

# **“Pride” Constitution**

**Ratified: February 2, 2023**

**Last updated: February 1, 2023**

## 1. Name

- Formerly known as UVic Pride or “Pride”. A new name is to be decided at the AGM by a members’ vote. This Constitution will be changed to reflect the chosen name before the document is finalized. Once approved by the Pride Membership in attendance at the AGM, this Constitution will be implemented effective immediately, replacing the past UVic Pride Constitution. The UVSS will recognize the new group as “UVic Pride” until the appropriate UVSS bylaw changes can be approved at a future UVSS AGM.

## 2. Definitions

- **Queer** - Umbrella term for identities outside of cisgender identity/expression or heterosexual identities. Included but not limited to Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, homosexual, intersex, non-binary, multisexual, asexual, aromatic, and other gay and/or trans identities.
- **Ally** - Someone who may not identify as Queer, but is actively supportive of Queer identities.
- **Pride Membership** - the term used to describe the community queer and allied students who both make up the organization and have access to its services, events, activities, and spaces.
- **Non-voting Pride Member** - Queer or Allied community members who are not a member of either the UVSS or GSS (i.e. a community member who is not enrolled as a UVic student). As well as Queer or Allied UVic students who are not in good standing of the UVSS or GSS.
- **Voting Pride Member** - A student actively enrolled or at UVic, who are members in good standing of the UVSS or GSS, who identifies as queer or an ally.
- **The Pride Council** - Pride voting members who have been elected to the Pride Council.
- **Pride Council Meetings** - Regularly scheduled meetings that the Pride Council is expected to attend, which are also open to Pride members.
- **Pride General Meetings** - Annual General Meetings, Semi-annual General Meetings, or Extraordinary General Meetings. These meetings are where larger changes can be made.
- **UVSS** - The University of Victoria Students’ Society.

- **GSS** - The UVic Graduate Students Society.
- **Heterosexism** refers to “discrimination or prejudice against gay people on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation”.
- **Cissexism** refers to the “prejudice or discrimination against transgender people”.
- **Allosexism** refers to “discrimination against asexual people, also known as acephobia or aphobia, encompasses a range of negative attitudes, behaviours, and feelings toward asexuality or people who identify as part of the asexual spectrum”.

### 3. Purpose

- The purpose of Pride is:
  1. To provide queer students and allies with safe (physical and virtual) spaces to connect and network, without subjection to judgement, bigotry, and/or discrimination.
  2. To offer queer students and allies programming, events and resources that align with Pride’s vision and mission statements.

### 4. Mission & Vision

- **Mission**  
 The University of Victoria Pride Membership works to provide a safer space for individuals within and outside of the queer and trans communities, both at the UVic campus and in broader communities. The Pride Membership aims to alleviate all forms of oppression and to address a lack of available safer spaces, community and education regarding queer and trans issues, needs and experiences. The Pride Membership acts as an organization that facilitates community building through various activities and advocates for issues related to sexual orientation and expression and/or gender identity and expression.
- **Vision**  
 The Pride Membership strives to gather as a sustainable, driven Membership that solicits participation from and provides space for folks who experience homophobia, heterosexism, transphobia, and/or cissexism, and allosexism, as well as intersex folks and folks who are questioning. As an organization, the Pride Membership works towards the eradication of all forms of oppression in personal, interpersonal, societal and institutional practices by challenging

ourselves.

## **5. Values**

- Advocacy with and for individuals in queer and trans communities, while being respectful of and acknowledging intersections of identity, experience and oppression;
- Striving for anti-oppression while recognizing that all forms of oppression are linked;
- Creating safer spaces that are anti-oppressive, and use a framework that challenges racism, ableism, colonialism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, cissexism, classism, xenophobia, and ethnocentrism;
- Celebrating body positivity, consensual sex, diversity, and different religious and cultural backgrounds and practices;
- Ongoing development of safer spaces, events and resources;
- Respect for individuals' privacy;
- Respect for and inclusion of individual self-identification and self-expression, without making unfounded assumptions or assumptions based on stereotypes, and without appropriating or co-opting identities and experiences;
- Ongoing promotion and development of resources and events for a broad variety of topics, including intersections of theory and practice;
- Inclusion of sexual orientation and expression and gender identity and expression;
- Striving to reach as much of the queer and trans communities as possible at the University of Victoria and throughout the broader communities;
- Promoting education about the community from a place of good faith and care;
- Acknowledgement of the importance of bodily autonomy, judgement-free health care and reproductive justice.

