

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Undergraduate Union Constitution

This is the constitution of the EEBU with the Winter 2023 amendments of:

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Undergraduate Union is to advocate on behalf of, and foster a sense of community between students participating in EEB or BIO courses and programs, and to remain transparent, promote equity, and conduct business in an upstanding manner.

Definitions

- **EEB Course** - is any course with an EEB course code or that is listed under the EEB department's page in the academic calendar.
- **Executive meeting** - a meeting at which the EEBU's executive committee convenes to discuss matters relevant to the EEBU.
- **General committee** - the EEBU executives and all constituents.
- **General meeting** - any meeting at which the EEBU's general committee convenes to discuss matters relevant to the EEBU.
- **ASSU** - The Arts and Science Student Union is the student union that oversees and funds the EEBU, and all other course unions at UofT's Faculty of Arts & Science
- **Referendum** - A general vote on an issue being put forward to the EEBU, often involves an amendment to the constitution.
- **Election** - The election of executive officers to be held annually.
- **By-election** - The election of executive officers in the event there is a vacancy.
- **Quorum** - The required number of votes cast for a vote to be passed, or the required number of individuals in attendance at a meeting for the meeting to proceed.
- **Committee** - A sub-group of constituents or executives for the purpose of working towards a particular goal. Usually chaired by one member of the committee.
- **Chair** - Leader of a group or moderator of a meeting.

Purpose

1.1 The official designation of this organization shall be "the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Undergraduate Union" or "EEBU".

1.2 The Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Undergraduate Union is hereafter referred to, in this document, as "EEBU".

1.3 The EEBU is a student organization of the department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Toronto.

1.4 The EEBU takes direction from its constituents and works solely for the benefit of the constituents.

Constituency

2.1 The EEBU represents all full-time undergraduate students enrolled in any ecology and evolutionary biology (EEB) program of study or any course listed on the EEB page of the most current academic calendar who are also Arts & Science Student Union (ASSU) members (or ASSU-fee paying members) registered on the St. George campus.

Responsibilities

3.1 The EEBU is responsible for organizing events, both social and academic, for EEBU constituents.

3.2 The EEBU serves as an intermediate communicator between undergraduate students and the department and represents students in matters concerning the department where necessary.

3.3 The EEBU is responsible for assisting the department with their events, including informational fairs, upon request.

Executive Committee

4.1 The EEBU executive committee shall consist of ten executive officers, referred to as the “executive”.

4.1.1 All EEBU executives must be a part of the EEBU constituency for the duration of the time they hold office.

4.1.2 The EEBU executive shall consist of: two co-presidents, one treasurer, one department coordinator, two social directors, one social media director, one webmaster, one engagement director, and one secretary.

4.2 The co-presidents are responsible for the overall organization and running of the EEBU’s Executive Committee and shall oversee the general administration of the EEBU.

4.2.2 The co-presidents must chair all EEBU general and executive meetings.

4.2.3 The co-presidents must call at least two meetings per semester.

4.2.4 At least one co-president must attend all ASSU meetings or must send a proxy in their place.

4.2.5 The co-presidents ensure that the EEBU acts in accordance with this constitution, the ASSU constitution, and with all other regulations of the University.

4.2.6 The co-presidents are responsible for all external communications including those with the EEB department, constituents, and other student organizations.

4.2.7 The co-presidents oversee all non-executive members of the EEBU including associates.

4.2.8 If a co-curricular record credit is available, the co-presidents ensure that it is appropriately awarded to EEBU members who have completed their roles.

4.3 The treasurer is responsible for overseeing the funds received and spent by the EEBU, as well as making those records available to constituents and future treasurers.

4.3.1 The treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the budget and the recording of purchases and income.

4.3.2 The treasurer is responsible for ensuring that all funds received from the ASSU are used appropriately and within the mission of the EEBU.

4.3.3 The treasurer must make any financial documents available to constituents upon request and must answer questions regarding the financial transactions of the EEBU upon request.

4.3.4 The treasurer is responsible for ensuring all EEBU executives are reimbursed for authorized purchases and awarded honoraria made on behalf of the EEBU

4.3.5 The treasurer is responsible for compiling and submitting any required audit materials.

4.4 The department coordinator is responsible for communication between the EEB department, the EEBU, and the constituents.

4.4.1 The department coordinator is responsible for holding academic events.

4.4.2 The department coordinator is responsible for hosting at least one academic seminar per semester.

4.4.3 The department coordinator is responsible for aiding the EEB department upon request.

4.4.4 The department coordinator is responsible for inviting EEB faculty and staff to relevant EEBU events.

4.4.5 The department coordinator may create sub-committees at any time during the year composed of any EEBU constituents to aid them in planning and executing events. Executives may sit on these sub-committees.

4.4.6 The department coordinator is responsible for sharing details regarding EEBU events, opportunities, and other relevant information with BIO120 and BIO220 course coordinators.

