



Executive Policy

Oversight body: Vice-President, Internal

Date Passed by Council: December 7, 2023

Date of Next Review: April 2025

Related policies, bylaws, legislation: DSU Act; Bylaw 5; DSU Oversight Terms of Reference

Definitions

Signing Officer: An Executive or designated full-time staff member vested with the authority to sign official documents or orders, particularly in respect to payments, purchases, and contracts.

Business Day: A Day on which the University is open and in session, not including any Saturday, Sunday or statutory holiday in the province of Nova Scotia.

Incoming Executive Officer: A member elected into an Executive Officer role who has not yet taken office.

Purpose

In addition to those Executive responsibilities outlined in bylaw 5, this policy serves to outline authorities, expectations and obligations of Executive Officers as a whole and individually.

Scope

The following terms apply to all Executive Officer positions.

Statement

1. Eligibility

1.1 No Member shall serve more than three consecutive terms in the same Executive Officer position.

1.2 Executive Officers must be current members of the Union.

2. Order of Authority

2.1 All decisions of the Executive must be consistent with the Bylaws, Union policy, and directives from Council.

2.2 During the daily administrative operations of the Union, the President has the authority to direct the Executive according to Bylaws and policies of the Union. However, the President cannot direct the Vice-President, Internal or Vice-President, Finance and Operations to enter a contractual relationship or sign a cheque or purchase order, unless directed by Council.

2.3 The following is the order of authority among the Executives:

- President;
- Vice-President, Internal;
- Vice-President, Finance and Operations;
- Vice-President, Academic and External;
- Vice-President, StudentLife.

2.4 Members of the Executive have a responsibility to ensure that all decisions taken by the Executive Committee and individual Officers are in line with the Union's bylaws and policies. In the event that an Executive Officer believes that a decision or directive is in violation of a bylaw or policy, they must reach out to, in ascending order, other members of the Executive, the Policy and Governance Coordinator, the Judicial Board, and/or legal counsel in order to determine the best course of action.

2.5 Should any Executive Officer become aware of a violation of Bylaws and/or policies, they are to bring it to the attention of the President or in the case it is in respect to the President, to Council if the breach is not rectified within ten (10) business days.

2.6 In the event that a Full-time Staff member is directed to violate any part of the Bylaws and/or Policies, they are obligated to refuse to follow the directive and bring the incident to the attention of their Director. In the event that the direction is given by said Director, the staff member should bring the issue to the attention of the other Director.

3. Meetings and Reporting Obligations

3.1 There shall be at least one meeting of the Executive Committee per week, chaired and scheduled by the President. In the absence of the President, the Vice President, Internal shall serve as chair.

3.2 Minutes of the Executive Committee shall include:

3.2.1 All Executive reports on their weekly activities;

3.2.2 All decisions made;

3.2.3 All actions items for follow-up and to whom each was assigned.

3.3 The Vice President, Internal shall act as secretary for meetings of the Executive Committee and shall circulate minutes to the Executive within five (5) business days following the meeting. Where needed, the Vice President, Internal may delegate this responsibility to another member of the Executive.

3.4 Quorum for the Executive Committee meeting will be three members, provided that either the President or Vice President, Internal is present.

3.5 All members of the Executive Committee must have the opportunity to vote on decisions to enter into contracts and formal agreements.

3.6 Decisions of the Executive are binding on all members of the Executive. Decisions under the purview of the Executive and within the Bylaws and/or policies must be respected.

3.7 All members of the Executive are expected to report on the activities of the respective committees that they, or their designate, Chair.

3.8 Members of the Executive committee are expected to submit reports on their activities and the minutes of the meetings they attend to the Council Chair and Council Secretary so these documents may be presented to the Oversight Committee.

3.8.1. Reports from May 1 to Aug 31 must be submitted by September 15.

3.8.2 Reports from September 1 to October 31 must be submitted by November 15.

3.8.3 Reports from November 1 to the last day of February must be submitted by March 15.

3.9 Executives should report a brief overview of the meetings they have attended, progress toward executive goals, and work on any initiatives as required by Union policies at each meeting of the Council.

4. Leave

4.1 Each member of the Executive is entitled to 10 business days of leave from their role as an Executive Officer, in addition to regular student holidays as outlined in the Union staff handbook.

