

Ontario Medical Students Association Elections Policy

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The constitution of the Ontario Medical Students Association (OMSA) stipulates that OMSA must select its Executive Board through an annual election period, overseen and administered by an Electoral Officer.

The election shall take place during OMSA's Annual General Meeting, and therefore shall be conducted in accordance with appropriate OMSA bylaws. This Policy further defines and outlines the process and logistics of elections.

Article 1: Definitions

- 1.1 **“Active Member”** shall mean any medical student currently enrolled in an Ontario medical school.
- 1.2 **“OMSA Executive Board”** shall mean the President, President-Elect, VP of Advocacy, VP of Student Affairs, VP of Communications, VP of Education, VP of Operations, VP of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and VP of Finance of OMSA
- 1.3 **“OMSA Council”** shall mean the OMSA Executive Board and the two designated representatives of each Medical Society.
- 1.4 **“Ontario medical school”** shall mean the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, Northern Ontario School of Medicine, University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine, Queen's University School of Medicine, Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, or the Temerty Faculty of Medicine.
- 1.5 **“Medical Society”** shall mean the executive representing each OMSA subsection, the student body at each Ontario medical school.
- 1.6 **“Subsection Representative”** shall mean the two designated representatives to OMSA decided at the discretion of each Medical Society, often the Medical Society's Vice Presidents of External Affairs.
- 1.7 **“General Assembly”** shall mean all OMSA members present on election day.
- 1.8 **“Electorate”** shall mean all individuals eligible to vote in a given election.
- 1.9 **“Electoral Officer”** shall mean a member of the OMSA Council who is responsible for overseeing and administrating the elections process, with guidance from the OMSA President.

Article 2: Electoral Officer

- 2.1 The Electoral Officer must
 - 2.1.1 Be a member of the current OMSA Executive.
 - 2.1.2 Not be running for an Officer position in the current election.
- 2.2 The Electoral Officer (EO) shall be the President-Elect, unless the President-Elect does not meet the criteria to be the EO, in which case the President shall be EO.
 - 2.2.1 If both the President-Elect and President are not eligible to be the EO, the EO shall be appointed by a vote of the OMSA Council.

- 2.2.2 If there are any objections to the appointment of President-Elect or President to be the EO, the EO shall be appointed by a vote of the outgoing OMSA Council
- 2.3 The EO shall have final authority on issues pertaining to elections that are not addressed in this document, the OMSA constitution or the OMSA bylaws, with guidance from the OMSA President and the OMSA Council

Article 3: Nomination Timeline

- 3.1 The election shall occur during the OMSA Annual General Meeting (AGM). The date of the AGM shall be determined by the OMSA President and President-Elect, with approval from the OMSA Council. This date should fall on a weekend between April 15 and May 31.
- 3.2 An announcement including the election date, process, and a call for nominations shall be communicated to Active Members at least four weeks before the date of the election.
- 3.3 The nomination period shall remain open until two weeks prior to the election.
- 3.4 If any position has no nominees two weeks prior to the election, the EO shall communicate a final call for nominations for the given position(s) to all Active Members. If there are no nominees within one week prior to the election, the ballot for the position(s) shall remain empty and shall be treated as an unfilled position, as per Article 9.
- 3.5 The EO shall ensure that the list of candidates running for each position as well as platform submissions is communicated to the outgoing OMSA Council and electoral candidates, and posted on the OMSA website at least one week before the election.

Article 4: Positions

- 4.1 The Executive positions open for election are:
 - 4.1.1 President-Elect
 - 4.1.2 VP of Advocacy
 - 4.1.3 VP of Communications
 - 4.1.4 VP of Education
 - 4.1.5 VP of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Decolonization
 - 4.1.6 VP of Finance
 - 4.1.7 VP of Operations
 - 4.1.8 VP of Student Affairs
- 4.2 The term of Executive positions (with the exception of President-Elect), notwithstanding removal or resignation, is one year, starting from acceptance of that position during the AGM, lasting until the following AGM.
- 4.3 The term of the President-Elect, notwithstanding removal or resignation, is two years, the second of which is completed as President.

Article 5: Candidacy and Nominations

- 5.1 Candidates must be Active Members of OMSA (ie. currently enrolled in an Ontario medical school).

- 5.2 Once elected, candidates must become OMA members and retain the membership for the duration of their term.
- 5.3 Candidates must self-nominate for Executive positions.
- 5.4 Candidates may run for a maximum of 2 positions.
- 5.5 Candidates will self-nominate via an online form, organized by the EO and disseminated via usual OMSA communication channels.
- 5.6 Nomination submissions shall include a paragraph of no more than 250 words detailing the candidate's platform, and if the candidate so chooses, a photograph of the candidate.
- 5.7 The EO reserves the right to standardize candidates' 250-word platform and photo in terms of font, font size and typographical emphasis.
- 5.8 Candidates may voluntarily withdraw their nomination at any point prior to voting and must notify the EO in writing.

