



THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENTS' COLLECTIVE

1.0 PURPOSE:

The Women's Studies Students' Collective aims to represent the diverse interests and issues of the students within the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research. The Collective seeks to provide venues for mentorship, activism and social networking both in the department, on the University of Western Ontario campus and within the greater London community. Our goal is to promote the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research as we educate others about the need for feminism within the Western community, and surrounding communities at large. The Collective will actively advocate for inclusion of intersectional perspectives within the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research, and within the Collective and its related projects. The Women's Studies Students' Collective will devote itself to working in the best interest of its students and will be an active agent of social change.

2.0 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

- 2.1 'Ad Hoc':** A committee formed temporarily for the purpose of fulfilling a specified goal or event.
- 2.2 'AHSC':** Arts and Humanities Students' Collective
- 2.3 'Collective':** Refers specifically to the Women's Studies Students' Collective unless otherwise specified.
- 2.4 'DWSFR':** Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research
- 2.5 'Faculty Advisor':** A Professor appointed by the Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research who acts as guidance and resource to the Collective. In extenuating circumstances this person has the right to intervene in Collective's actions if the latter are considered damaging to Collective, the department or the student body.
- 2.6 'Majority Vote':** More than half of the entire group.
- 2.7 'Member':** Refers to the Executive members of the Collective listed in 4.1 unless specified.
- 2.8 'Quorum':** The minimum number of bodies that must be present to hold a conclusive voting meeting. This Collective requires 50% +1.
- 2.9 'SSSC':** Social Science Students' Collective
- 2.10 'WSFR':** Women's Studies and Feminist Research
- 2.11 'WSFR module':** Refers to a Specialization, Major or Minor recognized as within the DWSFR. This term also makes reference to students in a graduate program in the DWSFR.
- 2.12 'WSSC':** Women's Studies Collective

3.0 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

3.1 The jurisdiction of the WSSC shall extend over all students registered in a module within the DWSFR.

3.2 The power and jurisdiction of the WSSC are to operate within the boundaries of policy held by the DWSFR. To ensure this, a Faculty Advisor from within the department will be assigned to mentor the Collective.

3.3 No member may sign a binding financial contract, or agree to any transaction under the name of the Collective unless they have the permission of the two (2) signing authorities (President and Vice President) or consent of the Faculty Advisor if needed. Any member who signs a contract without the permission of the signing authorities becomes personally responsible (financially and otherwise) for that contract or transaction.

3.4 No Collective and or member shall engage in a contract that assumes forty percent (or more) of the Collective's budget for the term of the present Collective.

3.5 In order for the Collective to assume a contract, consultation with the Faculty Advisor must take place, followed by a majority vote to accept the contract.

3.6 No member shall use Women's Studies Students' Collective funds for any purpose outside the scope of Collective business.

3.7 A member not working toward the greater good of the Collective may be asked to justify actions to Collective.

3.8 No Collective and or member may commit to a contract that exceeds the term of the present Collective, unless specified by the Faculty Advisor.

3.9 Any member who forfeits her or his position on the WSSC must do so by means of a signed declaration addressed to the President. The vacated position shall be filled in accordance with the same procedures as outlined in the criteria for appointments not filled in the fall (see section 9)

4.1 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 *The Executive Collective:*

All members within the Executive Committee are equal voting members but the President(s) have preferential voting based on the Collective's wellbeing. Each member holds one vote. All members are elected into position by the students in accordance with WSSC nomination and/or election policies with the exclusion of the SSSC representatives (2) and AHSC representative (1). Their titles, in order of succession, shall be:

- a. President
- b. Vice-President
- c. Treasurer
- d. Communication Executive
- e. Secretary
- f. Social Executive
- g. Tulips Editor
- h. First-Year representative (minimum 1 per first-year class/section)
- i. Second-Year representative (2)
- j. Third-Year representative (2)

- k. Fourth-Year representative (2)
- l. Grad representative (2)
- m. Mature Student representative (1)
- n. Member-at-Large (2)
- o. SSSC representative (2)
- p. AHSC representative (1)

4.2 Collective members will operate in accordance with the specifications of their position as outlined in Appendix A

4.3 After fall applications the Collective shall internally elect a Curriculum representative, a CRO (Chief Returning Officer) and executives to sit on or attend meetings of other groups of interest to the Collective, for example the services operating under the Peer Support Network should the presence of the WSSC be requested. Such groups of interest will be contacted at the discretion of the President, alerting them to the possibility of WSSC involvement/collaboration. Members of the Executive will offer themselves for the positions which then must be accepted by the Collective.

