

# THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PHYSICS STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The “Physics Student Association” (PSA) is an organization of primarily physics and engineering students working to develop camaraderie and community within the physics department, as well as between other science students. We as an association offer a work area for students to receive help from fellow students and a community of colleagues to orchestrate a social network. We aim to enhance the educational experiences of our members by organizing guest lectures and tours of scientific facilities, and providing opportunities for learning outside of the classroom setting.

## Section I: Official Name, Acronym, and Logo

The name of the association shall be the “*University of the Fraser Valley Physics Student Association*”. The acronym *PSA* may be used in place of the full name where appropriate. Hereinafter, the PSA may be referred to as “the Association”.

The Official Logo of the UFV Physics Student Association shall be:



Acceptable alternate forms of the official logo are:



The official logo, or any of the stated acceptable alternative forms may only be used with permission from the current President or Vice President of the PSA. The logo shall appear on all official PSA documents, letterhead, banners, handouts, posters, business cards, and corkboards.

For any Engineering related business of the Association, the above logo, or the below alternate logo may be used.



## **Section II: Objectives**

The objectives of the PSA shall be to:

1. Encourage and assist students interested in physics to develop the knowledge, competence, enthusiasm, and social responsibility that are essential to the advancement of physics.
2. Stimulate interest in advance study and research in physics.
3. Develop collegiality among physics students and faculty members, as well as instill inter-discipline cooperation and collaboration within the UFV student associations.
4. Promote public interest in physics.
5. Offer a work area for students to receive help from fellow students and a community of colleagues to orchestrate a social network.
6. Enhance the educational experience by organizing guest lectures and tours of scientific facilities, and providing opportunities for learning outside of the classroom setting.

## **Section III: Membership**

1. Membership of the PSA consists of all undergraduate students currently enrolled in at least one (1) course offered by the UFV Physics Department or who are enrolled in a Degree or Diploma program offered by the Physics Department.
2. Associate membership will also be available to anyone with an interest in Physics or the activities of the PSA. Associate membership requires attendance at the annual AGM, and at least two other events (excluding Casino Royale and the Big Bang) hosted by the Association during an academic year (April to the following April)
3. Full members are granted voting rights at any general meeting, and may stand for election to the executive committee, provided they are in good standing with the association and the Student Union Society.
4. Associate members who are registered with the association may also vote at any general meeting, but may not stand for election to any position of the executive committee.
5. If a member is involved in theft, fraud, or any commission or omission of an act or acts detrimental to the PSA as determined by the Executive, they will be referred to the UFV Student Union Society and to the Associate Dean of Students.

## **Section VI: Finances**

1. The president and treasurer of the association shall hold signing authority to the finances of the association.
2. All withdrawals from the association account shall be recorded by the treasurer, and should be approved by at least two signing authorities.

## **Section III: Executive Committee**

1. The executive leadership of the PSA will be made up of 5 members who hold signing authority to the PSA account. The titles of these positions and a brief summary of responsibilities are outlined below:
  - a. Duties of the President include
    - i. Directly interacting with the department of physics and the faculty of science to provide a voice for the student body.
    - ii. Directly interacting with other student associations to discuss cooperative events and collaborations
    - iii. To oversee the official running and operation of the association
    - iv. To delegate tasks to, supervise, and work closely together with the rest of the executive leadership.
    - v. The president will call, chair, and set the agenda for general and executive meetings of the PSA.
    - vi. Upon being appointed, the president must put forward a one-year and a five-year plan for the association. Upon their leave, an exit report must be submitted to the successor of the association, and the rest of the association.
  - b. Duties of the Vice-President of Academic include:
    - i. Organizing events which augment the educational interests of the student body, not limited to presentations by graduate students, professors, industry professionals, engineers, or physicists in other fields.
    - ii. A Vice-President Academic should also act in an advocacy capacity accepting academic suggestions and concerns to present to the executive leadership and to the department of physics or the faculty of science, if applicable.
  - c. Duties of the Treasurer include:
    - i. Managing the financial details of the association
    - ii. Keeping track of expenses and income
    - iii. Writing and depositing cheques on behalf of the association,
    - iv. Organizing and storing receipts from events (past, present and future) and expenses incurred by the association.
    - v. Organizing the transferal of association accounts and signing authorities during transitions of leadership.
  - d. Duties of the Secretary include:
    - i. Managing official documents of the association, not limited to meeting minutes and event summaries
    - ii. Promote physics and engineering events through the department and university as necessary
  - e. Duties of the Vice-President of Social Affairs include:
    - i. Managing and maintaining the website, Facebook, and Twitter page, and keeping it active and relevant.
    - ii. Recruitment of new leadership candidates for the preservation of the association.
    - iii. Organizing events which augment the social interests of the student body and contribute to a healthy campus life, not limited to the Big Bang, Casino Royale, Movie Nights, and Games Nights.
    - iv. The VP of Social Affairs should oversee the outreach and promotion of the association and association events, as well as updating the membership on important and interesting advances in science.
      1. Any science updates should be well-researched from reputable sources, and be found without significant bias.
2. The following positions may be appointed by vote of the executive, and should attempt to be filled in order to preserve the future of the association. Other representative roles may be outlined by the executive and filled at an executive meeting.
  - a. Internal Social Events Representative

