



Course Union Policy

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COURSE UNION POLICY

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PART 1: **PREAMBLE**

Course Unions are designed to enhance the academic experience of Student Society members within their faculty of study. Course Unions are intended to foster a positive educational environment beyond the classroom and to integrate those activities into the diverse university community.

PART 2: **GOVERNANCE**

1. MEMBERSHIP

All undergraduate students registered in at least one course in a department are automatically members of that department's course union.

2. RATIFICATION & STATUS*

To be ratified as a course union of the UVSS and maintain active status the following conditions must be met each semester:

- a. Have a constitution that complies with this policy and is ratified by Course Union Council
- b. Complete a "Course Union Status Verification Form"
- c. Have a representative attend the Course Union Council meeting at which the course union is seeking ratification.
- d. Be ratified by the Board of Directors.
- e. Hold regular meetings at least once per month.
- f. Hold at least one general meeting that is advertised and open to all its members.

*Faculties that have PDUs as recognized by UVSS Bylaws are ineligible to receive ratification and status.

3. EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

- a. Each course union shall have an executive of not less than three members that is elected as per the course union's constitution. All members of the course union have the right to vote in the election.

4. TABLE/ROOM BOOKINGS AND POSTERING/CHALKING

- a. All active course unions have the ability to book the following spaces:
 - i. Available bookable tables and rooms in the SUB
 - ii. Available bookable tables and rooms on campus
 - iii. Available bookable outdoor spaces on campus.
- b. Course unions may not use their room or table booking privileges for purposes that are outside the scope of their course union's constitution
- c. Furthermore, course unions may not use their booking privileges to secure space for other organizations whom plan to conduct non course union related business.

- d. Course union's must follow all policies relating to room and table bookings set out by the UVSS and UVic.
- e. Course unions must follow all poster policy set out by the UVSS and UVIC.

5. CONSTITUENCY GROUP CAUCUSES

Members of course unions are entitled to form constituency group caucuses for traditionally marginalized and oppressed groups such as but not limited to women, LGBTQ+ folks, people of colour, Indigenous folks, and people with disabilities. Constituency group caucuses shall be entitled to:

- a. Use the name of their course union along with their constituency name (eg. The Creative Writing Students' Guild Women's Caucus or Queer People of the Creative Writing Students' Guild);
- b. Meet as a caucus, exclusive of the other members of the organisation;
- c. Produce reports on issues important to their constituency;
- d. Fair access to funding and resources of the course union; and
- e. Bring any concerns about discrimination and harassment to the University's Equity and Human Rights Office.

PART 3: FUNDING

1. ELIGIBILITY

- a. In order to receive funding, a course union must meet the requirements for ratification and active status
- b. For a course union to receive base funding, a representative from the course union must attend the first Course Union Council meeting of each semester. Travel Pool, Academic, or Publication fund grants will not be issued at this meeting.

2. FORMULA

- a. The annual committed allocation for Course Unions shall be divided as follows:
 - i. 20% for the summer semester
 - ii. 40% for the winter semester
 - iii. 40% for the spring semester
- b. The Society shall withhold the following from each semester's committed allocation:
 - i. 5% for contingency purposes
 - ii. 2% for Janitorial, Utilities and Maintenance (JUM) in exchange for course unions being granted free room bookings in the Student Union Building
 - iii. 25% for the Travel Pool Fund

All remaining funds will be evenly distributed among all course unions that are

granted base funding for that semester.

3. TRAVEL POOL

a. Application

- i. Any UVSS member in good standing may apply for a grant from the Travel Pool Fund by submitting a Travel Pool application form to the Director of Student Affairs. The Director of Student Affairs shall bring the application to Course Union Council for consideration.
- ii. Clubs, Course Unions, and members can retroactively apply for a grant from the Travel Pool Fund for expenses incurred within the same semester.
- iii. Applications are restricted to academic conferences or events that are not hosted by a religious group or political party.
- iv. The application shall include:
 - o Date and duration of conference or event
 - o Purpose of conference or event and statement of how the student(s) will benefit
 - o Detail of costs involved (travel, registration, accommodations)
 - o List of fundraising activities or money acquired from other sources (i.e. department, course union, community groups)
 - o Declaration of intention to report back to Course Union Council about the conference or event
 - o Amount requested from the Travel Pool Fund
 - o The number of students applying

b. Travel Pool Fund Grants

Travel Pool Fund grants shall be recommended by Course Union Council and approved by the Board.