4.4 Based on the discretion of the President and Faculty Advisor the number of members can exceed what is specified in 4.1.

5.00 MEETINGS

5.1 The WSSC shall meet bi-weekly from the beginning of classes in September until the beginning of the final exam period in April, excluding university holidays, December Break, Reading Week, exam periods, and extraneous circumstances.

5.2 Meeting will be set by the Secretary after consultation with the schedule of the Collective members.

5.3 In the event of an emergency meeting, twenty-four hour notice will be given. These meetings must be run by the President or the Vice-President. If quorum is not reached the Collective will continue with the meeting and, if time does not allow for electronic vote, the Faculty Advisor must give approval of the business in question.

5.4 If quorum is not achieved business can still be discussed but put to electronic vote post-meeting for ratification by majority.

5.5 If any member must be absent from the meeting, they must notify the Secretary via the Collective email twenty four hours prior to the meeting.

5.6 Executive Collective members must attend every meeting. Three strike rule will be implemented for unexcused absences and final decision will be voted on by the Collective.

5.7 Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all WSSC meetings, failing that the President does not provide alternative effective means of structuring meetings.

5.8 The President will act as Chair for Collective meetings.

6.00 NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

6.1 Principles:

The purpose and spirit of these nomination guidelines are:

- a. to ensure fairness and democracy;
- b. to provide a manner of appointment that is efficient, effective, impartial and confidential;
- c. to allow any WSFR student to be an applicant, regardless of financial status;
- d. to protect the reputation of the WSSC on campus and elsewhere.
- e. to ensure a representative Collective that reflects, as much as possible its constituents in WSFR.

6.2 Eligibility to Apply for an Executive Committee Position:

6.2.1 With the exception of First-Year reps, a candidate must be a student who is currently registered in a module within DWSFR

6.2.2 Candidates are expected to remain a student of the DWSFR during their term in office.

6.2.3 Candidates for President and Vice-President of the WSSC must have served a minimum of one year on the Collective.

6.3 Administration of Nominations:

6.3.1 The timeline procedures indicated by Administration of Nominations may be subject to revision in unusual circumstances (for example, in the event of a faculty strike) with approval of the majority vote of the Collective and Faculty Advisor.

6.3.2 Call for Nominations:

6.3.2.1 Call for elections will be made by decision of the Collective.

6.3.2.2 Spring elections are for all Executive position except the following: First-Year representatives, Member-at-Large, SSSC representative and AHSC representative.

6.3.2.3 Call for elections will be made no sooner than three weeks before the anticipated election date, and no later than two weeks.

6.3.2.4 A call for nominations must be accompanied by a posting of positions available in addition to their respective roles and responsibilities through DWSFR wide email and social media

6.3.2.5 Call for elections will be advertised through the year representatives, also with documentations in the office of WSFR, the WSSC bulletin board, as well as any other advertising vehicle available for use by WSFR and WSSC.

6.3 Nominations:

6.3.3.1 Nomination forms can be obtained in the WSFR office.

6.3.3.2 Each person may only be nominated for one position.

6.3.3.3 Nomination forms must be signed by the nominator and nominee (nominee's signature indicates willingness to stand). A student is eligible to nominate themselves for a position.

6.3.3.4. Nomination forms must be submitted to the designated area as specified on the nomination Form by the end of the first campaign day. A nomination period shall last 7 days, weekends included.

6.3.3.5 A late submission for nomination will be accepted only at the discretion of both the President and Faculty Advisor.

6.3 *Nomination Procedure/Appointment of Positions*

6.3.4.1 If more than one person applies for position of President, an election must occur. See section 9 for election procedure. If only one person applies, they win by acclaim, should they meet the criteria specified in section 6.2.3. Should only two people apply for President, at the discretion of the Faculty Advisor, they may serve as Co-Presidents.

6.3.4.2 On the date the nomination period ends, all nominations will be collected by the current President and/or Faculty Advisor. Applicants will be notified by e-mail of the receipt of their nomination within two weeks of the end of the nomination period.

6.3.4.3 Necessity for elections will be determined at the discretion of the President, and depended upon the number of nominations, in which case see Section 9.

6.3.4.4 Unless otherwise specified at the discretion of the President, and dependent upon the number of applicants for each position, nominees will be assigned at the discretion of the President and Faculty Advisor, should there be more applicants for a position than allowed by the Constitution.