- i. Organizing events which augment the social interests of the student body and contribute to a healthy campus life, not limited to the Big Bang, Casino Royale, Movie Nights, and Games Nights.
    - ii. Actively engage the membership to ensure that social and academic events are meeting the needs of the student body
  - b. Academic Events Representative
    - i. Organizing events which augment the educational interests of the student body, not limited to presentations by graduate students, professors, industry professionals, engineers, or physicists in other fields.
    - ii. Actively engage graduates, the community and local industry to build rapport and connection.
  - c. Member-at-Large
    - i. Assisting the executive in the operations of the Association as needed.
- 3. All representative roles will work alongside an executive and communicate primarily with one executive. When the number of representatives exceeds 2, the representatives will be evenly assigned to the executives excluding the president for organizational and communication purposes.
- 4. All positions of the executive will have one vote on official association business. If a tie arises during a vote, the motion is defeated.
- 5. In the case that less than five executive positions can be filled, executive members of the PSA, excluding the president, can fill up to two of the above outlined executive positions.
- 6. All members of the Executive must be student members of the PSA who have completed or are enrolled in at least two 300 level Physics, Engineering, or Engineering Physics courses or be nominated by a majority vote of the existing executive team.
- 7. A minimum of one member of the executive or one representative must be a current declared Engineering Physics Diploma or Engineering Transfer student. In the case that this requirement cannot be met, it is sufficient that one member of the executive or one representative be currently enrolled in a designated ENPH or ENGR course.
- 8. All members of the Executive shall be voted into their positions via an election or consensus on a motion of instatement at an AGM via a majority vote. No member can be appointed to an Executive position unless the appointment is less than two months in duration, and they must be elected or officially appointed after that time frame. An exception to this point is if a president is nominated by a UFV Physics Faculty.
- 9. A majority vote shall entail 50%+1 of the voting membership in attendance.
- 10. If a member of the executive is unable to perform the duties in Section III.1, the duties will fall to the next in line (President, Treasurer, Academic, Secretary, Social).
- 11. A departing president in good standing with the association retains status as President Emeritus. The position is purely ceremonial, and holds no official authority within the association, but does allow former presidents to consult with active leadership on official matters.
- 12. An executive of the association may be suspended by a majority vote of the executive ratified by the president.
- 13. A suspension may only occur if evidence is presented that incriminates or gives reasonable suspicion to the accused executive in malicious activity against the association.
  - a. A suspended executive loses voting rights at meetings for two weeks; within this period, an investigation must be performed led by the president, and presented to the entire executive (including the suspended party).
- 14. The removal of an executive may only be done through a justified suspension.

#### **Section IV: Meetings**

1. The purpose of General Meetings shall be to raise and discuss any important business with the association membership, vote on any business, call for input/suggestions for the given semester, and enjoy camaraderie. Food and beverage are not required, but suggested.

2. General Meetings shall take place near the campus where the approximate ( $\pm 10\%$ ) majority of the declared membership attends classes. The exact location of the General Meeting should be chosen to encourage maximum participation and attendance.
3. At least one General Meeting must occur per academic year. As time permits, two General Meetings are encouraged, near the end of the Winter Semester and the beginning of the Fall Semester. If assembling members is difficult, PSA business can be conducted over email (see Section VI: Business over Email).
4. All meetings (general or executive) should be advertised at least two weeks in advance.
5. The agenda for all meetings (general or executive) shall be announced at least one week before the meeting.
6. General meetings should be announced using all means available (email, social media, posters, websites, word-of-mouth, etcetera).
7. Provided that there is evidence of adequate notice of the meeting to the membership, quorum for general meetings is 15 voting members.
8. Minutes shall be recorded for all official meetings. Minute taking duties will be rotated amongst the executive team.
9. Minutes from a general meeting shall be approved and ratified at the next proceeding general meeting.
10. Executive meetings will be held as needed. An effort should be made to ensure all executive members are in attendance.
11. Should the president be absent at a meeting, the Vice President Academic will stand as chair in their place.
12. No General Meeting shall run longer than one hour, unless extended by majority vote of the attending membership.
13. Where there are inconsistencies or unclear instructions in this document, defer to Robert's Rules of Order for direction.

