



COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION DES ÉTUDIANTS EN INFORMATIQUE

Computer Science Student Association Constitution

Original Language: English

Last Ratified on
March 13, 2024

Preamble

We, the Computer Science Student Association (CSSA) of the University of Ottawa, provide by this Constitution an organization dedicated to the pursuit of obtaining and managing resources for all members of the undergraduate Computer Science community at the University of Ottawa. We are also dedicated to providing social programming, academic services and employment resource opportunities to all our members. We are dedicated to fostering a sense of community among students, professors and members of the computer science department through these events and services.

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Article I Definitions

1. The below terms used in this Constitution will have the following meanings:
 - (i) the abbreviation *CSSA* shall refer to the *Computer Science Student Association*;
 - (ii) Student Federation and the abbreviation *UOSU* shall both refer to the University of Ottawa Students' Union;
 - (iii) Executive shall refer to the voting members of the Computer Science Student Association Executive Committee;
 - (iv) Member shall refer to any member of the Computer Science Student Association;
 - (v) Student shall refer to any undergraduate student enrolled in the University of Ottawa for part-time or full-time studies;
 - (vi) Notice of Impeachment shall refer to an official written statement from the Executive giving notice that the impeachment process for the Executive member to whom it is addressed is underway;
 - (vii) the abbreviation *VP* shall refer to Vice-President; and
 - (viii) Director shall refer to the non-voting members of the Computer Science Student Association Executive Committee;
2. Any term used in this Constitution that applies to one gender shall apply equally to all genders.

Article II Name of the Association

1. This association shall be known in French as the *Association des étudiant(e)s en informatique* and in English as the *Computer Science Student Association* and may also be referred to as the *AÉI* or *CSSA*, respectively.

Article III Membership

1. All undergraduate students registered with a Major or Specialization at the Department of Computer Science of the University of Ottawa for part-time or full-time studies are members of the *CSSA*.

Article IV Statement of Purpose

1. By virtue of this constitution, the CSSA is the decision-making and representative body for the undergraduate students of the Department of Computer Science of the University of Ottawa.

Article V Offices

1. The offices of the CSSA shall be located at:
SITE room 4076
800 King Edward
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 6N5

Article VI Official Languages

1. The official languages of the CSSA shall be English and French.
2. All documents and publications released by the CSSA shall be available in all the official languages. Documents and publications released by the CSSA shall include:
 - (i) This constitution; and
 - (ii) All advertisements and promotions made by, or in conjunction with, the CSSA.

All other CSSA documents and publications shall be translated at the request of any CSSA member.

3. All translations of a document written in the official languages shall be equally authoritative. In the event of a conflict between translations, the original document shall be authoritative.
4. All documents and publications released by the CSSA shall indicate their original language. In the case of advertisements and promotional materials, this indication may be made as a note alongside the master copy of the promotional material in question.

Article VII Membership of the Association

1. The CSSA shall have four levels of membership:
 - (i) General members, which consist of all undergraduate students registered at the Department of Computer Science of the University of Ottawa for full- or part- time studies in a Major or Specialization program, have voting rights in referendums and elections;
 - (ii) Executive members, as defined in Article VIII, §1 have voting rights in Executive meetings, referendums, and elections;
 - (iii) Director members, who are Members appointed to positions enacted by a vote of the Executive members for a given term. All Executive rules and regulations, except those relating to voting power, shall apply to Director members;
 - (iv) Junior vice presidents are first year members of the CSSA elected by the Executive subject to an application process proposed by the executive. The junior Vice-Presidents shall discuss with an Associated Member of the Executive what the role will entail for their term. The role includes but is not limited to: Assisting with initiatives under the umbrella of their associated member of the executive, Attend CSSA executive Meetings on a regular basis with other Junior Vice-Presidents of the CSSA to ensure they work together to represent first year students in Computer Science at the University of Ottawa.

Article VIII Executive of the Association

1. The Executive shall consist of Members elected as specified in Article XI to the positions of:
 - (i) President, who shall be responsible for chairing the executive meetings of the CSSA, authorizing and co-signing all cheques certified by the CSSA, attending meetings of the Presidents' Roundtable of the UOSU and who shall represent the CSSA at departmental meetings and communicate with the Director for the Faculty of Engineering of the UOSU;
 - (ii) Vice-President Executive Affairs, who shall be responsible for supporting all other executive members of the CSSA in their duties and projects and who shall further be responsible for ensuring that all policies in the CSSA Policy manual are followed as described; VP executive affairs is responsible to reply to any general emails addressed to exec@cssa-aei.com and ensure that the exec is properly cc'd in the response.

