

CANDIDATE GUIDE

A guide to the UWSA General Election process, available positions, and key dates



Make a Difference

- Indigenous Course Requirement
- Affordable Healthcare
- UWSA Daycare
- U-Pass
- Fall Reading Week
- Bike Lab
- Accessible Door Openers

Did you know that these big campus developments were started by students like you? As a UWSA Director, you can create positive change for students at UWinnipeg.

Nominate Yourself!



UWSA Elections Candidate Calendar

UWSA Elections run on a six-week cycle:

Weeks 1 & 2: Candidate Nominations - January 26 at 9:00 AM till February 5 by 6:00 PM

Week 3 & 4: All Candidates Training and Campaign Preparation Period – February 9 till February 20

Week 5: Campaign Week – February 23 till February 27 by 6:00 PM

Week 6: Voting Period – March 2 at 9 AM till March 4 by 6:00 PM

Mon, Jan 26	Tue, Jan 27	Wed, Jan 28	Thu, Jan 29	Fri, Jan 30
Nominations are now open *Students may ask questions to the Chief Elections Commissioner (CEC) at the CEC's email, cec@theuwsa.ca. Fill out and submit the nomination form at theuwsa.ca/elections				
Mon, Feb 2	Tue, Feb 3	Wed, Feb 4	Thu, Feb 5	Fri, Feb 6
Nominations are now open *Students may ask questions to the Chief Elections Commissioner (CEC) at the CEC's email, cec@theuwsa.ca. Fill out and submit the nomination form at theuwsa.ca/elections				Candidates will receive an email confirming their Candidacy
			6:00 PM Nominations are now closed	
Mon, Feb 9	Tue, Feb 10	Wed, Feb 11	Thu, Feb 12	Fri, Feb 13
12:00 PM Campaign and Posters Workshop	10:30 AM – 3:00 PM Optional Headshot Session	10:30 AM – 3:00 PM Optional Headshot Session	4:00 PM Deadline to register as a slate. Must notify the Chief Election Commissioner and General Manager	4:00 PM Deadline to change positions you are running. Must notify the Chief Election Commissioner and General Manager
Mon, Feb 16	Tue, Feb 17	Wed, Feb 18	Thu, Feb 19	Fri, Feb 20
Louis Riel Day UWSA is closed	1:00 PM CST Candidate headshots and bios must be submitted to UWSA Comms Team		3:00 PM CST Campaign Materials must be submitted to UWSA Comms Team	
Mon, Feb 23	Tue, Feb 24	Wed, Feb 25	Thu, Feb 26	Fri, Feb 27
Campaign Period *Starting early may lead to disciplinary action				
9:00 AM Campaigning may begin for candidates				6:00 PM Final day for candidates to campaign in person
Mon, Mar 2	Tue, Mar 3	Wed, Mar 4	Thu, Mar 5	Fri, Mar 6
Voting is open – participate in person or online *In-person campaigning is prohibited, but online campaigning may continue.				
9:00 AM Start voting now		6:00 PM Voting is now closed		

Understanding Elections

An Intro

The UWSA General Election is a six-week period in the Winter Term where students can run for an Executive Team position (President, Vice-President Student Affairs, Vice-President External Affairs), Emerging Leader Director, a Board of Director position, a UWSA Senator position, or a Board of Regents seat.

UWSA Elections may be a bit different than the elections you're used to. As a students' union, the UWSA is invested in helping students reach their individual and collective potential. This means providing an electoral experience that fosters collaboration and meets the UWSA's values of accessibility, anti-oppressive leadership, authentic representation, outreach & engagement, organizational integrity, empathy, and continual reflection.

Election Periods

Elections are divided into four periods: nominations, all candidates training and campaign preparation, campaigning, and voting. Nomination Period is when students can nominate themselves as a candidate. All Candidates Training and Campaign Preparation Period is when candidates prepare for their campaign, make their own promotional materials, and can get training by the UWSA Election Team. Campaign Week is when candidates can campaign and encourage students to vote for them. Voting Period is when students vote for their preferred candidates. Candidates must stop in-person campaigning at the end of February 27 and may only campaign online during the voting period. The unofficial results are announced at the end of the voting period and the newly elected leaders start on May 1.

Your Elections, Your Leaders

Student Unions and Associations represent students' voices on campus. To ensure that your student leaders represent your interests, Executives and board members are elected democratically through annual elections.

How do I run?