#### **Section V: Elections and By-Elections and Group Consensus Agreements**

1. PSA Executives must be elected from and by the membership with a majority vote by secret ballot.
2. Executive positions can be held by any full member of the PSA in good standing with the association.
3. One election must be held per active Fall semester of the PSA.
4. Executive members voted in during the official election will hold office until the end of the Summer semester the following year (for a maximum of an 18 month term).
5. Order of voting shall be: President, VP Academic, Treasurer, Secretary, VP Social.
6. In the event that elections are not able to be held due to scheduling or time constraints, the Executive committee may hold nominations and elections by way of email, provided at least two weeks of notice are given to the membership by email, social media, word of mouth, and posters.
7. Candidates must be verbally nominated by a member of the PSA, and passed by a majority vote through secret ballot.
8. Should a position become vacant over the course of the semester, a by-election shall be announced with at least one week's notice and candidates be nominated by a majority vote of the remaining executive. A vote by the membership will decide the result. The term of the resulting executive member will be until the end of the Summer Semester the following year (for a maximum of an 18 month term).

#### **Section VI: Business over Email**

1. As assembling the entire membership can often be difficult with the challenges associated with a science degree, minor business requiring the consent of the membership may take place via email with the following guidelines:
  - a. Any business conducted over email must be thoroughly announced to the membership through any means available (physical postings in classrooms or on whiteboards, Facebook, Twitter, emailing the membership, word of mouth, etc.)
  - b. Any business conducted over email must be announced with no less than two weeks' notice, with multiple reminders during that period.

- c. The deadline for voting via email will be clearly announced in all communication with the membership.
- d. Any votes on an issue by the membership through email must be sent from an official UFV email address to the declared official PSA email address (as of 2016, it is [ufv.physics@gmail.com](mailto:ufv.physics@gmail.com)).
- e. Vote via email is not equivalent to vote by secret ballot.
- f. Results will be tallied, announced, and ratified immediately after the voting deadline.
- g. A tally of votes must be posted publically (electronically and physically) after the decision is made.
- h. The membership will have one month to contest the results by means of petition. If a petition is brought forth with names, emails, and signatures of more verified association members than votes in favor of the resulted action, the previous result will be considered invalid, and another vote on the same issue will commence two weeks after the petition is verified.
  - i. If the ruling is identical after the second voting, the result will be ratified with no opportunity to contest the result.

### **Section VII: Accounts of the Association**

1. This section pertains to any internet accounts of the association including, but not limited to email, social media, wikis, etc. Any accounts relating to finances should be discussed in section IV of this document.
  - a. The president and vice presidents shall be given equal access to all accounts in the interest of transparency.
  - b. Official communication through these channels to the membership (i.e. communication regarding association business or announcements) requires the author of the communication to sign with their name and executive title.
    - i. An exception may be found if the author is acting with permission from the majority of the executive. The communication may then be signed on behalf of the association.
  - c. All accounts held in the name of the association shall be recorded with the purpose of the account stated.

### **Section VIII: Changes to the Constitution**

1. Changes to the constitution may only be brought up at general meetings of the association.
2. Any member in good standing may propose changes or amendments to this document.
3. All changes will be voted on according to the appropriate protocol. Changes to the constitution must be passed by a 60% vote of the attending membership.
4. Changes will be ratified at the following general meeting through the approval of the last meeting's minutes.

### **Section IX: Amendments**

1. Amendments to this constitution may only be made through a poll of the membership. This poll may be done through email or during an AGM, according to the bylaws provided.

### **Section X: Dissolution**

1. Should the Association be disbanded or in any way become defunct, then all assets and accounts of the Association shall be held in trust by the UFV Student Union Society as a ledger entry until such time as the Association is reconstituted and re-affiliated, or for a period of five (5) years. After this period, the assets will be donated to the UFV Science Rocks! Outreach Program, or if no such program exists, it will be turned over to the UFV Science Department to use as a bursary for physics students demonstrating financial need.

### **Section XI: Agency**

1. The association is not an agency of the Student Union Society and the association's views and actions do not necessarily represent the voice of SUS.