- (iii) Vice-President Social Affairs, who shall be responsible for the organization of 101 Week and other social events of the CSSA and who shall attend meetings of the Social Roundtable of the UOSU;
 - (iv) Vice-President External Affairs, who shall be responsible for attending meetings of the University Affairs Round table of the UOSU, organizing the CSSA Winter Career Fair and other professional activities, and acting as a liaison between the CSSA and university services, and a liaison between the CSSA and external entities;
 - (v) Vice-President Internal Affairs, who shall be responsible for the operation of all in-office services provided by the CSSA, keeping the offices of the CSSA in a clean and orderly state, ensuring that all documents pertaining to CSSA business are led in a manner that is accessible to all members of the CSSA, and ensuring that the CSSA office is stocked with all necessary office supplies;
 - (vi) Vice-President Financial Affairs, who shall be responsible for preparing an annual budget for the CSSA as defined in Article XIII, preparing and presenting semester financial reports, attending the Money Round Table meetings of the UOSU, completing and submitting all audits as required by the UOSU, co-signing all cheques made by the CSSA, and supervising all financial transactions of the CSSA;
 - (vii) Vice-President Communications, who shall be responsible for recording the minutes of executive meetings, making publicly available all minutes, translating any content released by the CSSA into all official languages, and preparing the agenda for all meetings of the CSSA and who shall be fluent in all official languages and who shall meet the language requirements as defined in Article XI, §36;
 - (viii) Vice-President Information Technology, who shall be responsible for maintaining, managing, and assisting in the regular use of all information technology infrastructure owned or operated;
 - (ix) Vice-President Academic Affairs, who shall attend meetings of the EECS council, organize academic activities, act as a liaison between students and the University for academic issues and complaints, and manage the mandate of the Junior VP's;
 - (x) Vice-President Philanthropic, who shall attend meetings of the Philanthropic Roundtable of the UOSU, organize philanthropic activities, and ensure the CSSA's participation in charitable campaigns on campus;
 - (xi) Vice-President Equity, who shall be responsible for promoting a focus on equity with an intersectional lens within the fed body; Promoting equity internally and externally as it relates to the fed body; Promoting dialogue and collaboration with equity groups on and off campus; Helping to educate members and executive of the fed body on issues of equity; Act as liaison for marginalized students within the fed body and the fed body executive. Attend Equity Roundtables hosted by the VP Equity of the UOSU; Working with all members of the fed body executive to ensure that fed body events are inclusive, accessible and sustainable as possible;
 - (xii) Vice-President Logistics, who shall be responsible for maintaining accurate inventory numbers of merchandise; Keeping record of all CSSA property that is not in the office at any given time; Determine the Executive's office hours; Be directly responsible for the organization, acquisition, and transport of all the equipment and materials required to run 101 Week; Assist the VP Finance with audits as much as the VP Finance deems necessary.
2. The Executive shall hold at least one (1) meeting per month.
 3. A meeting of the Executive may be called by any Executive member, provided that all Executive members are given forty-eight (48) hours written notice. Should the meeting be conducted over a medium other than in person, the notice must indicate the medium to be used and any information required to access the medium.

