



Bylaw 12 – First-Year Council

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The First-Year Council (FYC) shall seek to increase the involvement of first-year students in the MSU and in student life at McMaster University, and to that end shall:
 - 1.1.1. Provide a forum for discussion on issues of concern to first-year students;
 - 1.1.1.1. Provide a specific forum for discussion on issues of concern to students living in residence and residing off-campus;
 - 1.1.2. Work with other campus groups to address the needs of first-year students;
 - 1.1.3. Act as an advisory body to the SRA and report on issues of concern to first-year students;
 - 1.1.4. Plan and promote events for first-year students.

2. Operating Parameters

- 2.1. The First-Year Council shall meet beginning in October following elections;
- 2.2. The First-Year Council shall be composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair External, Vice-Chair Internal, and Vice-Chair Events in addition to representatives from each residence, off-campus students for the purpose of providing an effective consultative body for first-year students;
- 2.3. FYC shall create and promote an annual Year-End First-Year Feedback Survey in partnership with relevant departments to:
 - 2.3.1. Gain valuable insight into the demographics of first-year students;
 - 2.3.2. Assess areas that are lacking in student life for first-year students;
 - 2.3.3. Include results of the survey in the transition report for the succeeding FYC;

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- 2.3.3.1. The timeline regarding the rollout of the survey is at the discretion of FYC, however it is the expectation that it begins towards the end of the winter term;
 - 2.3.3.2. Results shall be finalized no later than April 30.
- 2.4. FYC shall work in partnership with one or more of the following: MSU Campus Events, MSU Spark, and Residence Life to plan at least one (1) major event per term that allows the first-year student body to participate;
- 2.5. FYC must review the changes implemented to the FYC structure for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 terms during the months of December 2023 and March 2024 with guidance from the FYC Coordinator.
 - 2.5.1. In which the purpose will be:
 - 2.5.1.1. To assess whether changes to the elected body structure created a more representative body which fostered a more supportive environment for first-year led initiatives;
 - 2.5.2. Findings/determinations of the review must be approved by a quorate vote of FYC after which it will come to the Student Representative Assembly (SRA) for final approval;
 - 2.5.2.1. Changes made for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 terms will then be made permanent or removed from the Bylaw by the SRA based on recommendations of the review.

3. Membership

- 3.1 FYC shall be composed of nineteen (19) voting members, elected by and from MSU members registered in Level 1 of their program of study.
 - 3.1.1 Additional parameters for the FYC Elections, including polling, is outlined in **Bylaw 7 – Elections**.
- 3.2 Voting members shall be:
 - 3.2.1 The Chair;
 - 3.2.2 The Vice-Chair Internal;
 - 3.2.3 The Vice-Chair External;
 - 3.2.4 The Vice-Chair Events;
 - 3.2.5 Representative from Bates Residence;
 - 3.2.6 Representative from Brandon Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.7 Representative from Edwards Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.8 Representative from Hedden Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.9 Representative from Les Prince Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.10 Representative from Mary E. Keyes Residence;
 - 3.2.11 Representative from Matthews Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.12 Representative from McKay Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.13 Representative from Moulton Hall Residence;

- 3.2.14 Representative from Peter George Centre for Living and Learning;
 - 3.2.15 Representative from Wallingford Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.16 Representative from Whidden Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.17 Representative from Woodstock Hall Residence;
 - 3.2.18 Two representatives for students living off-campus or for those who commute.
- 3.3 Voting members shall hold office from October 1st-September 30th the following year.
- 3.4 Official observers (non-voting) of FYC and the FYC Core Executive shall be:
- 3.4.1 The FYC Coordinator;
 - 3.4.2 The MSU President;
 - 3.4.3 Three (3) members of the previous year's FYC, selected by the previous years' FYC;
 - 3.4.4 One (1) SRA member, elected by the SRA;
 - 3.4.5 The Maroons Coordinator;
 - 3.4.6 First-year representatives from academic division student societies;
 - 3.4.7 The Spark Director.
- 3.5 In the event of nominations not being filled for Residence Chair past an extended nomination period;
- 3.5.1 A presently sitting member of FYC shall volunteer to provide a forum for discussion on issues of concern to students living in the pertaining residence.

