

The GSU By-laws or The Rules We Live By

The Administration at U of T has guidelines for all student organizations that must be followed if fees are to be collected by U of T on their behalf. These guidelines require that all student groups hold elections, be democratically organized and be financially accountable. The GSU By-Laws comply with these guidelines. The GSU Constitution was originally written and approved by GSU Council in 1977. When the GSU incorporated in October, 1998 we were obliged by law to rewrite our Constitution which was then approved by GSU Council. Some of the information pertaining to course unions will now be found in a new document entitled GSU Policy Document, approved by Council and available at our website. In the meantime, here are the Articles of the By-laws and the Policy Document that pertain to you.

1. When the framework of Course Unions was decided upon, and a method of funding determined, the GSU Council realized that any money given out had to be linked with the GSU's receipt of its fees from the U of T. The GSU receives its fees in 2 major lumps: one in early October and the second in February.

Policy Article 3.11

"(c) Course Union grants are to be paid in two instalments, the first based on 60% of the previous year's enrolment which shall be paid as soon as possible after the Fall General Council Meeting ... and before the end of October. The second instalment should be paid as soon as possible after the final enrolment figures are available (usually late February). Payment of the second installment will be based on attendance at 3/4 of the fall General Council meetings by the departmental rep from the course union."

"(e) The cut-off date for course union grants will be the 15th of April. Course Unions applying after the 1st of January will get 50% of their grant."

2. GSU Council decided that, if money were to be collected from students, both the GSU and the groups which received money annually from the GSU were to be held financially accountable.

To protect both the Course Unions and the GSU Council from allegations of financial abuse, it was decided that the fairest way to do this was to require a Financial Statement, stating how the money received from the GSU had been spent.

By-Law Article #5.1 (g)

"Course unions in receipt of course union funds shall be required to keep their books open to the Union Treasurer or his/ her representative, and shall submit a financial report to the Union Treasurer at the end of each Spring Term and at any time the Union Treasurer shall require..."

3. As well, Council believed that it was important to ensure that course unions had been democratically elected and were accountable to the GSU Council. To that end, they wrote a by-law that required that information forms be submitted to the GSU and that a certain number of Council meetings be attended.

By-Law Article #4.10, Attendance

"Payment of the second instalment will be based on attendance at 3/4 of the fall General Council Meetings by the departmental representative(s) from the course union."

Policy Article 3.11

"A standard form for each course union to fill out information needed by the Union (By-Law #9) and to request course union grants will be provided to course union officers in early September. This form must be returned before a grant is made available."

By-Law Article #5.1 (h)

"Annually, each Fall and when elections take place, each course union shall provide General Council with the names of its executive and member(s) of General Council and a copy of all its publications."

By-Law Article #4.10

"Failure of a departmental representative to attend a percentage of General Council meetings may be considered grounds for General Council to curtail financial support of the ... course union. In this regard payment of the second instalment to a course union (as per the Policy Documents) will be based upon attendance at three (3) out of four (4) of the fall General Council meetings by the representative(s) from the course union."

By-Law Article # 5.1 (i)

"Copies of changes, alterations, or additions to the constitutions of course unions shall be sent to the Secretary of the Union as soon as possible..."