4. An agenda for each meeting shall be delivered to all members of the Executive in writing at least forty-eight (48) hours before the start of the meeting.
5. Minutes shall be prepared following every meeting of the Executive, and shall be made publicly available within thirty (30) days.
6. Meetings shall usually be conducted in person, but may also be conducted over any medium that:
 - (i) Is reasonably accessible to all members of the CSSA;
 - (ii) Provides near real time communication;
 - (iii) Provides acceptable audio quality; and
 - (iv) Does not otherwise hinder the efficiency or effectiveness of the meeting.
7. No member of the Executive shall hold more than one Executive position simultaneously.
8. Each Vice-President shall receive one (1) vote on all decisions to be made at a meeting.
9. The President shall receive a maximum of one (1) vote in the event of any or all of the following situations:
 - (i) There exists a tie between the other voting members present at a meeting; or
 - (ii) Excluding the President, there are not enough members present at the meeting to form quorum.
10. A member of the Executive may, with mutual agreement between the two Executive members in question, act as a proxy for an absent Executive member at an Executive Meeting, provided that all other Executive members are notified as such before the meeting in question. In this situation, the absent member shall be counted toward quorum, as defined in Article VIII, §15.
11. During a meeting, any member of the Executive, including the President, may receive up to one (1) additional vote if the member is acting as a proxy for an absent member. No member of the Executive may proxy for more than one (1) absent member per meeting.
12. The following decisions require at least a two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority to pass:
 - (i) Declaration of the official position of the CSSA;
 - (ii) Accepting the annual budget;
 - (iii) Approving any use of the emergency fund defined in Article XIII, §4;
 - (iv) Ratification of a new constitution or amendments to the constitution;
 - (v) Impeaching an Executive member as defined in Article IX, §6; and
 - (vi) Appointing a new member to fill a vacant position.

13. All decisions other than those defined in Article VIII, §12 require at least one-half plus one ($\frac{1}{2} + 1$) of all votes to pass.
14. Any decision of the Executive may be overturned by referendum, as defined in Article XII.
15. Quorum for a meeting of the Executive is defined as one-half plus one ($\frac{1}{2} + 1$) of currently filled positions, except for votes defined in Article VIII, §12 for which the quorum is defined as three quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of currently filled positions.
16. The President shall chair all meetings of the CSSA, unless she is unable to attend, in which case she shall appoint another Executive member as chair. The appointee's voting rights shall be changed to adhere to the President's as defined in Article VIII, §9 for the duration of the meeting for which they were appointed.
17. A member of the Executive may resign from her position provided that:
 - (i) Fourteen (14) days written notice is given to the Executive;
 - (ii) The notice includes the reason for resignation; and
 - (iii) The member completes the duties defined in Article VIII, §18.
18. Prior to the end of their term, all departing members of the Executive must:
 - (i) Pay any outstanding debts to the CSSA;
 - (ii) Provide copies of all written communications received and sent while performing duties related to the CSSA;
 - (iii) Return all property of the CSSA and of the University of Ottawa that was loaned at the start of the member's term;
 - (iv) Perform any additional pre-transition duties as defined from time to time by the Executive; and
 - (v) Provide a transition report to the Executive, the specifications for which shall be detailed in the Policy Manual.
19. If, for any reason, a vacancy opens in the Executive, the remaining Executive shall either:
 - (i) Delegate the duties and responsibilities of the vacant position to other members of the Executive; or
 - (ii) Appoint a student to the vacant position to serve until an election or by-election is held, as defined in Article XI, §35.
20. If a position becomes or remains vacant after the by-election or election nomination period deadline, the Executive may appoint any student to the vacant executive position until the end of its mandate.

Article IX Impeachment

1. Any member of the Executive who, by any action or inaction, negatively affects the interests of the CSSA and its members may be given notice of impeachment.
2. Any member of the Executive may be given notice of impeachment if a petition to said effect with at least twenty (20) CSSA member signatures is presented to the Executive. Impeachments initiated in this way shall be resolved by referendum.
3. Any individual who has been given notice of impeachment shall have the right to defend herself at a meeting of the Executive.
4. Fourteen (14) days written notice must be given to all Executive members prior to an impeachment meeting.
5. Failure of a member subject to a notice of impeachment to appear at or to appoint a proxy for her impeachment meeting shall result in the removal of the impeached individual from the Executive and the loss of any privileges associated with being a member of the Executive.
6. A two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of votes in support of impeaching a member shall result in the removal of the impeached individual from the Executive and the loss of any privileges associated with being a member of the Executive.
7. Following the impeachment of a member of the Executive, the newly vacant position shall be filled as defined in Article VIII, §19. The appointed member shall serve for a maximum of three (3) weeks.
8. Any impeached executive will be given a period of three (3) weeks to submit an appeal in writing. If an appeal is not led in this time, the vacant position may be filled as defined in Article XI, §35.

