

Senate Election Procedures

Effective Date: September 19, 2025

Supersedes: May 17, 2024; October 13, 2023, July 1, 2023; October 14, 2022, October 15, 2021; November 13, 2020; March 2019

The University of Western Ontario Act 1982 as amended in 1988 and 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the Act), in Sections 24 and 25 defines the composition of Senate and sets out general provisions for election of members, including eligibility for candidacy and voting, the establishment of a staggering of terms at the time of first elections, and a provision for the designation of constituencies within units.

For purposes of these Senate Election Procedures, “the University” means Western University, excluding the Affiliated University Colleges; and

The “Affiliated University Colleges” means Huron University College and King’s University College.

THE ELECTION OF FACULTY, ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF, UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AND GRADUATE STUDENT MEMBERS

A.1 General

1. The University Secretary shall have responsibility for overseeing all aspects of Senate elections including engaging and promoting the electoral process, administering elections including voting, ruling on election matters in accordance with these Procedures, and communicating information to the public and candidates.
2. The schedule for calling for nominations, publication of candidates' names, and timelines for campaigning and balloting shall be as published by the University Secretary on or before November 30 each year. Normally, nominations are open for approximately two weeks in early January, followed by a campaign period.
3. Elections of faculty members from the Affiliated University Colleges are conducted by each Affiliated University College, with the names of those elected being forwarded to the University Secretary.

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4. With the exception of faculty elected from the Affiliated University Colleges, candidates for election must be nominated by means of an official nomination form available from the University Secretary and accessible on the University Secretariat website.
5. Nomination forms for administrative staff and students must be supported by three persons eligible to vote in the unit or constituency to be represented.
6. Nomination forms for faculty members shall be supported in one of the following ways:
 - (a) by three members eligible to vote in the academic unit or constituency to be represented; or
 - (b) by the Nominating Committee of the Council of the Faculty or School through the Chair of the Nominating Committee, the Dean, or in the case of the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), the Vice-Provost.
7. Candidates must declare on the nomination form:
 - (a) that they are willing to stand as candidates for election and to serve if elected;
 - (b) that they meet the eligibility requirements for the unit or constituency; and
 - (c) that they are validly supported in their nomination, including the specifics of that support (such as the names of nominators).
8. Candidates must submit with the nomination form a statement of interest up to a limit of 200 words and may submit a digital photograph for publication. Statements may not contain hyperlinks. The statement and the digital photograph (if provided) of the candidate will be posted on the election website and linked to the ballot, and by submitting the statement and photograph, candidates agree to such posting.
9. Errors or irregularities on a nomination form constitute grounds for rejection of the nomination by the University Secretary.
10. When only sufficient nominations to fill the vacancies for any unit or constituency are received, the University Secretary shall declare the person or persons nominated elected by acclamation.
11. Except where election is by acclamation, election shall be by secret ballot by those eligible to vote in the unit or constituency concerned.
12. Balloting will be conducted during a designated period using a secure

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electronic platform. Names shall be listed on the ballot by last name alphabetically.

13. Where more than one seat is vacant in any unit or constituency, voters may vote for candidates up to the maximum number of seats available. Candidates with the most votes will fill the vacant seats in order of votes received from most to least.
14. If in any election there is a tie vote, the election shall be determined by lottery conducted by the University Secretary in the presence of the candidates concerned or their agents.
15. An election shall not be invalidated by any irregularity which, as determined by the University Secretary, does not affect the outcome. Notification of any irregularity must be received by the University Secretary within five business days of the closing of the polls.
16. The results of the election shall be announced as soon as possible after the close of balloting. The number of votes received by each candidate will be made public.
17. A list of voting results, validated by the University Secretary, and nomination forms shall be retained for a period of two years.
18. In accordance with the Act, the following pertains with respect to terms for the various constituencies represented on Senate:
 - (a) Faculty members, administrative staff, and members of the general community are elected to two-year terms. They may serve two consecutive terms, following which they are not eligible for further election for two years.
 - (b) Students are elected to one-year terms. They may serve four consecutive terms, following which they are not eligible for further election for two years.
 - (c) When an individual is elected to complete the term of another Senator, that time is not included in the individual's eligibility to serve in their own right.
 - (d) Eligibility for re-election to Senate is unaffected by a Leave of Absence taken during a regular membership term, which shall not be construed as a break in the continuity of a regular membership term.

A.2 Elected Representatives – Distribution of Seats

A.2.1 *Faculty Members*

Constituency	Seats
School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (One from each of the following disciplinary groupings: Law/Information and Media Studies/Music; Arts and Humanities; Education; Engineering; Health Sciences; Business; Medicine & Dentistry; Science; Social Science; SGPS At-Large)	10
Faculty of Arts and Humanities	5
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry (4 from and elected by Medicine & Dentistry; 1 from and elected by Dentistry)	5
Faculty of Science	5
Faculty of Social Science	5
Faculty of Health Sciences	4
Faculty of Information and Media Studies	2
Faculty of Education	2
Faculty of Engineering	2
Faculty of Law	2
Don Wright Faculty of Music	2
Ivey Business School	2
Each Affiliated University College	2

A.2.2 *Full-time Administrative Staff*

Two members of the full-time administrative staff elected thereby.

