



University Students' Council of the University of Western Ontario ADVOCACY PAPERS POLICY

EFFECTIVE: 26 February 2014

SUPERSEDES: Purple Papers Policy
2 October 2012

AUTHORITY: Local and Campus Affairs
Committee

Provincial and Federal
Affairs Committee

RATIFIED BY: Council
26 February 2014

**RELATED
DOCUMENTS:**

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PREAMBLE:

As the elected representatives of the student body at The University of Western Ontario, the USC has a responsibility to represent the academic, socio-economic, and political concerns of its students to decision-makers, the University, and all three levels of government.

To do so, the USC must be able to effectively develop and represent students' beliefs. The USC Advocacy Paper Policy empowers council to prioritize, research, and articulate these values through expressing the principles, concerns, and recommendations of students. This policy outlines the process, participants, and parameters of creating these advocacy papers.

1.00 SCOPE

- 1.01 This document outlines the process by which the USC shall commission, draft, and approve standing policies of the organization for advocacy purposes through the creation of advocacy papers.
- 1.02 References in this document to “standing policy” or “standing policies” shall refer to policy papers authored via the process contained in this document and ultimately approved by Council.
 - (1) A paper that is in the process of being approved shall be referred to as an “advocacy paper.”
- 1.03 Individuals eligible to submit proposals and otherwise instigate the writing of a standing policy shall be the Ordinary (voting) Members of Council, including the President, Vice-President Internal, and Vice-President External.
- 1.04 References in this document to a “Standing Committee” or “Standing Committees” shall be assumed to refer to the Local and Campus Affairs Standing Committee and the Provincial and Federal Affairs Standing Committee. However, other Standing Committees of the USC may be tasked with reviewing policy in whole or in parts (e.g. the Long-Term Plan and Budget Standing Committee checking for financial



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implications of a proposed policy) and as such the aforementioned terms shall apply to any and all Standing Committees of the USC where necessary.

2.00 POLICY TASK FORCE COMPOSITION

2.01 To facilitate the creation of high-quality policy papers and standing policy, each commissioned paper shall be compiled and authored by an independent Policy Task Force.

(1) Each paper shall have its own Task Force.

2.02 The Policy Task Force shall have the following responsibilities:

(1) Research the assigned paper topics and compile a database of resources consulted;

i. The database of resources consulted shall be added to a master database of resources for use in future paper writing.

(2) Consult stakeholders and conduct interviews where necessary;

(3) Develop Principles, Concerns, and Recommendations for the paper topic;

(4) Produce a draft advocacy paper;

(5) Amend the draft advocacy paper to produce a final draft based on comments from Council and students-at-large; and

(6) Give updates on the paper-writing process as requested.

2.03 The Policy Task Force for a given paper shall have the following composition:

(1) The Vice-President under whose portfolio the paper topic falls, as Task Force Leader;

i. If the topic is not clearly within a specific portfolio the Advocacy Group shall assign a Vice-President as Task Force Leader;

(2) The Advocacy Services Officer;

(3) The USC President, ex-officio;

(4) Any other resource members appointed by the Task Force to assist them in developing the policy paper, including but not limited to the councillor who proposed the topic.



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3.00 PAPER PROPOSALS

- 3.01 In order for an advocacy paper to be commissioned, a proposal must be submitted to Council (via the appropriate Standing Committee).
- 3.02 Topics for proposals shall consider feedback from student engagement initiatives such as Change Camp;
- 3.03 Paper proposals shall be two (2) to three (3) pages in length and shall contain the following information:
- (1) A brief description of the topic;
 - (2) Reasons why the topic is important to undergraduate students;
 - (3) How the topic relates to the USC's mission statement; and
 - (4) A set of principles for the policy to guide the research and writing process.
- 3.04 Paper proposals for the upcoming academic year shall be submitted no later than January 31st and shall be vetted by the appropriate Standing Committee at their February meeting.
- 3.05 Council members may consult the Advocacy Services Officer to solicit help in drafting a proposal.
- (1) Assistance from the Advocacy Services Officer does not guarantee that a proposal will be accepted and a paper written on the proposed topic.
 - (2) The Advocacy Services Officer will also engage the appropriate member of the Executive for advice and guidance during the proposal writing process.