- i. Course Unions are not permitted to vote on grants for their own course union members.
- ii. A majority vote is required for all applications. Individuals or group representatives must attend the Course Union Council meeting where their application is considered.
- iii. Delegations who have submitted an application may be asked to leave the meeting while their funding request is discussed.

c. Reimbursement Requirements

- i. Travel Pool funding may only be used for the following activities:
 - Travel costs
 - Registration

- Accommodation
- ii. Cheque requisitions and receipts for travel, registration, and/or accommodation must be submitted no later than the end of the following semester after the semester in which the application was approved.
- iii. At the end of each semester, any approved grants that were not used in the previous semester shall be considered forfeit and added to the total Travel Pool funds available for the following semester.
- iv. Upon return, a written summary or presentation of conference activities must be provided to Course Union Council.

d. Funding Formula

- i. Of these available funds 20% will be reserved for the summer semester, 40% for the fall semester, and 40% for the spring semester. Once all of a semester's available funding has been used, no more Publication Fund grants will be issued for that semester.
- ii. If there are remaining funds at the end of a semester, they shall carry over into the next semester, adding to the total available funds for that semester. This does not occur in the spring semester.

4. ACADEMIC FUND

a. Application

- i. Any course union or PDU in good standing may apply for a grant from the Academic Fund by submitting an Academic Fund application form to the Director of Student Affairs. The Director of Student Affairs shall bring the application to Course Union Council for consideration.
- ii. Course Unions can retroactively apply for a grant from the Academic Fund for expenses incurred within the same semester.
- iii. Applications are restricted to academic conferences or events within Greater Victoria that are related to the course union's or PDU's area of study and that are not hosted by a religious group or political party.
- iv. The course union or PDU must demonstrate fundraising efforts before an application will be considered.
- v. The application shall include:
 - The date and duration of on-campus event
 - The purpose of academic event and statement of how students will benefit
 - A budget detailing the costs involved (speaker, honorarium, etc)
 - A list of fundraising activities or money acquired from other sources (i.e. department, course union, community group(s), bake sales, etc.)

- A declaration of intention to report back to Course Union Council about the event
- The amount requested from the Academic Fund

b. Academic Fund Grants

- i. Course Unions or PDU's that apply for a grant from the Academic Fund must present to Course Union Council in order to be eligible for a grant.
- ii. Academic Fund allocations require a majority vote of Course Union Council subject to approval by the Board. Individuals or group representatives must attend the Course Union Council meeting where their application is considered.
- iii. Approved funding is accessed via cheque requisition. Funding shall not be dispersed until minutes from the Board meeting where the funding was approved is submitted to the Accounting Department.
- iv. Course unions and PDU's are not permitted to vote on allocations for their own course union or PDU.

c. Post-Event Requirements

- i. Cheque requisitions and receipts must be submitted no later than the end of the semester in which the application was approved.
- ii. Upon completion of the event, a written summary or presentation of the event must be provided to Course Union Council. Failure to meet this requirement will remove eligibility for funding of any kind in the following semester.
- iii. At the end of each semester, any approved funding allocations that are not used shall be considered forfeit and added to the total academic funds available for the following semester.

d. Funding Formula

- i. Of these available funds 20% will be reserved for the summer semester, 40% for the fall semester, and 40% for the spring semester. Once all of a semester's available funding has been used, no more Academic Fund allocations will be issued for that semester.
- ii. If there are remaining funds at the end of a semester, they shall carry over into the next semester, adding to the total available funds for that semester. This does not occur in the spring semester.

5. PUBLICATION FUND

a. Application

- i. Any course union or PDU in good standing may apply for a grant from the Publication Fund by submitting a Publication Fund application form to the Director of Student Affairs. The Director of Student Affairs shall bring the application to Course Union Council for consideration.
- ii. Course Unions can retroactively apply for a grant from the Publication Fund for expenses incurred within the same semester.
- iii. Applications are restricted to publications that are related to the course union's or PDU's area of study, are not partisan, and do not attempt to persuade people to join a religion, cause, or group.
- iv. The course union or PDU must demonstrate fundraising efforts before an application will be considered.
- v. The application shall include:
 - A description of the publication and its purpose
 - A statement of how the applicant and/or students will benefit
 - A budget detailing the costs involved
 - A list of fundraising activities or money acquired from other sources (i.e. department, course union, community group(s), bake sales, etc.)
 - The amount requested from the Course Union Control Account

b. Publication Fund Grants

- i. Publication Fund grants require a majority vote of Course Union Council subject to approval by the Board.
- ii. Course Unions and PDU's are not permitted to vote on grants for their own course union.

c. Post-Publication Requirements

- i. Cheque requisitions and receipts must be submitted no later than the end of the semester in which the application was approved.
- ii. Upon completion of the publication, the course union shall submit a written summary and a copy of the completed publication to Course Union Council.
- iii. At the end of each semester, any approved grants that are not used shall be considered forfeit and added to the total publication funds available for the following semester.

d. Funding Formula

- i. The total available funds for the Publication Fund for a fiscal year (May 1-April 30) shall equal the amount of money that has rolled back from individual Course Union Budget accounts into the Course Union Control Account from the previous fiscal year.
- ii. Of these available funds 20% will be reserved for the summer semester, 40% for the fall semester, and 40% for the spring semester. Once all of a semester's available funding has been used, no more Publication Fund allocations will be issued for that semester.
- iii. If there are remaining funds at the end of a semester, they shall carry over into the next semester, adding to the total available funds for that semester. This does not occur in the spring semester.

