

2024-25 Bylaw & Policy Committee Annual Report

March 25, 2025 SAGM

Membership

Chair: Wyatt Maddox

2024-25 members:

- Bernardo Leite
- Jasmine Padam
- Jeremy Perkins
- Katarina Sawchuk
- Irfan Tanveer, Governance Coordinator, ex-officio, non-voting
- Kyla Turner, Executive Director, ex-officio, non-voting
- Semyon Drozdetsckii (reassigned to Advocacy & Campaigns)

Duties of the Committee

The Bylaw and Policy Committee is responsible for overseeing and proposing changes to the governance documents of the GSS. The Committee responds to the needs of the Society through referrals and requests of staff, members, the Graduate Representative Council (GRC), and the Executive Board. Changes should follow the steps outlined in the Bylaw & Policy Committee workflow chart, as dictated by the existing bylaws, policies, and the Societies Act.

Overview of Work Completed

The Bylaw and Policy Committee focuses on issues that arise through the day-to-day practice of governance within the GSS. In close consultation with Irfan Tanveer (GSS Governance Coordinator) and Kyla Turner (GSS Executive Director), governance issues requiring review were identified and presented to the Committee.

Since convening in September 2024, the Bylaw and Policy Committee has approved amendments to the Elections and Referendum Policy in accordance with previously developed and approved Electoral Appeals Committee Terms of Reference.

Bylaw amendments previously identified by the Executive Director, which were deemed in the 2023-24 year as lower priority, were reviewed for consideration of amendment. Bylaws 1.1b, 14.4, and 15 were identified as projects of interest. Bylaw 14.4 was amended and approved by the Executive Board and the Graduate Representative Council for presentation to the membership at the March 2025 SAGM. Bylaw 1.1b was found to be sufficient as it stood, but required amendments to Bylaw 4.4 and 14.3a to reduce ambiguity and improve the definition of the GSS fee structures. Bylaw 4.4 and 14.3a were amended and approved by the Executive Board and the Graduate Representative Council for presentation to the membership at the March 2025 SAGM.

The Finance Committee drafted and amended several policies to improve the financial guidelines and structures of the GSS. Bylaw and Policy Committee reviewed these updates and approved them for presentation to the Executive Board.

Overview of Incomplete and Outstanding Work

Bylaw 15 has been given due consideration by the Bylaw and Policy Committee and found to require significant background research. This work has been suggested to the incoming Chair of the committee for further investigation.