A.2.3 Students

Constituency	Seats
<i>Undergraduate Students:</i>	
Faculty of Social Science	2
Faculty of Science (incl. Bachelor of Medical Sciences (BMSc) years 1 & 2)	2
Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Don Wright Faculty of Music, and Faculty of Information and Media Studies	1
Faculties of Education, Engineering and Law, and the Ivey Business School	1
Faculty of Health Sciences	1
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry (incl. BMSc years 3 & 4)	1
Huron University College	1
King's University College	1
At-Large	4
<i>Graduate Students</i>	4

A.3 Eligibility

A.3.1 Faculty Members

- (a) To be eligible for election to the Senate, a faculty member (including those holding Clinical Academic appointments) must be a member, either full-time or part-time, at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher, of the academic unit or constituent parts thereof as designated by the Senate or Affiliated University College to be represented, and must have held an academic appointment in the University or Affiliated University College for at least two academic years. Elected faculty whose employment status at the University or Affiliated University College ends during their term shall cease to be Senators.
- (b) To vote for representatives of Faculties and Schools, members of faculty of the University (including those holding Clinical Academic appointments), at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher, must be listed as such in the records of Human Resources. To vote for faculty representatives of the Affiliated University College, members of the faculty of the Affiliated University Colleges, at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher, must be listed as such in the relevant records of the Affiliated University College in question.
- (c) A member of faculty holding an appointment in more than one academic unit (or constituency within that unit) other than the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies may be nominated only in the unit designated as the "Home Faculty/School". Such a member of faculty is, however, eligible to vote in each academic unit in which they are a member.

A.3.2 Full-time Administrative Staff

All employees of the University who are recorded in Human Resources as holding a full-time continuing position and who are not members of the faculty (excluding limited duties appointments) are eligible for election and to vote. A member of full-time administrative staff who is registered as a student is not eligible to vote in the undergraduate or graduate student constituencies. Elected administrative staff whose employment status at the University ends during their term shall cease to be Senators.

A.3.3 Students

Any full- or part-time student who is registered, at the time of the call for nominations, in one of the academic units comprising the constituency is eligible to be a candidate and to vote in their academic unit of registration constituency except that those who are otherwise included in a faculty or administrative staff constituency shall not be eligible to be a candidate for election or vote. In any given Senate election, a student may not be a candidate in more than one constituency. Elected individuals who cease to have the status of a registered student at the University during their term shall cease to be Senators.

Western University students on exchange are eligible to vote in the constituency in which they were registered at the time of leaving for an exchange.

A.4 Procedures

A.4.1 Faculty Members and Full-time Administrative Staff

- (a) The University Secretary shall call for nominations, normally within the first three weeks of January each year.
- (b) Completed nomination forms must be submitted to the University Secretary within the nominations period as posted by the University Secretariat. The University Secretary shall publish official lists of the valid nominations on the University Secretariat website within two business days after the close of nominations. The official lists shall be organized by constituency and by last name alphabetically, showing the rank (for faculty), title and academic/administrative unit of each candidate.
- (c) Elections shall be conducted by electronic ballot.
- (d) If at any annual election no nominations are received for a faculty constituency, Senate will appoint a member upon the recommendation of the unit concerned based on the unit's internal nomination procedures. The name of the member will be submitted to Senate for information through the

Operations/Agenda Committee.

- (e) If at any annual election no nominations are received for the administrative staff constituency, the University Secretary shall issue as soon as possible after the close of nominations a second call for nominations, followed by a by-election. The timeline and procedures for the by-election will be as given in paragraphs (b), (c) and (f) of this section. In the event that a by-election fails to yield a candidate, the seat(s) shall be filled in accordance with the procedures for filling of mid-year vacancies (see section B.6, below).
- (f) The University Secretary shall publish the names of the successful candidates on the University Secretariat website, as soon as possible after the close of the balloting. The successful candidates for each unit/constituency shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes in each unit/constituency concerned.

A.4.2 Students

- (a) When possible, elections to the undergraduate and graduate student constituencies are timed to run in conjunction with the University Students' Council (USC) and Society of Graduate Students (SOGS) presidential elections. Calls for nomination will be issued in accordance with the posted Election Schedule.
- (b) Students registered in Years 1 and 2 of the Bachelor of Medical Science (BMSc) program will be nominated and vote in the "Faculty of Science constituency", while students registered in Years 3 and 4 of the BMSc program will be nominated and vote in the "Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry constituency".
- (c) If, at any annual election, an Affiliated University College constituency fails to nominate a representative, the seat thus unfilled shall migrate to the other Affiliated University College for that year only and be filled by election from the nominations for that Affiliated University College.
- (d) Notwithstanding A.4.2(c) If, at any annual election, an undergraduate academic constituency fails to nominate a representative(s), the seat(s) thus unfilled shall migrate to the undergraduate "At Large" constituency for that year only and be filled by election from the "At Large" nominations.
- (e) If one or more "At Large" seats are not filled, the required members shall be determined by the USC and provided to Senate for information through the Operations/Agenda Committee.
- (f) If at any annual election insufficient nominations are received for the graduate student constituency, the required members shall be determined as outlined

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in the procedure for the Filling of Mid-Year Vacancies and Appointment of Alternates (see section C.5(c)).

