Science Society of Toronto Metropolitan

Appendix A

Examples of Permissible and Non-Permissible Campaign Practices

Speaking to students	Interrupting other candidates while they are speaking to students.
Asking questions to the CRO.	Asking questions about the election to the Executive or Board of Directors.
Removing, or replacing your own approved election materials	Removing, modifying or replacing another candidate's approved election materials
Respectfully making editorial comments or giving opinions about issues and events, positions and actions of other candidates	Accusing candidates of actions or views that are not proven; slandering the character of other candidates, members of the Board of Directors, or USSTM volunteers
Beginning to campaign immediately upon the start of the campaign period	Campaigning prior to the commencement of the campaign period
Persuading members for their vote	Remunerating someone for their vote
Creative campaigning	Spending more than the permitted amount; involving alcohol in your campaign
Responding to emails sent regarding your campaign	Sending out unsolicited emails or electronic messages of any type or through any medium
Asserting your rights as a candidate and filing complaints as necessary	Repeated, and frivolous complaints against another candidate
Campaigning during voting	Campaigning within the restricted vicinities (in the USSTM operated Science Lounge (KHE223) as well as in Kerr Hall East in the area immediately in front, and on the walls immediately to the left and right of the KHE223 door)
Speaking to the media about your campaign	Bringing unverified election complaints to the media