Article 6: Campaigning and Election Day

- 6.1 The contact information for the current Executive Board shall be provided to Active Members when nominations open. Candidates are encouraged to reach out to these members for information. The current Executive Board must ensure that fairness is maintained in all interactions with candidates, such that no individual candidate is given an unfair advantage.
- 6.2 Campaigning is restricted to the 250 word nomination platform shared on the OMSA website (see Section 5.6 and 5.7) and a two minute speech.
- 6.3 Candidates shall present a two minute speech on the day of the election. If the candidate is unable to attend the election or if it is an entirely virtual election, they may submit a two minute video/audio recording or a two minute written speech to be read by the EO. There shall be a five minute period after the speech for questions from the General Assembly.
 - 6.3.1 The first question in the question period will be prioritized to the outgoing Executive Board member of the position being elected.
- 6.4 The order of the speeches will commence with the President-Elect and then in random order for the remaining Executive Board positions. The order will be relayed to the candidates in advance.
- 6.5 Immediately following speeches for all Executive Board positions, representatives will be given a 20 minute period to converse with other members of their subsection, followed immediately by a voting period.

Article 7: Electorate and Voting

- 7.1 The Electorate shall consist of the 2 subsection representatives from each of the Medical Societies and the outgoing Executive Board member for each respective Executive Board position.
 - 7.1.1 Each elector shall have one vote, for a total of 13 votes per position.
 - 7.1.2 If a Subsection Representative cannot attend the election, the respective subsection Medical Society shall send an alternate representative as proxy.



- 7.1.3 If an outgoing Executive Board member cannot attend the election or is serving as the EO, they shall proxy their vote to another Executive Board member.
- 7.2 In order to vote for a given position, an elector must be present for every candidate's speech and must not be running for that position.
 - 7.2.1 If a Subsection Representative is running for a given position, the respective subsection medical society shall select an alternate representative as proxy for that position.
- 7.3 If an outgoing Executive Board member is running for re-election, they shall proxy their vote to another Executive Board member. Voting shall occur through a confidential ranked ballot system, per Articles 7.3.1. If an electronic ranked system is not available, exhaustive voting shall commence, per Articles 7.3.2.
 - 7.3.1 Voting shall occur through a confidential ranked ballot system (ranked voting, preferred).
 - 7.3.1.1 Each elector shall submit a ballot with any number of candidates in a ranked order.
 - 7.3.1.2 Electors may spoil their ballot.
 - 7.3.1.3 First choice votes are counted for all candidates. If one candidate receives a majority of votes, the candidate is considered the winner.
 - 7.3.1.4 If no simple majority is reached, the candidate(s) with the fewest first choice votes shall be dropped and their ballots redistributed according to the next highest choice. The process will continue until a majority is received.
 - 7.3.2 If ranked voting is unavailable, voting shall occur through a confidential ballot system (exhaustive voting).
 - 7.3.2.1 Each Electorate member shall vote for one single candidate, or abstain.
 - 7.3.2.2 If one candidate receives a majority of votes, the candidate is considered the winner..
 - 7.3.2.3 If no simple majority is reached after voting, the candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be excluded and the Electorate shall vote again on the remaining candidates.
 - 7.3.2.4 In the event of a tie between candidates with the most or the fewest votes, each candidate shall be given an additional 2 minutes to answer additional questions from the General Assembly and the Electorate shall vote again.

Article 8: Election Results

- 8.1 The EO must tally the votes as per the procedure outlined in 7.3 on election day.
- 8.2 The EO must notify all election candidates of the results a minimum of two hours prior to releasing the results to Active Members.
- 8.3 Election results shall be communicated to all Active Members within five days following vote ratification.

Article 9: Unfilled Positions

- 9.1 In the event that a position remains or becomes unfilled, the EO shall communicate a

- call for nominations to all Active Members within two weeks following the day of elections or vacancy of a position.
- 9.2 Applicants shall be required to submit a 250-word platform, photo and a recording of their 2-minute speech to the EO (as per Article 5 & 6).
 - 9.3 The EO shall remove all identifying information and forward the application to the incoming Executive Board, who shall review each applicant.
 - 9.4 Each Executive Board member will have one ballot and voting will be done by a ranked ballot system, per 7.3.1 and verified by the EO.
 - 9.5 Election results shall be communicated to all Active Members within one week of the voting period ending.

Article 10: Appeals

- 10.1 Any candidate for an Executive Board position may appeal the election results within 2 days of the election decision.
- 10.2 The appeal shall be submitted in writing to the EO by the candidate and shall outline the reasons for the appeal.
- 10.3 The EO shall call a special meeting of the outgoing OMSA Council to evaluate the appeal within three weeks of the acceptance of the appeal.
- 10.4 The Council will vote on whether the appeal is valid, with a majority vote required for an appeal to be approved. The appellant shall be notified of the results of the vote with an option to add a written response from the EO.
- 10.5 If the appeal is determined valid, the results of the election of that position shall be declared void and the position shall be handled as an unfilled position, as per Article 9.

Article 11: Sanctions

- 11.1 Violation of these Articles, including attempts to circumvent their letter or spirit, shall be reported to the EO in written format and may be anonymous.
- 11.2 The EO will relay the allegations of the sanction to the candidate and allow the candidate to challenge the sanction.
- 11.3 If the EO decides that the sanction is valid, a first sanction will be a written warning to the candidate, a second sanction will result in a public notification of sanction against the candidate to Active Members, and a third sanction will result in the termination of candidacy which shall be communicated to all Active Members.