4.2 Requests for leave will be submitted in writing to the Directors and the President, or the VP Internal in the absence of the President, who shall determine whether the requested leave would significantly interfere with Union operations. Leave will be granted by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Essential tasks that must be performed during such leave shall be delegated to other Executive Officers through consultation between the Executive and the Directors. The dates of any approved leave shall be relayed to the Chair of the Oversight Committee, or in the event the Oversight Committee has yet to be formed, the Chair of Council

4.3 Leave due to illness will be granted for up to 10 business days at which time the President or the VP Internal in the absence of the President, may request a medical note be submitted indicating a timeline for return and any necessary accommodations. In the case of the President requiring leave, the Executive Committee may request the aforementioned documentation. The dates of any approved leave shall be relayed to the Chair of the Oversight Committee, or in the event the Oversight Committee has yet to be formed, the Chair of Council

4.4 Should any Executive Officer encounter an exceptional circumstance which requires additional leave, a request will be submitted in writing to the Directors and the President. Leave will be granted by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. Essential tasks that must be performed during such leave shall be delegated to other Executive Officers through consultation between the Executive and the Directors. The dates of any approved leave shall be relayed to the Chair of the Oversight Committee, or in the event the Oversight Committee has yet to be formed, the Chair of Council

4.5 All three Signing Officers cannot be granted leave at the same time.

5. Executive Goals

5.1 Upon taking office, members of the Executive shall develop individual and collective goals for the year in collaboration with one another and the Directors.

5.2 Executive Goals must contain the following information:

5.2.1 Clear timelines for achieving those goals

5.2.2 Metrics for measuring results

5.3 Executives are encouraged to provide a rationale for their goal by connecting it to the DSU Strategic Plan in effect.

5.4 Executive Goals shall be submitted to the Chair of the Oversight Committee for feedback on any policy issues or anticipated difficulties in assessment one week before being presented to Council

5.5 At the first meeting of the Council in September, the Executive shall present their individual and any collective goals for the year.

5.6 Executive goals must be posted on the Union website after notice is provided to the Oversight Committee and the goals are presented to Council.

5.7 Executives are encouraged to include progress updates in their reports to the Council.

6. Transition Period

6.1 The transition period commences once the General Election results are official.

6.2 Where needed, the incoming Executive Officers will be provided with temporary office space until they take office.

6.3 The transition period shall include:

6.3.1 A two-week period with the outgoing and incoming Executive working together full-time;

6.3.2 The incoming Executive interviewing and hiring all standing Commissioner roles;

6.3.3 Other key hiring and training tasks may be required on a year-to-year basis.

6.4 Each member of the Executive shall orient their successor during the transition period.

6.5 Each incoming member of the Executive shall complete the Transition Checklist contained in their Executive Orientation Guide.

6.5.1 The President will confirm at the first Council meeting in May that all completed Transition Checklists and transition reports have been received and are satisfactory.

6.5.2 Each Executive Officer will also, at the first Council meeting in May, provide reports on the transition support received from the outgoing Executive Officers and from staff to date. Executive Officers are also to include evidence of their own engagement and participation in the April transition period.

6.6 Each incoming member of the Executive is obligated to attend the annual transition retreats or to make alternate arrangements with the Executive Committee in the event that they are unable to attend. The transition retreats shall be organized by the Directors in consultation with the outgoing President.

6.7 The Union shall withhold the final honorarium installment of each member of the Executive until the following conditions have been met:

6.7.1 The outgoing Executive Transition Report template has been completed and submitted to their successor;

6.7.2 Office keys, e-mail accounts and any equipment considered the property of the Executive position is provided to the appropriate incoming Executive Officer;

6.7.3 Any outstanding reports regarding any honorarium position reporting to that Executive Officer or their designate have been submitted to the Oversight Committee, and all honoraria for said positions have been paid or submitted for payment through the appropriate channel.

7. Performance Expectations

7.1 In carrying out their duties, all Executive Officers are expected to fulfill the expectations laid out in the Union's bylaws and policies and to act in good faith as the official officers of the Union.

7.2 Further to the duties mandated by bylaws and policies, all members of the Executive are expected to actively communicate and collaborate with one another in a respectful and productive manner.

8. Discipline

8.1 Failure to perform duties as outlined in the Bylaws, Policies, or the Statement of Office will result in disciplinary action by Council.

9. Executive Office Hours

9.1 Executives are required to maintain a minimum of ten (10) in person office hours per week in their designated offices, to ensure availability and accessibility for staff consultations, member interactions, and effective management of organizational duties.