

Elections Policy

1) Elections

- a. All elected members of the Law Students Association (the Association) Executive shall assume office on the first day of May for a period ending on the last day of April of the following year.
- b. The positions of Indigenous Law Students' Association Representative, 1L Representative(s) and VP of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) shall be elected using specific procedures described under section 11.
- c. Other elected student positions within the Faculty of Law may be included within the elections process outlined within this policy. This may include, but is not limited to, positions on any Law Faculty Council Committees.

2) Chief Electoral Officer

- a. The Chief Electoral Officer of the LSA shall be the President of the LSA.
- b. In the event where the President of the LSA is unable to fulfill the role of Chief Electoral Officer, the Executive may appoint a law student in their last year of the JD program to fulfill this role via an Executive Resolution.

3) Duties of the Chief Electoral Officer

- a. The Chief Electoral Officer shall administer the election in accordance with this policy, including the;
 - i. setting of nomination deadlines;
 - ii. setting of the campaign period and voting period;
 - iii. regulation of campaigning;
 - iv. processing of nominations;
 - v. administration of balloting;
 - vi. counting of the ballots; and
 - vii. declaration of the elected candidate(s).

- b. The Chief Electoral Officer shall be responsible for enforcing the regulations concerning campaigning and may impose sanctions on any person they deem appropriate for violating campaigning regulations as per this policy.
 - i. Sanctions imposed by the Chief Electoral Officer shall be in accordance with those procedures described in Section 10.
 - c. The Chief Electoral Officer shall be responsible for making the regulations for the election publicly accessible for the candidates and the electorate.
 - d. The Chief Electoral Officer may appoint such persons not standing for election as they shall deem necessary to assist in the administration of an election.
- 5) Scheduling of Annual Elections
- a. Elections shall be held annually in March and shall be completed no later than April 1st of each year.
 - b. The Chief Electoral Officer shall select a campaign period that permits for at least 72 hours of campaigning during weekdays.
 - c. The Chief Electoral Officer shall select a voting period that permits at least 48 hours of voting.
 - d. The Chief Electoral Officer shall shall give at least seven (7) days' notice of the campaign and voting periods to the members by posting a notice in a conspicuous place in the Law Centre and sending an electronic notice via Email.
 - e. The LSA Executive shall be notified at least 21 days in advance of the proposed campaign and voting periods date, and may, by Executive Resolution, fix alternative dates.
- 6) Electorate
- a. Each member of the LSA shall be entitled to cast one vote for each position being elected. However, the Chief Electoral Officer shall not vote in the election.
- 7) Candidacy
- a. To be eligible for an elected position or an appointed position, an individual must be a student enrolled in the Faculty of Law at the University of Alberta.
- 8) Nominations

- a. Each candidate that intends to run for the election shall indicate their interest by notifying the Chief Electoral Officer in writing.
 - i. The notification shall include the candidate's name, year of study, and intended position.
 - b. The Chief Electoral Officer shall set a date and time by which nominations must be submitted. The date on which the election is announced by the Chief Executive Officer shall be at least 5 business days before nominations are due.
- 9) Conduct during campaign and voting period
- a. The Chief Electoral Officer shall notify, in writing, all candidates within the election of rules and obligations governing the election.
 - b. The Chief Electoral Officer shall mandate, prohibit, or otherwise regulate during the campaign period;
 - i. The period of time during which campaigning is permissible;
 - ii. Speeches delivered by candidates;
 - iii. The location, format, and design of campaign materials and advertisements; and
 - iv. Any other material related to the process of campaigning.
 - c. The Chief Electoral Officer shall require that no campaigning of any kind occurs during the voting period.
- 10) Sanctions
- a. Any candidate or party who fails to comply with Section 9 or with any regulation made thereunder shall be notified of their improper conduct by the Chief Electoral Officer and, if compliance remains an issue, or if deemed necessary by the Chief Electoral Officer, the candidate may be disqualified from the election. However, disqualification is an option of last resort.
 - b. If a candidate is disqualified before the voting period begins, the Chief Electoral Officer shall remove the disqualified candidate's name from the ballot.
 - c. If a candidate is disqualified after the voting period begins, the Chief Electoral Officer shall;

- i. Not remove the candidate's name from the ballot; and
- ii. Immediately advertise that the candidate has been disqualified, explaining why the candidate has been disqualified and that any votes for that candidate shall not be counted within the election process.