6.4 *Fall Nominations (By Nominations)*

6.4.1 Positions that are not filled during the spring elections process will be reopened in the fall

6.4.2 The positions of First-Year representative (1 per first-year class/section) and Member-at-Large (2) will also take place during this time.

6.4.3 By-Elections are subject to the above provisions

6.4.4 If positions are not filled during the fall, they may be opened for appointment by the WSSC Executive throughout the academic year. 6.4.5 Elections will be held at the discretion of the President and Faculty Advisor, dependent on the number of nominations received. See section 9

6.4.6 Should there be more than 2 representatives per first year class/section in Women's Studies, an in-class election will occur, led by the President, to determine the 2 students that will sit on the Collective.

6.4.7 The President shall visit each first year class/section during the nomination period to advertise first year positions on the WSSC

6.4 *Specifics of Non WSSC Elected Positions*

6.5.1 Representatives from the SSSC and the AHSC will be elected through and by the election process and criteria of their respective Faculty Collectives. These persons then become automatic members of the WSSC Executive Committee at the commencement of their term under their Faculty Collective.

6.6 Dissolution of WSSC or majority resignations:

In the event of a suggestion for dissolution of WSSC or resignation of a majority of members from the Collective the Faculty Advisor will intervene and assess whether and when a replacement election will take place.

7.00 COMMITTEES OF COLLECTIVE

7.1 The members may, by a resolution of Collective, create or dissolve standing committees and Ad-Hoc committees to most accurately reflect the needs and objectives of Collective without amending the Constitution

7.2 The following are examples of committees that may be implemented by the Collective:

- a. Tulips Committee (led by Tulips Editor)
- b. Activism Committee
- c. Discussion Group Committee
- d. Merchandise Committee
- e. Social Committee
- f. Fundraising Committee
- g. Constitution Amendment Committee

7.3 Each committee shall report through its chairperson to Collective on all matters referred to or otherwise dealt with by the respective committee during each bi-weekly meeting.

7.4 Minutes and updates for each committee are to be communicated through the Chair of the committee to the President in a timely manner proceeding each committee meeting.

7.5 Interested persons who share feminist initiatives may be invited from the general membership/base of WSFR to sit on sub-committees; however, they may not be voting members nor may they be a Chair of a WSSC committee.

8.00 AMENDMENTS

8.1 Notice of proposed amendment(s) must be given to members no later than one week prior to the meeting where these amendments will be discussed.

8.2 Amendments to this Constitution require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all voting members of Collective present at a general meeting of Collective.

8.3 Emergency amendments to the Constitution may be made by agreement between the President, Vice- President and the Faculty Advisor.

8.4 Amendments to the amending formula of this Constitution may be made at a special meeting called for that purpose by a voting member.

8.5 An affirmative vote of at least ninety (90) percent of all voting members present is required to amend the amending formula for amendments.

8.6 At the discretion of the President and Faculty Advisor, a Constitution Amendment Committee can be formed, with one member from each year in their program of study in WSFR sitting on the committee.

9.00 ELECTION PROCESSES

In case of an election, the following guidelines will be put into place:

9.1 *Role of the CRO:*

9.1.1 Once Collective decides to hold elections, one member of the Core Committee will be elected by Collective members to act as CRO

9.1.2 This member will then work with and assist the Faculty Advisor in administration of the election.

9.1.3 This member will assume responsibility for disseminating access information (through electronic means) on/to campaign profiles to WSFR faculty and where possible WSFR students through the DWSFR.

9.1.4 This member shall remain as a non partisan and non voting member during the course of said elections.

9.1.5 This member will be responsible for the composition of the ballot ensuring that only the legal names of the candidates, or reasonable derivation thereof appear on the ballot in alphabetical order by last name

9.1.6 Assist in the ballot-counting procedure with the Faculty Advisor.

9.2 *Campaigning:*

9.2.1 Commencement of campaigning will begin 7 days, including weekends, from the call for nominations.

9.2.2 The distribution and/or posting of any material designated and/or likely to influence voters shall not take place prior to the designated campaign period.

9.2.3 Campaigning by a person cannot be in any form discriminatory, creating slander toward another candidate. Otherwise they will be disqualified from elections under the consultation of the present WSSC and the Faculty Advisor.

9.2.4 WSSC will provide an online and/or bulletin board space for promotion of all candidates' campaign profiles. All candidates are expected to submit a summary of their campaign platform to this public site. Students may not solicit instructors for use of classroom space for campaigning or make formal presentations in class.