4. First-Year Council

- 4.1 FYC shall consist of representatives from each residence, off-campus/commuting students, the Chair, Vice-Chair External, Vice-Chair Internal, and Vice-Chair Events;
- 4.2 First Year Residence Chairs shall:
- 4.2.1 Live in the residence building, live in off-campus housing, or be commuting students which corresponds to the position they were elected for during the fall-winter term;
 - 4.2.2 Advocate for, and represent the opinions and concerns of their fellow residents or students;
 - 4.2.3 Support programming of off-campus and residence wide activities and events on behalf of their fellow students;
- 4.3 All members of FYC shall meet at least twice per month following the finalization of election results excluding the months of December and April-September;

- 4.3.1 During the months of December and April-September, all members shall meet once per month.
- 4.3.2 Fifty percent (50%) of the members of the First Year Council shall constitute quorum at all First Year Council Meetings.
- 4.4 The FYC Coordinator shall:
 - 4.4.1 Oversee all FYC operations;
 - 4.4.2 Liaise with, and provide updates to, members of the Board of Directors, SRA, and Residence Life as needed or requested;
 - 4.4.3 Reports to the Executive Board once over the summer and twice each school term regarding the progress of the FYC Coordinator job duties;
 - 4.4.4 Submit a transition report to the incoming coordinator by September 15;
 - 4.4.5 Ensure the efficient internal operation of the FYC and its compliance with this bylaw;
 - 4.4.6 Oversee the finances of the FYC, and provide the FYC with monthly financial updates;
 - 4.4.7 Call meetings of the FYC as requested by the Chair and prepare meeting agendas;
 - 4.4.8 Be responsible for fulfilling the administrative needs of the FYC, including keeping attendance records and minutes of all FYC meetings;
 - 4.4.9 Keep a contact list of the entire First-Year Council and interested MSU members;
 - 4.4.10 Maintain and update the FYC content on the MSU website;
 - 4.4.11 Ensure that FYC meetings are scheduled appropriately with regards to member availabilities;
 - 4.4.12 Perform other duties as outlined in the FYC Coordinator job description.

5. The First-Year Council Core Executive

- 5.1 The FYC Core Executive shall be composed of the following individuals:
 - 5.1.1 Chair;
 - 5.1.2 Vice-Chair External;
 - 5.1.3 Vice-Chair Internal;
 - 5.1.4 Vice-Chair Events.
- 5.2 The FYC Core Executive shall:
 - 5.2.1 Meet at least once per week, excluding December and April-September;
 - 5.2.1.1 During the months of December and April-September, FYC Core Executives shall meet twice per month.