To run, candidates will need to fill out the online nomination form found at theuwsa.ca/elections before Thursday, February 5 by 6 PM CST. The CEC and General Manager act on behalf of the UWSA students, ensuring that UWSA Elections, By- Elections, and Referenda are conducted with integrity, honesty, and transparency. Once your nomination is verified, you will receive an email with all the information about the rest of the Elections! Visit theuwsa.ca/elections or email us at cec@theuwsa.ca.

Slates

Two or more executive candidates who are running for different positions may choose to run as a slate/single campaign. You must register and notify the CEC and General Manager via email or in writing before 4PM CST on Thursday, February 12. Please note that candidates in slates will still be individually voted on, and only candidates running for Executive positions can run as part of a slate.

Changing what you're running for

Candidates can choose to change their position prior to the commencement of the campaign period. This means that once you've learned more about how the board works, you can choose to run for a position more aligned with your goals. Or, if you'd prefer to run for an uncontested position, you can do so. You must let the CEC and General Manager know via email or in writing before Friday, February 13 by 4:00 PM CST.

Campaign Training

Candidates are provided campaign training. You will be taught what it means to be a director on a non-profit board, how internal governance works at the UWSA, conflict mediation and resolution skills, and learn about collaborative governance. You'll additionally be instructed on UWinnipeg campus campaign strategies and best practices.

Campaign Materials

Candidates are expected to create, produce, and print their own campaign materials. You may use whichever software works best for you. Be creative, different, and make sure everything is correct. Candidates will have to send their graphics to the UWSA Communications Team by Thursday, February 19 by 3 PM CST. We are only checking that the information is correct specifically the voting dates.

Collective Goals For All Candidates Include:

- Building meaningful engagement with students
- Nurturing broad understanding of the key electoral issues among the membership
- Achieving a high voter turnout

Key Issues

Candidates may work together to establish the key electoral issues. Key electoral issues are the important issues facing students that each candidate will have their own perspective on. Once the key issues are established collaboratively, each candidate articulates their personal position on the issues.

Campaign Expenses Budget

All candidates shall receive a set budget for any campaign expenses including your printing. Uncontested, non-executive directorship shall receive a budget of \$50. Contested, non-executive directorship shall receive a budget of \$100. Executive directorship shall receive a budget of \$100. Referenda sides shall receive a budget of \$150.

Campaign Opportunities

During training week, all candidates may plan outreach strategies together, including scheduling meetings with student groups, classroom presentations, and any appearance targeting ten (10) or more students. These engagements are known as “campaign opportunities”. Planning campaign opportunities collectively allows for a strategic campus outreach that boosts student engagement and voter turn-out. Once campaigning begins, candidates only need to share any additional campaign opportunities they schedule with contesting candidates. Sharing campaign opportunities evens the playing field between experienced campaigners and those who are newer to campaigning. This means students are voting for candidates that represent their interests rather than just voting for the candidate they've heard of.

Conflict Resolution

In UWSA Elections, candidates are empowered to take leadership in resolving any conflicts they may have with other candidates. The complaints and anti-harassment policies allow for independent and/or supported mediation. If the conflict cannot be resolved through mediation, it then moves to an independent board for review and resolution.

Questions?

Visit theuwsa.ca/elections or contact cec@theuwsa.ca or d.bansal@theuwsa.ca

UWSA Elections Available Roles

Executives

UWSA Executive Directors are full-time, salaried officers (\$41,200 per year) of the student union. They are the official legal representatives of University of Winnipeg students. Each executive portfolio covers different aspects of the operations of the association, but all of them are charged with bringing business to, and carrying out the decisions of the UWSA committees and the Board of Directors.

- **President:** The President is the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Spokesperson of the UWSA. The President sits on the University of Winnipeg Senate and Board of Regents, Chairs the Executive Committee, and oversees all Vice-Presidential portfolios and all business of the union.
- **Vice-President Student Affairs:** The Vice-President Student Affairs (VPSA) advises and represents students who need assistance with academic appeals, sexual harassment cases, student housing issues, and another student advocacy. The VPSA represents students at the university Senate. The VPSA chairs the Student Life Committee.
- **Vice-President External Affairs:** The Vice-President External Affairs works with the President to coordinate external activities of the UWSA involving community, provincial, federal, and international organizations. The VPEA acts as the Chief Spokesperson of the UWSA in the President's absence.