Article X Complaints

1. Any student may submit a formal, written complaint against a member of the Executive, or the Executive itself. If the complaint is in regards to a specific event, the complaint must be submitted within one hundred and twenty (120) days of the event.
2. The Executive must hold a meeting within seven (7) days of receiving any valid complaint. During this meeting, the Executive must decide whether to admit any wrong-doing, and if applicable, take punitive actions against Executive members named in the complaint. Punitive actions include, and are limited to:
 - (i) Impeachment;

- (ii) Suspension from the Executive for up to thirty (30) days;
 - (iii) Submitting a formal apology; and
 - (iv) Compensation for any damages.
3. If the Executive cannot come to a decision regarding a complaint, the Vice-President University Affairs of the Student Federation shall act as a mediator between complainants and the named executive(s). During these negotiations, the members of the Executive named in the complaint shall be suspended from all duties related to the CSSA.
 4. If an agreement cannot be reached through mediation, the members of the Executive named in the complaint will be given notice of impeachment to be decided by referendum.

Article XI Elections

1. For the entirety of this article, the following terms are defined:
 - (i) A CSSA member shall refer to any part-time or full-time student currently registered in the Department of Computer Science in a Major or Specialization program and enrolled in one (1) or more classes offered by the University of Ottawa.
 - (ii) An EECS member shall refer to any part-time or full-time student currently registered in any class offered by the University of Ottawa in the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.
2. An election shall be held every year no earlier than March 1st and no later than March 31st.
3. Prior to each election, a Chief Elections Officer shall be appointed by the outgoing Executive no later than February 15th.
4. The Chief Elections Officer shall be responsible for the organization, management and execution of elections.
5. The Chief Elections Officer shall fill out a ballot that will be placed in a sealed envelope before the opening of the polling station. This envelope will only be opened in the event of a tie. If two or more candidates have the same number of votes, the Chief Elections Officer's vote shall break the tie.
6. Any person may be appointed as Chief Elections Officer provided that the person does not present candidacy and is not an official representative of any candidates running in the election she presides over.

7. All candidates shall submit a written list of official representatives and volunteers to the Chief Elections Officer prior to the beginning of the campaign period. Any student other than outgoing members of the Executive may be either volunteers or official representatives.
8. Candidates shall be responsible for the actions of their volunteers and official representatives. As such, candidates may receive sanctions as a result of actions committed by their volunteers and / or official representatives at the discretion of the Chief Elections Officer.
9. The Chief Elections Officer shall give written notice all CSSA members at least five (5) business days before the closing of nominations. The notice must include the requirements for candidacy.
10. Members of the Executive shall be elected to serve a one (1) year mandate beginning on May 1st and ending on April 30th of the following year.
11. Any CSSA member may be a candidate for any position defined in Article VIII, §1 provided that a valid nomination form has been submitted in writing to the Chief Elections Officer by the deadline established by the Chief Elections Officer.
12. If no CSSA members present candidacy for a position, any EECS student may be a candidate for that position subject to the same requirements as a CSSA member, excluding the CSSA membership requirement.
13. A valid nomination form shall include ten (10) signatures of CSSA members.
14. The Chief Elections Officer shall give written notice to all CSSA members prior to the start of the campaign period. The notice shall include a list of all candidates.
15. The Chief Elections Officer shall chair an all candidates meeting prior to the start of the campaign period. All candidates absent from the meeting must report to the Chief Elections Officer within two (2) days of the meeting or have their candidacy revoked.
16. The campaign period shall last for at least seven (7) business days and at most ten (10) business days. The campaign period does include the polling days. The campaign period cannot include fall or winter reading week.
17. All polling will be conducted exclusively online or in-person.
18. Online polling shall be conducted online through the CSSA's voting system, through unique voter links sent to all members' uOttawa email addresses.
19. In person polling shall have at least one polling station open from 10:00am until 7:00pm for two (2) days. The polling station(s) shall be in the SITE building.
20. Candidates shall submit a budget detailing all expenses related to the campaign to the Chief Election Officer.
21. Candidates shall not spend more than fifty dollars (\$50) on the campaign