- 5.2.2 Work with the FYC Coordinator to prepare and present the annual FYC budget to the Vice-President (Finance);
- 5.2.3 Report to the SRA twice per school term;
- 5.2.4 Conduct research and compile information regarding first-year student life and the first-year experience at McMaster University;
- 5.2.5 Provide a forum for discussion on issues of concern for first-year students
- 5.2.6 Seek to increase involvement of the first-year students in the MSU and student life at McMaster University;
- 5.2.7 Be responsible for participating in their initial transitions and ensuring adequate transition for their successors;
 - 5.2.7.1 Transition reports shall be submitted to the FYC Coordinator by September 15.
- 5.3 The Chair shall:
 - 5.3.1 Act as the chief spokesperson for the First-Year Council;
 - 5.3.2 Regularly attend meetings of the SRA and the President's Council;
 - 5.3.3 Monitor and ensure the regular attendance of FYC members at general meetings;
 - 5.3.4 Maintain regular communication with Residence Life and other campus groups to discuss pertinent issues affecting first-year students;
 - 5.3.5 Chair meetings of the FYC;
 - 5.3.6 Perform other duties as outlined in the FYC Chair job description.
- 5.4 The Vice-Chair Internal shall:
 - 5.4.1 Assist with the Chair's duties as needed;
 - 5.4.2 Serve as Vice-Chair of the FYC;
 - 5.4.3 Lead all Residence Chairs and to that extent shall:
 - 5.4.3.1 Provide support in fulfilling the duties of the Residence Chairs;
 - 5.4.3.2 Support in the planning and execution of residence-wide and off-campus events;
 - 5.4.3.3 Ensure the full participation of the Residence Chairs.
 - 5.4.4 Present an interim report to FYC in January and a year-end report in April summarizing the work of the Residence Activity Council;
 - 5.4.5 Conduct research and compile information about the living conditions and the student experience of first-year students living on McMaster campus;
 - 5.4.6 Perform other duties as outlined in the FYC Vice-Chair Internal job description.
- 5.5 The Vice-Chair External shall:
 - 5.5.1 Raise awareness of FYC to the McMaster community;

- 5.5.2 Chair meetings of the First Year Representative Society (FYRS), as outlined in **Section 6**;
 - 5.5.3 Conduct research and compile information about issues relating to academic and off campus student experiences;
 - 5.5.4 Perform other duties as outlined in the FYC Vice-Chair External job description.
- 5.6 The Vice-Chair Events shall:
- 5.6.1 Plan and conduct at least one (1) major event per semester for first-year students, intended to raise spirit within the McMaster University community;
 - 5.6.2 Work with campus partners to ensure the execution of such events;
 - 5.6.3 Maintain correspondence with Community Advisors (CAs) on different events and programs regarding first-year students;
 - 5.6.4 Perform other duties as outlined in the FYC Vice-Chair Events job description.
- 5.7 In the event of the departure of a First-Year Council Core Executive from office prior to the end of the official term of the member, members of the Council not already part of the Core Executives shall nominate themselves for the corresponding role;
- 5.7.1 Candidates shall be elected through a private quorate vote by all voting members of the council;
 - 5.7.2 The successful candidate shall hold office as a Core Executive until any of the following conditions met:
 - 5.7.2.1 Successful re-election of the departed member;
 - 5.7.2.2 The complete length of the term of the sitting council has elapsed;
 - 5.7.3 Successful candidates shall not relinquish their previous position upon ascension to as a Core Executive.

6. First Year Representative Society

- 6.1 The First Year Representative Society (FYRS) is an affiliate of First-Year Council that shall serve to:
 - 6.1.1 Combine the efforts of, and unite first year representatives of all undergraduate academic divisions as a means to:
 - 6.1.1.1 Advocate for and enable a better university experience for first year students;
 - 6.1.1.2 Channel the resources of the MSU and FYC to support inter-division collaboration related to first year student representation;
 - 6.1.1.3 Abolish physical and social barriers preventing integration between different academic divisions;