Board of Directors

UWSA directors represent constituencies of students (such as Arts students, or 2SLGBTQ* students) to UWSA committees and the Board of Directors. Directors help the union make decisions at every level, including managing finances, setting governance rules, and planning events and political campaigns. The Board of Directors meets monthly and UWSA Committees meet bi-weekly to monthly, depending on the committee.

Community Directors

Community Directors represent interests particular to students from their community to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. They act as a liaison between students, service centers and community groups.

- **Accessibility Director:** The Accessibility Director represents interests particular to students disabled by barriers and works with the UWSA Board of Directors and Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Accessibility Director acts as a liaison between students and the Accessibility Services, the UWSA Access Lounge, and other campus and UWSA services and community groups that challenge ableist oppression.
- **Community Liaison Director:** The Community Liaison Director assists the UWSA Executives in building community relationships and partnerships and implementing political campaigns relevant to the campus and downtown community. The Community Liaison Director assists UWSA student groups with charity events, liaises with the University of Winnipeg chapter of the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and volunteers with the UWSA Foodbank.
- **Environmental Ethics Director:** The Environmental Ethics Director represents environmental issues to the Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to address these issues with the community, university, and government. The Environmental Ethics Director acts as a liaison between students and environmental student groups.

- **International Students' Director:** The International Students' Director represents interests particular to international students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The International Students' Director acts as liaison with student groups and associations relevant to international students, including the University of Winnipeg chapter of the World University Service of Canada (WUSC).
- **Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and * Students' (2SLGBTQ*) Director:** The 2SLGBTQ* Students' Director represents interests particular to 2SLGBTQ* students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The 2SLGBTQ* Director acts as a liaison between students and the Rainbow Lounge and community groups that challenge sexuality and gender oppression.
- **Part-Time/Mature Students' Director:** The Part-Time/Mature Students' Director represents interests particular to Part-Time and/or Mature students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government.
- **Racialized Students' Director:** The Racialized Students' Director represents interests particular to Black People, Indigenous People, and People of Colour to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Racialized Students' Director acts as liaison between students and the BIPOC Lounge and community groups that challenge racism.
- **Recreation and Athletics Director:** The Recreation and Athletics Director assists UWSA staff and Executives in planning, coordinating, and promoting recreational and athletic activities on campus, and works with relevant student groups to support campus intramurals. The Recreation and Athletics Director acts as a liaison between students and the Duckworth Centre and RecPlex administrators.
- **Student Living Director:** The Student Living Director represents issues surrounding cost of living and university education to the Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to address these issues with the community, university, and government. The Student Living Director acts as a liaison between students and the University of Winnipeg Residents Association and the Department of Housing and Student Life.
- **Women, Trans, and Non-Binary Students' (WTNB) Director:** The WTNB Director represents interests particular to Women, Trans, and/or non-Binary students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The WTNB Director acts as a liaison between students and the Women-Trans Spectrum Centre and community groups that challenge gender oppression.

Faculty Directors

Faculty Directors represent interests particular to students of their faculty to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the broader community, university, and government. They act as liaison with relevant student groups and associations.

- **Arts Director:** The Arts Director represents the interests of Arts students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Arts Director acts as liaison with student groups and associations relevant to Arts students.

- **Business and Economics Director:** The Business and Economics Director represents interests particular to Business and Economics students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Business and Economics Director acts as a liaison with student groups and associations relevant to Business and Economics students.
- **Education Director:** The Education Director represents interests particular to Education students and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Education Director acts as liaison with student groups and associations relevant to Education students.
- **Graduate Students' Director:** The Graduate Students' Director represents interests particular to Graduate students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Graduate Students' Director acts as liaison with student groups and associations relevant to Graduate students.
- **Professional, Applied, and Continuing Education (PACE) Students' Director:** The PACE Director represents interests particular to PACE students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The PACE Director represents students at the university Senate.
- **Science Director:** The Science Director represents interests particular to science students to the UWSA Board of Directors and works with the UWSA Executives to represent these interests to the community, university, and government. The Science Director acts as a liaison with student groups and associations relevant to science students.