4.00 PAPER COMMISSION

- 4.01 Upon receipt of paper proposals, each Standing Committee shall vet each paper and rank them in order of priority (i.e. which topic is of more immediate concern to students).
- 4.02 Standing Committees shall submit a list of no more than three (3) policies, ranked by priority, to Council for approval at the February meeting of Council.
- (1) The outgoing Council (those in office prior to the second part of the Annual General Meeting) shall approve the ranked slate of paper topics in principle only.



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- 4.03 At the first meeting of the new Council (those recently elected to Council), Council shall approve, in consultation with the incoming Executive (those whose term will start on the upcoming June 1st), a final slate of three (3) paper topics from the ranked list presented by the outgoing Council to be written into policy.
- (1) Of the three (3) paper topics approved by Council, at least one (1) paper topic must come from each of the Local and Campus Affairs Standing Committee and the Provincial and Federal Affairs Standing Committee.
 - (2) The new Council may choose to amend the slate of paper topics from which they are to choose three (3) and add an additional paper topic via a 2/3rds vote of Council.
 - i. A 2/3rds vote is required to void the proposal requirement.
 - ii. Only a non-Executive Member of Council shall be able to amend the slate of paper topics.
 - iii. Adding a topic to the slate does not necessitate that the topic be approved. Council will still have to approve the topic as part of its list of three (3) papers to be commissioned.
 - (3) Council may choose to commission four (4) papers instead of the standard number of three (3) with a 2/3rds resolution of Council.
 - i. Council shall never commission more than four (4) papers in a given year.
- 4.04 Paper commissions shall contain an expected date of completion for each paper.

5.00 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- 5.01 The Task Force shall produce a paper that adheres to the standard USC policy template, which shall be made available at the beginning of the policy development. Task Forces shall also receive training to assist them with policy development.

6.00 PAPER APPROVAL PROCESS

- 6.01 Draft policy papers shall be discussed by Council members at a Policy Weekend before appearing in front of a Standing Committee or Council.
- (1) The date and time for this Policy Weekend shall be set at the discretion of the USC Executive.
 - (2) The Policy Weekend shall consist of, but shall not be limited to, the following parts:



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- i. Educational sessions on the paper topics to ensure Council members are up to date on the issues before critiquing the papers.
- ii. Breakout sessions on each topic, allowing Council members the opportunity to discuss the papers in small groups.

6.02 Draft policy papers shall also be made available to students-at-large and avenues shall be utilized to receive student-at-large feedback.

6.03 Recommendations from the Policy Weekend and student-at-large feedback shall be taken by the Policy Task Force and used to produce a final draft of the advocacy paper.

(1) Amendments arising from the Policy Weekend or student-at-large feedback shall be documented in a report that accompanies the final draft of the paper to the Standing Committee and Council.

6.04 Final drafts of papers shall be sent to the appropriate Standing Committee for vetting.

6.05 Council shall approve the papers and pass them into standing policy of the organization.

7.00 POLICY RENEWAL

7.01 Each standing policy of the USC shall be renewed on a three (3) year cycle.

7.02 Policies up for renewal shall be brought to the attention of the appropriate Standing Committee who shall then recommend to Council whether a paper is to be renewed as is, amended, or removed from the USC's standing policies altogether.

7.03 The Legislative Assistant shall maintain a list of policies and their renewal dates, and shall inform the appropriate Committee of any approaching renewal dates.

8.00 EXPEDITED POLICY PROCESS

8.01 Issues that arise that require immediate policy action shall be put through an expedited policy process before being drafted into full policy.

8.02 The expedited process shall consist of the appropriate Standing Committee debating the issue and presenting a resolution to Council. The resolution shall be presented as a motion which the Council may adopt as a temporary standing policy of the organization.

8.03 The USC Executive, and their designates, shall be able to advocate on temporary standing policy.



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8.04 Temporary standing policies shall, at the soonest date, be translated into actual standing policies of the USC by following the procedures set out in sections 5.00 and 6.00, and shall be subject to renewal as stated in section 7.00 of this policy.

(1) The resolution passed at Council to create a temporary standing policy shall remove the need to draft a proposal document as per section 3.00 of this policy.

9.00 EXISTING POLICIES

9.01 Council shall have the authority to designate papers in existence at the time of the ratification of this policy as Advocacy Papers;

9.02 This designation shall require a review by a task force whose composition shall be consistent with Section 2.03 of this policy.