

2026-2027 Bylaw and Policy Committee Annual Report

October 27, 2026 AGM

Membership

Chair: Violet Cieslik (Elected 05/27), Sarah Roberts (Resigned 05/19)

2025-2026 members:

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- Rosemary Webb (Chair)
- Maren Akyürek (GRC)
- Josie Hill (GRC)
- Chidimma Ike (GRC)
- Jasmine Padam (GRC)
- Melody Ray (GRC)
- Andrea Sadowski (Sept 2025 - June 2026)
- Annie Wu (Sept 2025 - June 2026)
- Wyatt Maddox, Committee Member at Large, non-voting
- Sam Fielder, Committee Member at Large, non-voting
- Kyla Turner, ex-officio, non-voting
- Irfan Tanveer, ex-officio, non-voting

2026-2027 members:

- Rosemary Webb (GRC)
- Justine Keefer (GRC)
- Emily Jewett (GRC)
- Sammi Wong (GRC)
- Brianna Olynyk (GRC)
- Akriti Singh (GRC)
- Silas Porter Crenna (GRC)
- Wyatt Maddox, Committee Member at Large, non-voting
- Sam Fielder, Committee Member at Large, non-voting
- Kyla Turner, ex-officio, non-voting
- Irfan Tanveer, ex-officio, non-voting

A big thank you to the 2025-26 Committee members for all your hard work and dedication. Each of you brought unique skills and experience to the table which contributed greatly to the bylaw and policy amendments that were completed this year.

Duties of the Committee

This committee serves as the Development Authority for general Governance policies of the Society, and for Governance policies specific to GRC or the Executive Board. The committee is responsible for recommending and identifying changes to the Society's bylaws, monitoring policy implementation across the Society, receiving all staff requests and referrals from GRC and Executive Board for new policies. After

requests are received the committee will (1) determine whether amendments to current bylaws and policies should be considered for implementation, or (2) refer proposed new policies to the Development Authority that the Committee deems appropriate. Additionally, the committee will perform other duties related to the Constitution, Bylaws, and policies as directed by GRC.

Overview of Work Completed

Speaking to the beginning of the board term, April and May, the new Chair, Sarah Roberts, was onboarded to her role and work began on the ongoing projects surrounding amendments to Bylaw 12.4 - Removal of Directors on the Executive Board and Bylaw 10 – Stipends. However, work was halted on these projects when Sarah Roberts stepped down from her role as GSS Chair on May 19th, 2026.

On May 27th 2026, Violet Cieslik was elected as GSS Chair and took over Chair of Bylaw and Policy. Therefore, in June she was onboarded to her role and the ongoing projects of Bylaw and Policy. One major project on the list that required immediate attention was a full re-write of the Bylaw and Policies surrounding GSS Elections (i.e., Bylaw 4 - Elections and Referenda, Policy 45 - Electoral Appeals Committee, Policy 7 - Executive Board Election and Referendum Policy). The immediate need for this work stemmed from concerns that were brought up during the 2026 Referendum, as well as the incongruence in the documents outlining the elections and referendum process. Thus, the committee set off to complete amendments to these bylaw and policies during June, July, and August. We met every two weeks to ensure all work was done by September 2026 and ready for the upcoming 2027 board elections and referendum. Our work on these was guided by the advice from previous Chair's, Wyatt Maddox and Rosemary Webb, Elections Officer, Samuel Feilder, and the immense amount of institutional knowledge provided by staff members, Kyla Turner and Irfan Tanveer. We completed these amendments in the middle of August and submitted our policy 7 and 45 our amendments to the executive board in September, which were approved, and our bylaw 4 amendments will be presented for approval during the 2026 AGM. Updated policies 7 and 45 can now be found complete in 2026-2027 Governance Manual. Additionally, the committee finalized an election and referendum complaint form for which will be available to use during the 2027 election and referendum cycle. Thank you, Kyla Turner, for drafting this form for us to use. It is anticipated that the form will serve as an effective and straight forward method for gathering complaints in future election and referendum cycles. Below are the high-level overviews of amendments made to the aforementioned bylaw and policies.

Bylaw 4 – Elections and Referenda

The first concern brought up in this bylaw was the incongruence in timing of elector officer appointment and the needs of the role; thus, this was updated to reflect appointment of the elector officer at the AGM. Second, we amended the name of the electoral appeals committee to be, the Elections committee, and the timeline/process of appeals, was replaced with a complaint timeline/process. For example, complaints must now be submitted no later than 7 days after release of preliminary results. Additionally, one of the main changes to this committee was outlining that the committee will be made up of five Society full general members, four appointed by Grad Council, and the Electoral Officer. Amending the committee to consist of 5 members inclusive of the electoral officer, means that all complaints that are submitted will be viewed by multiple individuals and large decisions do not just fall on the elector officer by instead the committee as a whole. These changes better reflect the fairness in the complaint process, responsibility of the committee, and the overall process of complaints during elections and referenda.

Finally, we included that in the case of the tie vote, the Electoral Officer shall call for a runoff votes during the same meeting until plurality is reached.

Policy 7

Definitions included in this policy were updated to reflect amendments made in bylaw 4. Specifically, the appeals process was changed to the complaint process, the voting periods now reference changes made in bylaw 4, and the terms administrative fairness and natural justice, were added to the definitions. We also noted that referendum sides must comply with the regulation set out by the society and procedures set forth by the Electoral Officer. Lastly, it was noted that the electoral committee will review all complaints and a timeline of 4 days from the time a complaint was received was outlined for a timely complaint review process.

Policy 45

Membership now includes changes made in bylaw 4 and outlined in policy 7, where the Electoral Officer chairs the elections committee with the other 4 society full members selected from grad council. Further, amendments to the wording replacing appeal with complaint, and electoral appeals committee with elections committee, were done throughout the policy.

[Overview of Incomplete and Outstanding Work](#)

Members should hopefully see the amendments to Bylaws 10 and 12 at the next SAGM in March 2027. As this work has been ongoing in committee, one of my goals is to ensure we have movement on these so the 2027-2028 bylaw and policy committee will be able to focus their work on other areas of Governance that require attention. Moreover, the committee will also be working with the current elector officer, Samuel Fielder, to create a Job description and Job Manual. The main reason for this works is to ensure the responsibilities of the position is well outlined for subsequent officers. This means we may look at creating a job description policy, similar to the executive board job description policies, for the Electoral Officer that can be included in the Governance Manual.