Other Positions

- **Emerging Leader Directors (2-year term):** UWSA Emerging Leader Directors duties include general membership engagement; promotion of UWSA events, board meetings, and general meetings; and assisting the Vice-Presidents in board mentorship and transition year-to-year. There are two positions available for Emerging Leader Director, and each position is a two-year term ending April 30, 2028.
- **Emerging Leader Directors (1-year term):** UWSA Emerging Leader Directors duties include general membership engagement; promotion of UWSA events, board meetings, and general meetings; and assisting the Vice-Presidents in board mentorship and transition year-to-year. There are two positions available for Emerging Leader Director, and each position is a two-year term ending April 30, 2027.
- **UWSA Regent:** UWSA Regents represent all UW students to the University of Winnipeg Board of Regents. The Board of Regents rules on financial matters, big-picture goals, and the strategic development of the university. The Board of Regents is the highest governing authority of the university. The Board of Regents and Regent Committees meet monthly.
- **UWSA Senator:** UWSA Senators represent all UW students to the University of Winnipeg Senate and Senate Committees. The Senate makes decisions on all academic matters of the university, including curriculum development, student academic appeals, and the setting of academic standards. Senate meets monthly and Senate Committees meet bi-weekly to monthly, depending on the committee.

FAQS

Is it a paid position?

Directors elected in the Election receive a \$100 honorarium each month over the course of their term. In order to qualify for their honorarium, Directors must:

- Attend all scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors and
- Attend all scheduled Committee Meetings of the Board of Directors

Executive Directors are salaried full-time positions that receive \$41,200 per year.

What are the duties and time commitments of a director?

All UWSA directors MUST attend monthly board meetings and are expected to sit on at least one committee of the board. Directors represent their constituencies and the student body by bringing forward new ideas, offering feedback on UWSA operations, holding staff and the executive accountable, and voting on business. If you are unable to attend three Director of the Board meetings in a row you may be stripped of your title as director.

What are the benefits of being a director?

Directors gain experience as a member of a non-profit board; have the opportunity to connect with student communities and voice their needs; make decisions that impact students and the university; and learn more about the student union, university governance, and lobbying government. You will also receive exclusive access to the UWSA Lounge.

How long is a term?

The term begins once you are elected and expires on April 30, except for the Emerging Leader Director which are two-year terms. Candidates can run for the same position or a different position in the next General Election.

Do I need any experience to run?

Any student enrolled in at least 3 credit hours during the current academic year is a member of the UWSA and is qualified to run as a director of the board. Candidates for election:

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Must be a student at the University of Winnipeg.
- Cannot hold the status of bankruptcy.
- Executive Directors: Must demonstrate via transcripts that they have completed thirty credit hours at The University of Winnipeg or they must demonstrate via their transcripts that they have attended The University of Winnipeg for at least four full fall or winter academic terms prior to commencing the term in office.

How do I run?

To run, you can fill a nomination form online available at theuwsa.ca/elections.

I have more questions. Who can I talk to?

You can check out our website at theuwsa.ca/elections, talk to a current Board of Director (theuwsa.ca/board-of-directors), or e-mail the General Manager at d.bansal@theuwsa.ca or the CEC at cec@theuwsa.ca.

Nominate Yourself!

Nominations Open: Monday, January 26, 2026

Nominations Close: Thursday, February 5, 2027 at 6:00 PM

Do I qualify?

Any student enrolled in at least 3 credit hours during the current academic year is a member of this UWSA and is qualified to run as a director of the board.

Candidates for Executive Director must be a current UWSA member and must either:

- Demonstrate via transcripts that they have completed thirty credit hours at The University of Winnipeg or;
- Demonstrate via their transcripts that they have attended The University of Winnipeg for at least four full fall or winter academic terms prior to commencing the term in office.

Current executive directors are UWSA members regardless of whether they are registered in classes during their term.

Why should I run?

Joining the UWSA Board of Directors is a great way to get involved in your university!

You'll learn about issues at the university and in the community and you will help guide the association's response to those issues. You'll get experience sitting on a not-for-profit board, connect with other students, receive a recommendation for future jobs, and take leadership on projects that you care about.

How do I nominate myself?

Fill out the online nomination form at theuwsa.ca/elections before 6:00 PM on Thursday, February 5.

How do I know that my nomination is valid?

You will receive an email on Friday, February 6 confirming your nomination. In the email it will contain information on the next few weeks.

UWSA Elections All Candidates' Training and Campaign Preparation

February 9-20, 2026: Candidates create their own Campaign Materials

What is the All Candidates' Training and Campaign Preparation Week?

During Week 3 and 4, all qualified candidates will be training videos as well as possible additional optional training sessions/workshops produced by the UWSA. Some topics may include but not limited to are:

1. Collaborative governance;
2. The UWSA mission and vision, internal structure and operations, UWSA Ambassadorship, Policies, and election rules;
3. Non-profit board regulations, duties, and privileges;
4. How to campaign and make a poster;
5. Conflict mediation and resolution.