4.5 The two social directors are responsible for the coordination and hosting of all EEBU social events.

4.5.1 The social directors are responsible for hosting at least two social events per semester.

4.5.2 The social directors are responsible for coordinating with other organizations to host events where possible.

4.5.3 The social directors may create sub-committees at any time during the year composed of any EEBU constituents to aid them in planning and executing events. Executives may sit on these sub-committees.

4.6 The webmaster is responsible for handling website media and communications for the EEBU.

4.6.1 The webmaster is responsible for updating and improving the EEBU website and ensuring it remains up to date throughout their term.

4.6.2 The webmaster is responsible for reading and responding to emails received by the EEBU email address at least once per week.

4.6.3 The webmaster is responsible for keeping the EEBU calendar(s) up to date.

4.7 The social media coordinator creates all social media and advertises EEBU events.

4.7.1 The social media coordinator is responsible for advertising all events sponsored and organized by the EEBU and ensuring that all communications are done in accordance with the ASSU and University guidelines.

4.7.2 The social media coordinator is responsible for the management of all EEBU social media including but not limited to: the EEBU Instagram, Facebook, and Discord pages.

4.7.3 The social media coordinator is responsible for ensuring other EEBU communications are distributed to constituents including elections information, referendum information, and general activities of the EEBU.

4.7.4 The social media coordinator must check all EEBU social media and respond to messages received at least once per week. Messages that they cannot respond to must be discussed with EEBU presidents, and if necessary, other executives.

4.8 The engagement coordinator is responsible for running all contests and collaborating with other EEBU members to increase engagement in the EEB community.

4.8.1 The engagement coordinator is responsible for organizing EEBU's apparel sales at least once during the year and is responsible for organizing the art contest to design the apparel.

4.8.2 The engagement coordinator may choose to run photo contests and other contests throughout the year.

4.8.3 The engagement coordinator should work closely with other EEBU executives to create engagement opportunities outside of events for the EEBU.

4.9 The secretary keeps all records of the EEBU and takes minutes at meetings.

4.9.1 The secretary must attend all ASSU meetings or must send a proxy in their place. The secretary should record notes at ASSU meetings and relay any information relevant to the EEBU to the other executives.

4.9.2 The secretary must keep records of all general and executive meetings including recording the attendance.

4.9.3 In meetings where a vote is required, the secretary must record the vote and oversee any ballot counts.

4.9.4 The secretary must make any meeting minutes publicly available upon request.

4.9.5 If amendments to this constitution are proposed, the secretary is responsible for organizing them and assembling them to be voted on.

4.9.6 If amendments to this constitution are passed, the secretary is responsible for updating this document and sending it to all relevant parties which includes the ASSU and the EEB department.

4.9.7 The secretary should be familiar with this document and prepared to answer questions regarding its meaning when necessary.

4.10 All executives must hold at least one hour of office hours per week in-person or virtual.

4.10.1 Office hours must be advertised at least two days in advance and must be open to all EEBU constituents.

4.11 All executives must attend executive and general meetings and must notify the secretary if they are unable to attend.

4.12 No executive may hold more than one position on the EEBU at any time.

4.13 Two weeks before the end of their term, all EEBU executives must submit a transition document to the president which must be passed to the future executives. Transition documents must contain any and all necessary information the executive needed complete their role, and any advice or thoughts they can offer to the next EEBU council.

4.14 Any executive may be removed from their position through a two thirds vote of the constituents with a quorum set at 100 constituents.

4.14.1 The EEBU is not responsible for confirming the status of voting constituents during voting. The EEBU should provide the definition of “constituent” under article 2.1 and ask that only constituents cast votes.

4.15 Any executive may form a committee. If the executives wish the committee to continue into future years, they may open applications at the conclusion of their term to select new chairs for that committee for the coming year.

Meetings

5.1 Meetings can be called by the co-presidents.

5.2 The secretary and co-presidents must prepare an agenda once a meeting is called.

5.3 If fifty constituents request a meeting, the president must call a general meeting.

5.4 General meetings are public and all constituents have a vote. General meetings must be advertised to constituents at least two weeks in advance and constituents must have access to join them.

5.5 Any executive meeting at which a vote is held must have no more than one executive member absent.

5.6 If at least half of the voting executives request a vote on an issue, a vote must be held.

Elections

6.1 All candidates and voters of an EEBU election must be current EEBU constituents.

6.2 All elections must be completed in either March or April to select executives for the following academic year.

6.3 The outgoing executives serve until the last day of Arts & Science exams in their year, and then the responsibilities are handed over to the incoming executives.

6.4 No candidate may run for more than two positions in an election.

6.5 There will be an elections officer appointed by a two-thirds majority vote of the executives to oversee the elections.

6.5.1 The elections officer cannot run for any positions in the election.

6.5.2 The elections officer should be a member of the current executives. In the event that an executive cannot be chosen as the elections officer, constituents may self nominate during a 1 week period advertised by the executives for at least 5 days prior to the nomination period.