9.2.5 Candidates will be allowed to campaign up to and including the day before the first day of elections (ex. If election days were the 12th and 13th of March, candidates could campaign up to and including the 11th of March.)

9.3 *Voting/Ballots*

9.3.1 Each voting member of the Collective, the candidates, as well as other eligible voters shall be entitled to one vote per ballot for any given position.

9.3.2 In order to vote in WSSC elections, the voter must be enrolled in at least 1.0 course in WSFR or cross referenced course and be a student currently enrolled at Western University registered in WSFR module.

9.3.3 Voting will proceed by method of ballot through a preferential voting system

- a. The ballot will outline each position that is open for election. Under each position will be a list of candidates that have been nominated
- b. Each voter will be instructed to mark an X in the space indicated beside the name of their preferred candidate for each position.
- c. Only one candidate may be selected per position on the ballot.
- d. If the aforementioned process fails to produce a winner, a second vote of Collective will be conducted at the earliest possible time.
- k. In the event of a dispute as to whether or not a ballot is to be considered spoiled, the final decision will be left to the discretion of the Faculty Advisor.

9.5 Voting will take place at the time(s) and location specified in the call for elections.

9.6 Election designates at ballot boxes may only answer questions regarding voting procedures and not discuss candidates and campaigns. All ballots shall be counted after all voting has concluded.

9.7 Ballots shall be counted in an area designated by the WSSC. This area shall be private where booking allows; all ballots will be counted by the CRO and Faculty Advisor

10.00 ROLE AND PROCEDURE FULFILLMENT

10.1 All the procedures outlined in the Constitutions must be fulfilled.

Appendix A

Roles and Responsibilities of the WSSC Executive Team

1. President

- Be an elected member in accordance with the election criteria;
- Shall be the Chairperson of the Executive Collective including setting agendas for each meeting and ensuring meetings are carried out in a fair and equitable manner;
- Represent the WSSC to officials within WSFR;
- Shall ensure all members of WSSC perform duties as outlined by the WSSC Constitution and in accordance with the DWSFR;
- Shall attend the social functions affiliated with WSSC and WSFR;
- Oversee and offer support to other positions;
- Maintain on-going communications with sub-committees;
- Act as an intermediary between the Collective and other student and administrative bodies at Western;
- Maintain constant communication and advisory with the Faculty Advisor of the WSSC
- Oversee the finances of the Collective;
- Ensure effective transition of standing Collective to newly-elected Collective;
- In his/her absence appoint Vice-President as acting President where possible;
- Be a signing authority for Collective finances; and,
- Shall be a voting member.
- In the event of a tie, shall cast the tie-breaking vote.
- Familiarize themselves with USC policy (ex. How Western Link works, and how to submit event proposals)
- Submit event proposals via the appropriate avenues (ex. Western Link)

2. Vice President Communications

- Be an elected member in accordance with the election criteria;
- Serve as Acting President in the absence of the President including acting as signing authority;
- Shall act as intermediary between the Collective and outside committees, organizations, and individuals;
- Be responsible for working with permanent committees and ad hocs to advertise events;
- Inform students and faculty of activities of the WSSC through all relevant mediums of publicity;
- Ensure that all members of WSSC have a list of contact information of all Collective members prior to October;
- Shall be managing authority for all information via community venues (facebook,

- e-mail, other forms of social media etc.);
- Is responsible for transferring social media and e-mail passwords to incoming Communications Executive or VP Communications
 - Is responsible for forming a Communications Committee to help with their duties
 - Ensure all committees of the Executive are fulfilling their duties as outlined in the Constitution;
 - Shall attend the social functions affiliated with WSSC and WSFR;
 - Be available to address any concerns within WSSC and work through the appropriate administrative channels to address these concerns;
 - Shall create a Communications sub-committee and oversee all Communications related matters; and,
 - Shall be a voting member.

3. Vice President Finance

- Shall be an elected member in accordance with the WSSC election criteria;
- Present the WSSC with a standing of finances and known expenses before the end of October;
- Provide a revised budget of expenses and funds before February and the standing at year end before April; This process will be done in cooperation with the Treasurer;
- Delegate tasks for the Treasurer
- Shall have signing authority in absence of VP Communications for Collective accounts.
- Maintain general ledger and keep President updated monthly;
- Monitor and inform all members of Collective on financial activity;
- Shall sit on at least one sub-committee of the WSSC; and,
- Be a voting member.