Candidates Create their own Campaign Materials

Candidates are expected to create, produce, and print their own campaign materials. You may use whichever software works best for you. Be creative, different, and make sure your everything is correct. Candidates will have to send their graphics to the UWSA Communications Team by Thursday, February 19 by 3:00 PM (CST.) We are mainly checking that the information is correct specifically the voting dates.

Confirmation of Position

Candidates can announce the position for which they are running at the beginning of the All Candidates Training and Campaign Preparation Week. Before 4:00 PM on February 13, candidates may choose to run for a different position (contingent on eligibility) or withdraw from candidacy.

Confirmation of Slates

Two or more executive candidates who are running for different Executive positions may choose to run as a slate/single campaign. You must register and notify the CEC and General Manager via email or in writing before 4:00 PM on Thursday, February 12. Please note that candidates in slates will still be individually voted on.

UWSA Elections Campaigning

Starts February 23, 2026

What is a campaign?

A campaign is a series of actions done by or on behalf of a candidate to gain support for the vote. You can campaign during Campaign Week and only ONLINE during Voting Week, starting Monday, March 2.

How to build a campaign:

1. Identify your audience. Each position has a slightly different audience (arts students, 2SLGBTQ+ students, the whole student body, etc.) Keep in mind that although many positions represent specific communities, all voters are able to cast votes for all positions.
2. Identify the priorities of your audience and build a platform that meets those priorities. For example, arts students might have different priorities than science students. 2SLGBTQ+ students might have a set of priorities that are consistent regardless of faculty or might have priorities based on where they spend time on campus.
3. Think critically about the issues and how you'll engage with them—this will become your platform!
4. Create campaign materials that communicate your platform clearly and concisely. You have a budget provided by the UWSA to cover the cost of your campaign materials. Candidates will have to pay for their materials up front and keep their receipt to be reimbursed after the Elections have transpired. Anything over your budget will be out of pocket.
5. Talk to students, distribute your campaign materials, and remind people to vote! Some candidates choose to do classroom speeches—if you do, make sure you get permission from the professor beforehand!

UWSA Elections Voting

March 2, 2026 at 9:00 AM till March 4, 2026 by 6:00 PM

Who can vote?

Anyone enrolled as a student (full-time or part-time) can vote in the elections. Remember to have your student number on hand when you hit the polls!

Where and when do I vote?

UWSA General Elections will be conducted by online voting and in-person polling on March 2, 3, and 4, 2026. Check theuwsa.ca/elections for details about the voting.

What happens next?

Voting ends at 6:00 PM on March 4 and are automatically tallied by Simply Voting. Preliminary results are announced via e-mail to all students and posted on theuwsa.ca. The results are ratified and declared official during the next UWSA Board meeting.

Newly elected Executives and Board members start their term on May 1.

How to vote:

1. Check your Webmail to receive your password, and voting link.
Your Elector ID will be your UWinnipeg Student ID Number.
2. Click on the voting link and enter your Elector ID and password to login and go to the voting page.
3. Go through every candidate and vote yes, no, or leave it blank to abstain.
4. Click “continue” when you reach the bottom of the voting page.
5. Review your ballot. If you need to change a vote, click “change”.
6. Click confirm when you are satisfied with your answers. Your ballot will be submitted.
You can view your voting receipt on the page.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Each student will have until March 4, 2026 6:00 PM to change who they voted for.

UWSA Elections Complaints

The General Manager and Chief Elections Commissioner are responsible for ensuring a fair and unbiased election, and managing all complaints, disputes, and violations of the By-laws. Any member of the association can file a complaint against a campaign. Complaints must be submitted by filling out the online form available at theuwsa.ca/elections.

This document is not a stand in for the UWSA By-laws. All Candidates for Election are expected to familiarize themselves with the By-laws. This guide is now a governing document of the UWSA and may not be referenced in any election complaint or appeal.

UWSA Elections Appeals

If a candidate disagrees with the ruling, they can submit an appeal to the Election Accountability Board (EAB). The EAB oversees and holds accountable the CEC and General Manager. Complaints against an action or decision of the CEC or General Manager can be submitted to the Chair of the EAB at chair@theuwsa.ca. Any member of the association can file a complaint against the CEC and General Manager.

CONTACT

Reach out to the Chief Elections Commissioner at cec@theuwsa.ca, or visit theuwsa.ca/elections for more information.