PART 4: ACCOUNTING

1. BUDGET ACCOUNTS

- a. A budget account contains funds that are allocated to the course union by the Course Union Council and the Board of Directors.
- b. No funds shall be disbursed from a budget account without the written authorisation of the Director of Student Affairs.
- c. At the end of each fiscal year, all unspent funds in budget accounts shall be returned to the control account.

2. TRUST ACCOUNTS

- a. A trust account contains self-generated revenue of a course union held in trust by the Society. No other organisation or financial institution may hold these funds.
- b. Course unions are encouraged to raise additional funds beyond their budget allocation. Funds raised in this manner are to be deposited into course union trust accounts.
- c. No funds shall be disbursed from a trust account without the written authorisation of the Director of Student Affairs.

3. CONTROL ACCOUNT

- a. The control account is the account from which all budget account funds are allocated.
- b. Any funds remaining in budget accounts at the end of the fiscal year are deposited into the control account.
- c. Course Union Council may authorise expenditures from the control account for items of general benefit to all course unions. Such expenditures shall require a 2/3 vote of Course Union Council where at least half of all active course unions are present, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

- d. At the conclusion of the fiscal year, if there is a surplus that is \$4000 or more, \$2000 will be taken from the control account and distributed to Travel Pool.

4. SIGNING AUTHORITY

- a. Each course union must provide a list of no more than three, and no less than two, signing officers.
- b. All signing officers shall be executive members of the course union.
- c. Signing officers shall not be recognised until their name and information has been submitted to the Director of Student Affairs.
- d. Signing officers are the only members of a course union permitted to book rooms and equipment from the UVSS General Office or the University.
- e. All signing authorities are accountable for any financial mismanagement by their course union.

5. SPENDING

- a. Course unions must spend any monies allocated to them in a responsible manner that is not against their constitution, UVSS policies and bylaws, and all applicable legislation.
- b. To receive reimbursement for course union expenses, a signing authority must complete a cheque request form and submit it to the Director of Student Affairs. Cheque requests will only be granted for payment of legitimate course union expenses, which have supporting documentation (e.g itemized bill of receipt).
- c. The UVSS does not pay for any activities that result in the personal benefit of individual members, but rather activities that benefit the majority of members of a course union.
- d. The UVSS does not pay for the purchase of alcohol or gift cards.

6. ABANDONMENT OF FUNDS

- a. When a course union is inactive for a period of more than two [2] years, and attempts to contact all interested parties have been exhausted, Course Union Council may declare the registration of that course union to be abandoned and transfer all assets / liabilities of the course union to the control account.

7. DEBT

- a. No course union shall have a negative balance in their budget account or trust account.
- b. In the event that a course union has a negative balance in their budget account, the balance will be recovered from their trust account until it is paid in full.
- c. In the event that a course union has a negative balance in their trust account, the balance will be recovered from their budget account until it is paid in full.

PART 5. **COMPLIANCE**

1. Each course union must be and remain in compliance with the following requirements in order to continue to be recognized and have status:
 - a. Adherence to all aspects of this policy.
 - b. Adherence to the constitution and bylaws of the UVSS.
 - c. Adherence to the University of Victoria's policies of general application, including Discrimination and Harassment Policy GV0205-1150, or such policies as may be in force from time to time.
 - d. Not be found to have contravened the University's Discrimination and Harassment Policy by the University of Victoria's Equity and Human Rights Office.
2. If a course union is found by the Board of Directors to be non-compliant with this Course Union Policy, and for greater certainty compliance with the University of Victoria's Discrimination and Harassment Policy shall be adjudicated upon by the University's Equity and Human Rights Office, the course union may be subject to discipline by the Board of Directors who may direct or order any of the following in relation to the course union's activities and status as a course union:
 - a. An order to cease the violation and to refrain from committing the same or similar violation again.
 - b. Public censure.
 - c. Freezing of accounts, denial of funding or withdrawal of unspent funds for no more than one year.
 - d. Withdrawal of room or AV booking privileges for no more than one year.
 - e. Withdrawal of postering and bannerling privileges for no more than one year.
 - f. Withdrawal of course union status for no more than one year, at which point the course union may re-apply for status.
 - g. Other actions that the Board of Directors finds appropriate.
3. If a course union is found by the University of Victoria's Equity and Human Rights Office to have contravened the University's Discrimination and Harassment Policy, the course union shall lose status for one [1] year.

PART 6: **COMPLAINTS**

1. The UVSS does not adjudicate course union related harassment and discrimination complaints.
2. Discrimination and harassment complaints relating to course unions can be made to the University's Equity and Human Rights Office.
3. Members can make non-harassment and discrimination related complaints regarding course unions to the Director of Student Affairs. The Director of

Student Affairs will bring the complaint to the attention of the course union and will seek to resolve the matter informally and mediate between the two parties. If this informal process is unsuccessful, the Director of Student Affairs will bring the matter forward to the Board of Directors for adjudication. The Board may choose to establish an ad hoc complaints committee if it deems necessary.