11) Election of Candidate

- a. The Chief Elections Officer shall use an approach or software deemed secure and reasonable to administer the election and collect the votes.
- b. Each ballot shall include the name of the candidate, as well as the option to vote for none of the candidates for that position, or to abstain from voting entirely. Each ballot shall allow voters to rank candidates from highest to lowest choice.
- c. Within 5 business days of the closing of the polls, the Chief Electoral Officer shall distribute to the electorate a list containing the names of the winning candidate.
 - i. If a member of the electorate wishes to receive a list containing the names of each candidate and the number of votes received by each, they may contact the Chief Electoral Officer within 48 hours of the announcement of the winning candidates.
- d. A candidate who received the largest proportion of votes cast shall be declared elected.
- e. For any position where the largest proportion of votes is for the option of none of the candidates, no candidate shall be declared elected, and another election shall be held pursuant to this policy.
- f. In the event that there is a tie for first place between two or more candidates, the ballots shall be inspected by the outgoing Executive to confirm whether a tie has occurred. If after the inspection there is still a tie, the Chief Electoral Officer shall place pieces of paper with the candidates' names on them in a box, shake the box, and then randomly withdraw one of the names. Whichever candidate's name is withdrawn from the box is declared the winner.
- g. Due to the timing of enrolment for 1L Students, the 1L Representative positions shall be elected with in a separate election occurring before the end of September. This election shall reflect the protocol set for a general election.
- h. Due to the unique responsibilities of the VP JEDI, the position shall be elected within a separate process.

- i. The President and the current VP JEDI of the Association shall work with student groups made up of equity-deserving communities (including, but not limited to ILSA, FACL, BLSA, MLSA, OutLaw and WLF) to facilitate an interview process for prospective candidates.
 - ii. The participating student groups shall appoint a member to be involved in this process.
 - iii. The President, current VP JEDI, and the appointed members shall elect the current VP JEDI for a maximum one-year term by consensus.
 - iv. The current VP JEDI shall only be involved in the process outlined in sections 11.i.i-11.i.iii if they do not intend to run for the VP JEDI position again.
 - j. Due to the unique position of the Indigenous Law Students' Association Representative, the position shall be elected within a separate process.
 - i. The Indigenous Law Students' Association shall select an Indigenous Law Students' Association Representative from their own membership for a maximum one year term.
- 11) Results
- a. The Chief Electoral Officer shall publicize the results of the election via posting in the Law Centre, sharing on Association Social Media pages, and/or disseminating via email after the election is concluded.
- 12) Post-Election Vacancies
- a. If any position remains unfilled after an election, the Chief Electoral Officer shall solicit the electorate for applications for that position.
 - b. If one eligible elector applies for that position, the Chief Electoral Officer may appoint that person to the position or may require that person stand for election against the option of electing no candidate.
 - c. If more than one eligible elector shall apply for that position, the Chief Electoral Officer shall conduct a by-election, pursuant to the provisions of this policy, for that position.
- 13) By-elections

- a. If a position on the current or succeeding Executive becomes vacant, the Executive can determine whether a by-election is held to fill such position.
- b. The by-election and any associated campaign activities shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of this policy.
- b. The by-election may occur at the same time as the 1L Representative election.

14) Appeal for Electoral Process

- a. If a question arises on the administration of an election, and such question is not answered by this policy, the Chief Electoral Officer has the discretion to make a decision.
- b. A Chief Electoral Officer's decision to disqualify a candidate may be appealed by that candidate. This appeal shall be made to the Association's current Executive.
- c. An appeal may be sought by a candidate during the campaign period or voting period via the submission of a written request, setting out the particulars, to the Executive as a whole.
 - i. Upon receipt of such a request, the Executive shall call a special meeting of the Executive within 24 hours where they shall determine whether the disqualification should be reversed and if the voting period should be altered as a response.
 - ii. A written response shall be provided to the requesting party by the Executive, and shall include a written explanation of the Executive's decision.

15) Policy Review Timeline

- a. This policy shall be reviewed within the 2024-2025 academic year.

Policy approved during the June 19, 2023 LSA Executive Meeting via Executive Resolution

Policy amended during the March 6, 2024 LSA Executive Meeting via Executive Resolution