



SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## **External Political Representation Policy**

Amended April 2019

Policy:	<b>External Political Representation Policy</b>
Last Amended:	<b>April 2019</b>
Responsibility:	<b>Board of Directors, President; External Advocacy Review Committee</b>
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Board Chair Signature:	 Crystal Witter

### 1. GENERAL

- A. The Saint Mary's University Students' Association believes that external political representation is an important part of student government. The Association works to represent its members to all levels of government.
- B. The Association's external advocacy is non-partisan.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Association holds memberships in the following external political advocacy organizations (called "advocacy partner organizations" in this policy):
  - i. Students Nova Scotia (StudentsNS), and
  - ii. Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA).

### 3. REVIEW PROCESS

- A. The Association reviews advocacy partner organizations each year between September 1 and February 1.
- B. The President or Board of Directors may also ask the Association to do an Official Review of an advocacy partner organization at any time. This review takes place when the Board of Directors approves the request for review.
- C. The advocacy partner organization being reviewed must be notified within seven days of the Board's decision.
- D. The External Advocacy Review Committee reviews advocacy partner organizations.

- E. After a review is complete, the External Advocacy Review Committee gives the Board of Directors a report and any recommendations.
- F. As soon as the Board decides, the decision is communicated to the advocacy partner organization.

#### 4. WITHDRAWAL PROCESS

- A. The Association may end its membership agreement with an advocacy partner organization if the Board of Directors approves two consecutive reviews recommending that the Association withdraw its membership.
- B. If the Association is a full member when a review recommending withdrawal is approved, the Association will take steps to become an associate or prospective member for one year. In the following year, it will review the organization again.
- C. If the Association is an associate or prospective member when a review recommending withdrawal is approved, the Association will take steps to end its membership in the organization.
- D. The Association may also immediately end its membership with an advocacy partner organization facing serious legal, criminal, financial, or ethical concerns, or if the organization is in conflict with the values of the Association. If this happens, two-thirds of the Board of Directors must vote to end membership.
- E. The advocacy partner organization will have two weeks' notice before the Board of Directors votes on ending its membership with the organization.

#### 5. JOINING PROCESS

- A. The Association may become a member of an external political advocacy organization in the following ways:
  - i. The Board of Directors must approve two consecutive official reviews.
  - ii. If the Association is a not yet a member of the organization, it will take steps to become an associate or prospective member for one year. In the next fiscal year, it will review the organization again.
  - iii. If the Association is an associate or prospective member, it will take steps to become a full member in the organization.
- B. The Association must remain free to control its own decision-making as a member of any advocacy partner organization. The Association does not join any external organization that limits its autonomy in any of the following ways:
  - i. members' decisions to join or withdraw from the organization, including:
    - 1) which mechanisms of voting are acceptable
    - 2) quorum, the binding percentage of votes needed
    - 3) wording of a referendum question
    - 4) what constitutes appropriate campaign materials
    - 5) when the vote is allowed to occur
  - ii. purchasing agreements with suppliers and companies
  - iii. access to events at Saint Mary's University campus
  - iv. the distribution of printed content on Saint Mary's University campus.

#### 6. FEES

- A. The Association collects and pays membership fees to advocacy partner organizations.
- B. The Association must be notified of any fee increases before January 31st of the year before the increase.
- C. The Association publishes the fees it pays to advocacy partner organizations.
- D. The Association makes sure that the fees it pays to advocacy partner organizations are used effectively and efficiently, while reflecting the needs of students at Saint Mary's University. The President or their delegates are responsible for this.
- E. An advocacy partner organization may require members to give notice before leaving and to pay fees that were due for that year.

## 7. REPRESENTATION

- A. The President acts as the Association's primary delegate and may select a secondary delegate for any advocacy partner organizations. Alternatively, the President may give this responsibility to a primary or secondary delegate or both.
- B. Only the Association's executive members and employees may be delegates.
- C. Every delegate must act in the best interests of the Association and the students of Saint Mary's University.

## 8. EXTERNAL ADVOCACY REVIEW COMMITTEE

- A. General
  - i. The External Advocacy Review Committee is an ad hoc committee of the Association.
- B. Membership and Composition
  - i. The members of this committee are:
    - 1) the President
    - 2) the General Manager
    - 3) one representative from the Board of Directors
    - 4) the Association's primary or secondary delegate to the organization under review.
  - ii. Members remain on the committee until
    - 1) they resign from the committee or
    - 2) they are no longer members of the Board of Directors.
- C. Governance
  - i. The President is the Chair of the Committee but may choose not to accept this role.
  - ii. The Committee Chair holds their position until the end of the fiscal year in which they are elected.
  - iii. Vacancies are filled immediately.
- D. Meetings
  - i. As a special committee of the Association, this committee meets when members need to meet. The committee meets frequently enough to fulfil its obligations as set out in this policy.
  - ii. Quorum of any meeting is three or more members. Votes and motions are passed by a majority vote (50 % of all votes plus one vote).
- E. Authority and Deliverables
  - i. The committee gives the Board of Directors a report and recommendations each year after an official review.

- ii. The committee may make recommendations about membership in advocacy partnership organizations but may not make binding decisions on the matter.
  - iii. The Committee Chair reports to the Board as needed, and when requested.
- F. Goals
  - i. The committee's goal is to conduct Annual and Official Reviews of advocacy partner organizations as set out in the REVIEW section of this policy.
- G. Budget
  - i. The Board of Directors must approve all committee expenses in advance.