4. Treasurer

- Shall be an elected member in accordance with the WSSC election criteria;
- Work under VP finance for all financial and budgetary needs.
- Be a voting member.

5. Secretary

- Shall be elected in accordance with the WSSC criteria;
- Organize meeting agenda with President(s)
- Take attendance and minutes at meetings, edit and distribute minutes;
- Appoint someone from the Executive to take minutes if absent;
- Read minutes from previous meeting at the beginning of each meeting;
- Maintain the WSSC binder of all relevant information including minutes, correspondence, constitutions, contracts, media messages and any other supporting documentation;

- Be responsible for WSSC email account
- Keeping a detailed outline of President(s)'s schedule in order to keep them on task
- Ensure all information is passed to the secretary of the following term;
- Where the President is unable, the Secretary shall collect availability from all Collective members and establish bi-monthly meeting dates and times; and be responsible for booking meeting space and obtaining keys;
- Shall maintain a record of regrets from meetings;
- Shall sit on at least one sub-committee of the WSSC; and,
- Shall be a voting member.

6. Social Executive

- Shall be elected in accordance with the WSSC criteria;
- Shall form a Social Committee and delegate roles accordingly, must have internal and external Social team.
- Shall attempt to incorporate/negotiate WSSC into events of relevant departments and create other partnerships with on-campus groups and clubs;
- Shall be responsible for events put on by WSSC not already designated to the Vice-President.
- Will consult with any other sub-committee of the Collective that is planning events and /or sit on their committee;
- Must remain updated with VP Communications for community events
- Shall be in constant dialogue with the Communication Executive for the advertisement and promotion of events;
- Shall seek approval from the Executive regarding proposals for such events;
- Shall be a voting member.

7. Tulips Editor

- Shall be elected in accordance with the WSSC criteria;
- Shall have sat on the Collective for a minimum of one year;
- Shall create a Tulips Committee with existing Collective members
- Shall manage the call for submissions, editing, and production of Tulips;
- Shall work with the WSSC President to determine the budget for the publication;
- Shall chair the Tulips Committee, which will be responsible for editing and determining the layout of the publication and;
- Shall be a voting member.

8. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, Mature and Grad Student Representatives

- Shall be elected in accordance with the WSSC criteria;
- Shall be in the year they represent;
- Shall be responsible to relay information to all students in classes considered Women's Studies courses that are in their academic year;

- Make themselves available to the concerns of the WS students and relay needed information to Collective to address;
- Shall assist on event planning and other areas where Collective members may need assistance;
- Shall sit on at least one WSSC committee; and,
- Shall be a voting member.

9. Member-at-Large

- Shall be elected in accordance with the WSSC criteria;
- Will be expected to take up projects of the Collective as they arise and are appropriate; and.
- Shall be a voting member.

10. Social Science and Arts/Humanities Faculty Representatives

- Shall be responsible for acquiring levy monies for WSSC and, where appropriate, for the DWSFR, and informing Collective on the progress and success of proposals;
- Shall be familiar with the process for acquiring levy money for their designated Collective
- Be elected by the AHSC and SSSC in accordance with the Constitutions of said Collectives;
- Report to their respective Collectives the events and developments of the WSSC and the DWSFR at each meeting of their Collectives;
- Relay all relevant information to the members of the WSSC regarding the University Students' Collective gathered at the AHSC and SSSC meetings via USC;
- Be responsible for providing the President and Faculty Advisor with all information regarding the AHSC and SSSC to be posted in the WSSC display case, including contact information, meeting times, and announcements;
- Inform the DWSFR administration of all relevant updates within the faculties of Arts and Humanities and Social Science;
- Make announcements, when necessary, to WSFR classes, with permission of the professors, on behalf of the Collectives and Faculties which they represent;
- Ensure the DWSFR is equally included in faculty promotions, including Fall Preview Day, March Break Open House, and Intent to Register;
- Promote their positions to WSFR students during Spring elections to ensure the positions of WSFR representatives are filled before the next academic year begins; and
- Shall be a voting member.

11. Additional Duties Clause

- In addition to outlined roles and responsibilities all Core Committee Collective members are to take up any additional responsibilities or duties that are agreed upon by Collective.
- Outgoing executives are encouraged to submit a brief report of activities, issues that arose during their time in position and suggestions for their successors to the outgoing President before the end of April.
- All WSSC members are responsible for promoting to and informing their classes of upcoming WSSC events and initiatives.
- The President has Veto Power and should always consult with Faculty Advisor.