22. Candidates shall keep receipts for all campaign related expenses and submit the receipts to the Chief Elections Officer at the end of the campaign period.
23. The CSSA shall reimburse up to twenty dollars (\$20) per candidate, and up to two hundred (\$200) in aggregate. In the case that the total requested exceeds two hundred dollars (\$200), the Chief Elections Officer shall distribute the funds to the candidates.
24. Candidates shall not use the resources of the CSSA, UOSU or the University of Ottawa for their campaign unless the resource is made available equally to all candidates.
25. All campaign materials shall be available in all of the official languages of the CSSA.
26. The vote shall be made by secret ballot.
27. All CSSA members shall be entitled to one (1) vote.
28. In the event that there is only one (1) candidate running for a position, a yes-no vote shall be held. In order to be elected, a candidate must obtain at least fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) of yes votes.
29. Should a candidate not be elected while running unopposed, they shall not be eligible for election or appointment to the position for which the candidate ran until the next regular election.
30. The Chief Elections Officer shall give written notice of the results of the election as soon as the results are official.
31. In the event that less than 10 votes separate the winning candidate from the runner-up, a recount shall take place.
32. A person shall not present candidacy for multiple positions.
33. Campaigning shall be permitted during polling days, if it is not done through email communications and follows all other campaigning rules and regulations.
34. The Chief Elections Officer may impose the following sanctions when any elections regulations are violated:
 - (i) Withdrawal from the election; or
 - (ii) Declare a percentage of votes in favour of a candidate invalid.
35. Any CSSA member has two (2) working days to contest the election result after the result is made public.
36. Decisions of the Chief Elections Officer may be appealed to the Vice President University Affairs of the UOSU, who shall be responsible for guaranteeing the legitimacy of the election and shall have the authority to enact measures to that effect.
37. In the event that an Executive position remains vacant or that an executive member resigns, the executive may appoint any CSSA member to the vacant position as a director until a by-election is held. This by-election shall be held between September 15th and October 31.

38. Some positions, as defined in Article XI, §1, shall have a requirement for proficiency in all of the official languages of the CSSA. To be considered eligible for such a position, a person must satisfy one following requirements, in addition to those defined above:
 - (i) The candidate has taken at least of one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of her courses in two of the official languages; or
 - (ii) The candidate presents a certificate from the University of Ottawa's Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI) or other governmental certificate that indicates that the candidate is fluent in the official languages of the CSSA.
39. Any person who, in the year preceding the election, has been impeached from the CSSA executive is ineligible to present her candidacy.
40. In order to run for the President position as defined in Article VIII, §1, the candidate must have held a executive position within the CSSA for a full term as defined in Article XI, §10.

Article XII Referendums

1. Any referendum on a clearly proposed question will be called if any member of the CSSA submits a petition with signatures representing at least twenty (20) members or ten percent (10%) of the CSSA membership, which ever is the least.

Article XIII Budget

1. The Executive shall not, under any circumstances, approve a budget that would place the CSSA in debt by budget end.
2. The Executive shall create and approve an annual budget no later than two (2) months after the completion of the annual election.
3. All Executive members shall submit a written budget covering all expenses related to the completion of their duties within one (1) month of their appointment or election to be used as a guideline by the Vice-President of Finance for the creation of the annual budget.
4. The annual budget shall include, but not be limited to, the following items:
 - (i) The maximum allowable amount of funds to be distributed to candidates in the next election, as defined in Article XI, §21; and
 - (ii) An emergency fund equal to five (5) percent of all income received during the year.
5. Any funds that remain in the petty cash fund after the budget end shall be released for use in the next budget.

6. Any funds that remain in the election fund after the conclusion of the annual election shall be redistributed as decided by the Executive.
7. Any use of CSSA funds must be approved by the Executive in a meeting of the Executive, unless the amount required is less than fifty dollars (\$50). If the amount required is less than fifty dollars (\$50), a written agreement between the President and the Vice-President of Finance is sufficient.
8. The Executive shall prepare audits as required by Bylaw 6, Section 4 of the UOSU constitution.
9. All financial documents, including but not limited to budgets, petty cash agreements, audits and receipts shall be kept on record for a minimum of seven (7) years.

Article XIV Constitution Amendment Process

1. The procedure for amending this constitution shall be as follows:
 - (i) A written report detailing the specific amendments shall be presented at a meeting of the Executive, and the report shall be included in the minutes of the meeting;
 - (ii) Following the meeting, there shall be a minimum five (5) days and maximum fourteen (14) days reflection period during which the proposed amendments shall be publicly available;
 - (iii) Following the reflection period, a meeting of the Executive shall be held, and the proposed amendments will be voted on.
2. The date of the most recent ratification of this document shall be included at the beginning of this document.
3. All previously ratified versions of this document shall be made available upon request.