- (g) A mandatory all-candidates meeting will be scheduled for undergraduate student candidates. Undergraduate student candidates who do not attend or do not make arrangements to send a designate will be disqualified from candidacy. The University Secretary shall publish official lists of the valid undergraduate and graduate student nominations on the University Secretariat website within two business days after the close of nominations. The official list shall be by last name alphabetically, and show for each candidate the academic program as recorded in the official student records of the University or the relevant Affiliated University College.
- (h) For undergraduate students, the University Secretary may employ the USC Electoral Governance Board to supervise campaigning by candidates but any decision that a candidate be disqualified may be appealed to the University Secretary by 4:00 p.m. of the second working day following the date of the letter notifying the candidate of the Electoral Governance Board's decision that the candidate be disqualified. Where there is inconsistency between the policies and procedures stated in USC By-Law #2 and those of the Senate, the policies and procedures of the Senate shall take precedence and the final authority for resolving all disputes in such matters shall rest with the University Secretary.
- (i) For graduate students, the University Secretary may employ the SOGS Chief Returning Officer and Appeals Review Commission to supervise campaigning by candidates but any decision that a candidate be disqualified may be appealed to the University Secretary by 4:00 p.m. of the second working day following the date of the letter notifying the candidate of the Appeals Commission's decision that the candidate be disqualified. Where there is inconsistency between the policies and procedures stated in the SOGS election regulations and those of the Senate, the policies and procedures of the Senate shall take precedence and the final authority for resolving all disputes in such matters shall rest with the University Secretary.
- (j) When either the USC or SOGS processes are not employed, candidates will be required to adhere to the campaign requirements and processes established by the Operations/Agenda Committee of Senate.
- (k) The University Secretary shall publish the names of the successful candidates on the University Secretariat website, as soon as possible after the close of the balloting. The successful candidates shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes in each constituency concerned.

B. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GENERAL COMMUNITY

1. Senate membership includes five persons from the general community, one of whom shall be active in or associated with the field of secondary school education, consisting of:
 - (a) the President of the Alumni Association of the University or a person designated by the President of the Alumni Association, and two members of the Alumni Association appointed by the Alumni Association; and
 - (b) two persons appointed by Senate pursuant to the following provisions.
2. The Senate Nominating Committee shall select representatives from the general community to serve on the Senate in accordance with Section 24(1)(g)(ii) of the Act.
3. The Senate Nominating Committee shall, after receiving advice from such bodies or individuals as it may deem appropriate and in knowledge of the appointments to be made by the Alumni Association, present to Senate for information the names of the representatives of the general community.
4. Members of the General Community are elected to two-year terms. They may serve two consecutive terms, following which they are not eligible for further election for two years.

C. FILLING OF MID-YEAR VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

1. Vacancies may occur for various reasons, including through resignation or requests for leaves of absence. In the case of absences or leaves of absence granted in accordance with Senate By-Laws, the appointment of a replacement or alternate will follow the procedures outlined below.
2. The appointee to fill a vacancy must meet all criteria for Senate membership as defined in the Act and these Procedures.
3. Where a vacancy occurs before the term of office for which a person has been appointed or elected has expired,
 - (a) if the vacancy is that of an appointed member, the vacancy may be filled by the same authority which appointed that member;
 - (b) if the vacancy is that of an elected member, the provisions below apply, depending on the relevant constituency;

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- (c) a person appointed or elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the person who is replaced.

4. *Faculty*

Senate will appoint a member upon the recommendation of the unit concerned based on the unit's internal nomination procedures. The name of the member will be submitted to Senate for information through the Operations/Agenda Committee.

5. *Students*

- (a) In the case of a vacant seat in an undergraduate student constituency, if the vacancy occurs between July 1st and April 30th, the Senate Nominating Committee shall select a replacement from the constituency. The name of the replacement shall be submitted to Senate for information.
- (b) In the graduate student constituency, if the vacancy occurs between July 1st and April 30th the Senate Nominating Committee shall select a replacement from the constituency. The name of the replacement shall be submitted to Senate for information.
- (c) If a student vacancy occurs subsequent to April 30th and prior to July 1st of the same year, the Senator-elect in the constituency will be invited by the University Secretary to assume the vacant seat. In the case of constituencies where there is more than one Senator-elect, the invitations will be extended to candidates in an order determined by their votes received from most to least in that election.

6. *Full-time Administrative Staff*

The Senate Nominating Committee shall select a replacement. The name of the replacement shall be submitted to Senate for information.

7. *General Community Members Elected by Senate*

The Senate Nominating Committee shall select a replacement. The name of the replacement shall be submitted to Senate for information.