- 6.1.2 Discuss pertinent issues affecting first year students.
- 6.2 MSU registered students who are designated as first-year student representatives, or equivalent, in the following student groups shall automatically acquire membership and voting membership status within FYRS:
 - 6.2.1 Bachelor of Health Science Society (BHSS);
 - 6.2.2 DeGroote Commerce Society (DCS);
 - 6.2.3 McMaster Engineering Society (MES);
 - 6.2.4 McMaster Humanities Society (MHS);
 - 6.2.5 McMaster Kinesiology Society (MKS);
 - 6.2.6 McMaster Science Society (MSS);
 - 6.2.7 McMaster Social Sciences Society (MSSS);
 - 6.2.8 McMaster University Nursing Students Society (MUNSS);
 - 6.2.9 Society of Arts and Science Students (SASS).
- 6.3 Official observers of the First Year Representative Society shall be:
 - 6.3.1 First Year Council;
 - 6.3.2 The FYC Coordinator;
 - 6.3.3 The MSU President;
 - 6.3.4 The President, or equivalent, of each academic division society as listed in **Section 6.2**.
- 6.4 FYRS shall meet a minimum of two (2) times per semester;
 - 6.4.1 Fifty percent (50%) of members of FYRS shall constitute quorum.
- 6.5 FYRS shall organize a committee to plan and execute a year-end inter-division event aimed to promote integration between faculties;
 - 6.5.1 A committee lead shall be appointed to coordinate planning and execution of the event and report on the status of the project to FYRS.
- 6.6 Meetings of FYRS shall be chaired by the FYC Vice-Chair External;
 - 6.6.1 Meeting times and locations will be determined by the Vice-Chair External;
 - 6.6.2 The Vice-Chair External shall also record meeting minutes.
- 6.7 Each FYRS Agenda shall have a provision for the following standing orders, but not necessarily in this order:
 - 6.7.1 Roll Call by the meeting Chair;
 - 6.7.2 Report Period by each member listed in **Section 6.2**, during which each member will report on their past, current, and future objectives in relation to student life for first-year students at McMaster;
 - 6.7.3 Progress Update by the lead of the year-end event;

- 6.7.4 Discussion Period in which any member may address FYRS on issues pertinent to first-year students and prompt discussion amongst all members;
 - 6.7.5 Adjournment/Roll Call.
- 6.8 The full members of FYRS must review the implementation of FYRS for the 2023-2024 terms during the month of March, 2024, in which the purpose will be;
- 6.8.1 To assess whether the implementation of FYRS created a more representative body which fostered a more supportive environment for first year-led initiatives.

7. Attendance

- 7.1 Members of FYC are expected to attend all general meetings of the Council to represent the interests of their constituents and carry out the functions of the Council in the interest of the first-year student body;
- 7.2 FYC attendance records shall be kept by the FYC Coordinator and monitored by the Chair;
- 7.3 An absence shall count towards the pertaining FYC member's removal from the Council unless any of the following apply:
 - 7.3.1 The absence occurs while the member is representing FYC at any relevant event, conference, or other relevant meeting;
 - 7.3.2 The absence occurs for human rights reasons, at the discretion of the FYC Coordinator.
- 7.4 A FYC member shall automatically relinquish their seat if they are absent for:
 - 7.4.1 Four (4) meetings in the Fall Term: September 1 to December 30;
 - 7.4.2 Four (4) meetings in the Winter Term: January 1 to March 3.
- 7.5 The FYC Coordinator shall begin and end each meeting with a roll call of all members of FYC;
 - 7.5.1 The Chair shall assume this role in the event that the FYC Coordinator is not present at the meeting.
- 7.6 Being late beyond the first thirty (30) minutes of a meeting, or being absent at the end of the meeting, shall automatically be considered as an absence;
- 7.7 The FYC Coordinator shall attempt to warn a FYC member who is at risk of having their seat relinquished due to attendance requirements; however, a FYC member is still subject to removal from the Council regardless of attempts made by the FYC Coordinator;

- 7.8 Attendance requirements shall apply to all FYC members regardless of position;
- 7.9 Attendance requirements shall not apply to weekly meetings of the Core Executives;
- 7.10 Any FYC member forced to relinquish their seat for attendance may seek re-election.

8. Disciplinary Procedures

- 8.1 Discipline for the elected members for FYC will follow the grounds and procedures of recall as outlined in **Bylaw 4 – Board of Directors & Speaker**;
- 8.2 Discipline for official observers;
 - 8.2.1 Refer to **Employment Policy – Disciplinary Procedures**;
 - 8.2.2 Complaints regarding official observers shall be made to the FYC Coordinator;
 - 8.2.3 Complaints regarding the FYC Coordinator shall be made to the President.
- 8.3 Appeals:
 - 8.3.1 Probation, suspension, and dismissal may be appealed to the Executive Board.