

Plebiscites & Referenda

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure for initiating plebiscite and referendum questions, and regulate the Faculty Association Membership Fee referendum.

Policy:

Initiating Plebiscite & Referendum Questions:

- Where a member wishes to initiate a referendum or plebiscite via petition, that member shall submit to the Executive Director:
 - The intent of the question;
 - Whether the question is a plebiscite or a referendum; and
 - The name, student identification, and email of that member;
- Upon receipt of a submission meeting the requirements set out above, the Executive Director shall immediately forward the intent of the question to the Student Review Board. Any proposed motion must present a clear question, sufficiently narrow in scope for there to be absolutely no ambiguity with respect to the answers. The final text must be approved by the Students' Review Board and may be forwarded to the SU Bylaw Committee for consultation.
- The Student Review Board shall approve the question which:
 - Fully reflects the intent submitted by the member; and
 - If carried and acted upon, would not violate any ASA or Students' Union bylaws or federal or provincial law.
- Following approval from the Student Review Board, ASA Students' Council shall approve the question which meets the criteria set out in this policy unless the question would cause Students' Council to breach its fiduciary responsibility to the ASA and/or the University of Alberta Students' Union.
- Once a question is approved by the Student Review Board and Students' Council, the approved question will be forwarded back to the initiating member who must then collect support of at least fifteen (15) percent of the total membership of the ASA.
- A referendum/plebiscite will only be held on a question if:
 - a valid petition bearing the names, signatures, and student identification numbers of at least fifteen (15) percent of the total membership of the ASA requesting a referendum/plebiscite is returned to the D.R.O. by February 1st of a given academic year;
 - if the names, signatures, and student identification numbers were all collected within thirty (30) days of the submission of the petition; and
 - if the regulations set out in this policy were adhered to throughout the entire initiation process.
- Unless otherwise recommended by the Student Review Board, all plebiscite or referendum questions will be considered passed by a simple majority vote.
- Students' Council shall have the authority to call a plebiscite or referendum without a petition. Such a motion will require a 2/3 majority vote of Students' Council.

Plebiscites & Referenda

Referenda Deadlines:

- The primary course of action will be to run all referendum and plebiscite questions during the annual spring election. In order to get the question approved, support collected, and the question on the ballot, the initiating member must submit their application, as outlined above, to the Executive Director no later than the last week of November in any given year.
- After a question is approved by the Students' Review Board and Students' Council, the initiating member of the question must return a completed petition to the D.R.O. no later than February 1 of that academic year.
- In order to have a referendum question run outside of the Spring Election, the initiating member must appeal to the Student Review Board. The motion requires a unanimous vote of the Student Review Board to pass. The Student Review Board will only approve motions on the basis of time sensitivity.

Plebiscite and Referendum Campaign Side Selection

- At least twenty-eight (28) days in advance of the plebiscite or referendum, the D.R.O. shall schedule and announce a meeting for the registration of sides. This meeting must take place no more than twenty-one (21) and no fewer than fourteen (14) days in advance of the plebiscite or referendum vote. During the annual spring elections this meeting will take place in conjunction with the candidates meeting.
- For each plebiscite or referendum, there shall only be:
 - one "yes" side;
 - one "no" side;
 - and no other official sides.
- A referendum can run without a 'no' side but cannot run without a registered 'yes' side.
- Members wishing to register themselves as part of a side must attend the meeting for registering sides.
- A member's registration for a side shall be accepted when the member
 - Attends the meeting for registering sides;
 - Announces their intention to register for a side;
 - Provides the D.R.O. with their name, student identification number, and contact information; and
 - The D.R.O. is satisfied that the member does not aim to falsely represent that side by registering for it.
- No member shall register for more than one (1) side for any plebiscite or referendum.
- Each side shall select, from among the members registered to it, one (1) side manager.
- The side manager is required to attend the results meeting at the close of voting.
- Any member of the ASA Executive Committee is eligible to serve as a side manager of a referenda/plebiscite side without taking a leave of absence from their position as an executive.

Plebiscites & Referenda

Faculty Association Membership Fee:

- As per SU Bylaw 8200, the ASA must reaffirm their membership fee, through referendum, every five years.
- The FAMF referendum shall be held in accordance to the above policy, ASA Bylaws, and SU Bylaws.
- The wording of the question must be approved by the SU Bylaw committee.
- The Faculty Association Membership Fee will be considered approved in a referendum where the following conditions are met:
 - All base members of the ASA, as defined by Bylaw 3.01, are eligible to vote;
 - A minimum voter turnout of 15% was achieved;
 - A majority of votes casts are in favour of the fee;
 - The referendum was conducted in accordance with the Association's legislation and Students' Union bylaw.
- The ASA VP Academic or other designated Executive member will be responsible for organizing the official 'yes' campaign.
 - No ASA member can use their official ASA emails to promote the 'yes' campaign;
 - Any ASA resources used by the 'yes' campaign will be assessed at market value against the 'yes' campaign's budget.
 - The ASA can use official social media for promoting the 'yes' campaign.
- If an official 'no' campaign is registered through the D.R.O., they will be allotted the same campaign spending limit, and both sides will otherwise be governed by the rules and regulations set out in policies #2.5.1, #2.5.2, and #2.5.3.
- The Augustana Students' Association will set a spending limit of \$250 for each registered side. The money shall be reimbursed after receipts have been submitted to the D.R.O.