6.5.3 The elections officer may work with executives during the election process but should keep private information confidential. Private information includes releasing voter personal information like names or emails, and disclosing election results before they are publicly released.

6.5.4 The elections officer must create an elections schedule, election rules, and campaign rules that must be consistent for all candidates and enforced equally. These rules can change year to year so long as they follow the rules in this constitution. They must be communicated to all candidates and to the current executives by the end of the nomination period.

6.5.5 An elections officer may be removed or replaced via the same process as the removal of executives outlined in article 4.

6.6 Candidates for executive positions must submit a nomination to the elections officer. They must be given at least one week after the announcement of the election to do so. The nomination should consist of their basic personal information (such as student number, name, email, etc.) and a nomination statement that will be presented to voters on the ballot.

6.6.1 Candidates can withdraw or change their nominations during that one week period.

6.7 Candidates must be given at least 48 hours to campaign.

6.8 Elections must be run on a secure and anonymous platform, either in person or online.

6.9 No current EEBU member may use any privileges awarded to them as a part of the EEBU while campaigning for a position.

6.10 Campaigns must be positive. No candidates may run a joint campaign, and must run independently.

6.11 The elections officer may choose to run a debate or speech event where constituents can meet their candidates.

6.12 Elections will use the instant-runoff voting system.

6.12.1 “Reopen Nominations” will be an option for all positions alongside the candidate(s) names.

6.12.2 If the position is contested by more than two candidates, voters rank candidates in ascending order of preference. Ballots are initially counted based on a voter’s first choice. If one candidate secures more than half of the votes, then that candidate wins. If not, then the candidate with the fewest first selection votes is eliminated. Ballots assigned to the eliminated candidate are recounted and added to the totals based on the candidate ranked second on those ballots. This process continues until one candidate wins by obtaining more than one half of the votes.

6.12.3 If, through the described process, the “Reopen Nominations” option gains more than half the votes, then a by-election must be held through the same processes as a general election.

6.12.4 Candidates must rank the positions they are running for in order of preference. If a candidate is elected in both positions for which they are competing, they will be elected in the position they ranked first. If a candidate wins a position by winning more than 50% of the votes via instant runoff voting, they are removed from the second position that they ran in if applicable, and all votes received for that candidate in their second position competition will be redistributed to the next available candidate choice as per instant runoff voting rules.

6.13 The elections officer must count the votes and may be asked to recount by a majority vote of the executives.

6.14 If no candidates are nominated for the open executive positions, a by-election must be held to fill those positions.

6.15 By-elections, if they are needed, are to be held in September or October in the following school year after the general election is finished. A by-election may also be held later in the year if there is a vacant executive position.

6.16 The voting period must be announced publicly at least one week before it begins and must be accessible to all constituents.

Referendum

7.1 All amendments to this constitution must be in accordance with the ASSU’s constitution.

7.2 In order to amend this constitution, a two-thirds majority vote of the general committee is required. Quorum is set at 100 constituents.

7.2.1 The EEBU is not responsible for confirming the status of voting constituents during voting. The EEBU should provide the definition of “constituent” under article 2.1 and ask that only constituents cast votes.

7.3 Referendums are overseen by the elections officer and can be voted on at the same time as general elections or by-elections. A meeting must be held before a referendum to allow discussion and proposals of new amendments. This meeting must be open to all constituents.

7.4 Amendments that do not change the meaning of an article (e.g. grammar, spelling, or style changes) may be put forward without a vote.

7.5 All constituents must be notified of an upcoming referendum at least one week in advance and given at least one week to submit any suggested amendments. Voting must take place either in a single meeting or over the course of at least 2 days if voting is held asynchronously.

7.6 Voting must be anonymous and must offer the option to agree (“In favor”), disagree (“Opposed”), or abstain from voting (“Abstain”).

7.8 As with elections, referendum voting may be carried out through a secure online platform at the discretion of the elections officer.

Extenuating Circumstances

8.1 An extenuating circumstance is when any outside influence beyond the control of the EEBU directly or indirectly impedes the execution of a part of this constitution.

8.2 If an extenuating circumstance occurs, a unanimous vote of the executives may suspend those relevant articles for the remainder of the academic year.

8.3 The EEBU must issue a public statement of the changes being implemented and constituents may call for a vote on the executives’ decision if at least 50 constituents petition for a vote. If a vote is called, the elections officer must be selected and all constituents may vote. If the vote passes by majority, the articles that were previously suspended must be reinstated with a quorum set at 100 constituents.

8.3.1 The EEBU is not responsible for confirming the status of voting constituents during voting. The EEBU should provide the definition of “constituent” under article 2.1 and ask that only constituents cast votes.

8.4 In the event there is at any time, a complete vacancy of the executives, the EEB department may appoint acting executives to hold an election at the earliest possible time.