## **6. Authority**

- Nothing in this Constitution shall be considered in variance with the Constitution and Bylaws, and all policies of the University of Victoria Student Society (UVSS), which includes the UVSS [Advocacy Groups Policy](#).
- Both the physical and online Pride spaces must be aligned with the values, procedures, guidelines, and expectations written in the UVSS' [Safer Spaces](#)

[Policy](#).

## **7. Members and Membership**

- University of Victoria students and community members who identify as queer or allies are considered members of Pride.

## **8. Specific Council Roles & Responsibilities**

- The UVSS Board Representative
  - Responsibilities include:
    - Attending the UVSS Advocacy Relations Committee;
    - Attending UVSS Board of Directors meetings;
    - Attending Pride Committee Meetings and fulfilling the duties of a Council Member;
    - Liaising with the UVSS Board of Directors;
    - Responsibilities outlined in the UVSS Advocacy Groups Policy;

## **9. General Council Roles, Responsibilities and Conduct**

- The Council shall be composed of 9 elected voting members. The UVSS Pride Advocacy Representative is automatically one of these 9 members.
- Council Responsibilities
  - To advocate for queer students' rights, well-being and success at UVic;
  - to be familiar with and adhere to the Constitution and Bylaws;
  - to attend Pride annual, semi-annual, and extraordinary general meetings;
  - to attend Pride Council meetings;
  - to prepare and present a report at annual general meetings describing their activities for the preceding year;
  - to support Pride events & programs when possible;
  - to have read and understand not only this Constitution, but also all other UVSS policies relevant to the role. This includes but not limited to: the Advocacy Group Policy, the Safer Spaces Policy, and the Issues Policy.
  - To ensure that at least one (1) Council member is responsible for creating and presenting an annual budget to the Pride Council in collaboration with the Pride Coordinator;
- Emails and File Storage

- At the beginning of each Council term, Pride Council members will be given access to a Pride database. All Pride-related documents should be kept in the specified database(s) and are the property of Pride and the UVSS.
- Resignation of Council Members
  - Any Council member who provides a written letter of resignation to the Pride Council shall be considered resigned and their position will be vacant immediately unless a date is otherwise specified.
  - Any Council member that is absent without regrets from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Pride Council shall be considered as having resigned from their position and their position will be deemed vacant at the close of the third (3rd) meeting from which they are absent.
  - Any former Council member who resigned from their current position may be nominated for re-election to the Pride Council at any future Pride General Meeting so long as they are a Member in good standing with the UVSS or GSS.
- Removal of Council Members
  - Removal of Council Members may be pursued if other resolution processes have not been successful. Guiding and educating fellow Council Members in order to correct harmful or problematic behaviours will most often be preferred over immediate removal. This step may be skipped if the Council Member has overtly displayed acts of hate, bullying, harassment, or has severely harmed, undermined, or underserved the Council and Pride Membership at large.
  - A Pride Council member may be asked to resign from their position on the Pride Council if unacceptable conduct is being exhibited i.e. violation of the UVSS Safer Spaces Policy. This will be done by a special resolution affirmed by a consensus (unanimous agreement) of the remaining Council members. This special resolution shall be accompanied by a brief statement providing the reason for the proposed resignation and shall be made available to the Council member who has been asked to resign at least seven (7) days prior to the Pride Council meeting at which the special resolution will be considered.
  - The meeting at which the Pride Council asks for the resignation of a Council member shall be conducted according to a talking circle format with a neutral facilitator brought in to ensure respectful behaviour.
  - Removal of Council Members shall not be employed in order to abet one party in the case of interpersonal issues or disagreements between Council

Members. Bullying, ganging up on, excluding, and/or expelling Council Members for interpersonal issues and disagreements is strictly prohibited.

■ In the same vein, the remaining Councillors' decision about removal of a fellow Councillor shall not be swayed due to positive interpersonal relationships.

## **10. Elections for Pride Representative and Council**

- The first election that must occur at the General meeting is for the Pride Advocacy Representative, followed by the election of the rest of the Council.
- Members in good standing of the UVSS or GSS interested in candidacy have the option of submitting their name and platform to the meeting organizers beforehand to be added to the agenda.
- Alternatively, those interested in Council Member positions can choose to announce their candidacy during the meeting.
- Candidates shall not run on a slate.
- When the item on the agenda for elections is called during the meeting, both pre-registered and other candidates may raise their hand and introduce themselves and their platforms. This applies to both in-person and virtual candidates.
- All pre-registered candidates will be given the ability to introduce themselves first, followed by other candidates. Access needs can be communicated privately to the staff.
- After each candidate has introduced themselves, there will be a 15 minute time period for questions from the Membership.
- Questions may be posed directly to specific candidates, or broadly to all candidates.
- Candidates will be given two minutes each to respond, with a warning of ten seconds from the General Meeting facilitators before their time is up.
- Broad questions must be answered in the order of the speaker's list.
- Conduct
  - Candidates may not slander or defame other nominees or any community members.
  - Candidates must adhere to the rules guidelines of the physical or virtual spaces they're campaigning in, including the UVSS [Safer Spaces Policy](#).
- Voting

- Voting for the Advocacy Representative will be done on a timed virtual poll made accessible to attendees who are members in good standing.
- Members will elect the remaining 8 Council Members by virtual poll. The candidates will be elected based on a ranking in order of who received the most votes overall, up to 8 spots.
- Elected Council members will begin their term at the general meeting at which they were elected or acclaimed, unless elected at an Extraordinary General meeting, in which they will begin their term within 1 week.
- Terms end after one year or at the following Annual General meeting, whichever is sooner.
- Vacancy
  - If, following an annual general meeting a position on Council remains vacant or a position subsequently becomes vacant due to the removal or resignation of the incumbent, Council may hold a by-election at a Collective Meeting, added by at least ten (10) voting Members.
  - By-election collective meetings should be advertised to the membership through posters in the Student Union Building and through social media with at least fourteen (14) days' notice.

#### **11. Pride Council Meetings**

- Quorum for Pride Council meetings shall consist of no less than 6 council members.
- Pride Council meetings are open to all Pride members to attend and vote at meetings.
- Pride Council meeting times shall be posted at least one week in advance on the Pride website and other relevant media platforms.
- Meetings shall be held at least once per month unless deemed impossible (by a recorded vote) by the Pride Council and there shall not be more than two months without a Pride Council meeting.

#### **12. Annual, Semiannual and Extraordinary General Meetings**

- Quorum for General Meetings shall consist of no less than ten (10) Members in good standing.
- A financial report shall be made available at each AGM.
- Council and staff term reports shall be shared at each general meeting.



- **Annual General Meetings**

- Shall be held each year. These shall be held during the fall term, except when deemed impossible (by a recorded vote) by the Pride Council.

- There shall be at least fourteen (14) days' notice of a General Meeting.

Such notice shall include:

- Posters that are to be posted at the Student Union Building and on the University of Victoria campus, containing the date, time, and location (in-person/online) of the meeting;
    - The proposed agenda may be made available at the discretion of the Membership;
    - Notice in relevant community social media, containing the date, time, and location of the meeting.

- **Semi-Annual General Meetings**

- Shall be held each year. These shall be held during the spring term, except when deemed impossible (by a recorded vote) by the Pride Council.

- **Extraordinary General Meetings**

- May be called as necessary by a petition of at least 10 Voting Members of Pride.

- Must be called in the case of the Pride Representative seat being vacated

**13. Collective Meetings**

- Collectives must be planned and scheduled by the Coordinator. These meetings must be publicly advertised using a diverse variety of tactics to voting and non-voting Members.

**14. Amendments**

- Amendments to any material contained in this Constitution shall be made by a motion at an Annual, Semi-annual or Extraordinary General Meeting.
- Members must submit proposed amendments to the Pride Council in writing. Assistance in drafting amendments can be provided by the Pride Council or the Coordinator.