

Ecological Restoration Student Association (ERSA) Constitution

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Contents

1. Name 2. Objectives 3. Membership 4. Administrative Structure 5. Terms of Office 6. Elections and Appointments 7. Amendments 8. Interpretation

1. NAME

1.1. The name of the organization is the Ecological Restoration Student Association, hereafter referred to as “ERSA”.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. The objective of ERSA is to promote the well-being of students enrolled in the Ecological Restoration Master of Science program (hereafter referred to as the “program”). ERSA encourages the creation of an inclusive environment for graduate students through fostering a collaborative and inclusive multi-disciplinary environment. ERSA aims to aid in developing students’ skills personally and professionally, and to act on their behalf on issues of mutual concern between themselves and:

- a) The Simon Fraser University (SFU) Faculty of Environment,
- b) The British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) School of Construction and the Environment
- c) The Ecological Restoration MSc Graduate Program Committee (GPC),
- d) The BCIT Ecological Restoration Program Advisory Committee (PAC),
- e) The SFU Graduate Student Society (GSS),
- f) The BCIT Student Association (BCITSA),
- g) The SFU Faculty of Environment Graduate Student Caucus,
- h) The Society of Ecological Restoration BCIT (SER-BCIT) Student Chapter, and
- i) The Society of Ecological Restoration Western Canada Chapter (SER-WC).

2.2. To notify others concerning the ERSA Constitution (hereafter referred to as the “Constitution”), a current copy of the Constitution shall be:

- a) Given to every Executive member.
- b) Posted in the ERSA-designated spaces at SFU and BCIT.
- c) Emailed to ERSA members in September, when initiating Executive elections, and if changes are proposed to the Constitution.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Membership is automatically conferred upon all ER MSc students as of September 1st of their first semester enrolled in the program.

3.2. Membership is conditional upon current enrollment in the program, thus it expires when individuals are no longer enrolled in the program.

3.3. Official enrollment status as ER MSc students is determined by the SFU/BCIT administration.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

4.1. An Executive shall be chosen from the membership to act on its behalf in specific roles and to administer the affairs of ERSA.

4.2. The ERSA Executive consists of the following positions:

a) Chair

- i) Organizes and sits as chairs and prepares agenda at ERSA meetings
- ii) Facilitates ERSA activities and coordinates the ERSA Executive
- iii) Organises the yearly Research Symposium
- iv) Acts as ERSA representative at meetings with external organisations
- v) Acts as ERSA representative at the monthly SFU Faculty of Environment Graduate Student Caucus meetings
- vi) Collaborates with other SFU Faculty of Environment graduate programs to ensure social events and academic/outreach opportunities are communicated and available to all graduate students in the Faculty (i.e., Archaeology, Geography, REM, and ER)
- vii) Supervises the expenditure of all funds
- viii) Conducts the bi-annual ERSA elections
 - 1) The outgoing Chair is responsible for running the Spring election that occurs at the end of their elected term (i.e. outgoing Chair runs election in Spring for new chair and Second-year Rep, as well as interim summer positions).
 - 2) The incumbent Chair is responsible for running the Fall election that occurs midway through their term (i.e. Current chair will run Fall election for First Year Reps, Secretary/Treasurer/GSS Rep, Ecological Director, and Web & Media Directors for the upcoming year).
- ix) Appoints committee members when necessary
- x) Nominates interim appointments for vacant Executive positions
- xi) Acts as Secretary in their absence
- xii) May delegate any of their responsibilities to another Executive member temporarily or permanently (e.g., appoint an Elections Officer to conduct the elections)
- xiii) This is an elected position
- xiv) By resolution of the Executive Council, there may be two Chairs (i.e., Co-Chairs). However, an additional Chair increases the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings.

b) Secretary

- i) Acts as Secretary, Treasurer, and GSS Representative
 - ii) Supports the Chair(s) in carrying out their duties and acts as Chair(s) in their absence
 - iii) This is an elected position
 - iv) By resolution of the Executive Council, this may be split into a maximum of three positions (i.e., Secretary, Treasurer, and GSS Representative). However, additional Executive positions increases the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings.
 - v) Duties as Secretary include:
 - 1) Keeps minutes of each ERSA meeting
 - 2) Keeps ERSA records and ERSA Google Drive, including the Constitutions and related GSS business correspondence, as well as other documents and correspondence
 - 3) Responsible for maintaining student/alumni mailing lists and communicating updates from council to members
 - 4) Updates ERSA administrative files as needed and at end of tenure
 - vi) Duties as Treasurer include:
 - 1) Responsible for all monies received and disbursed by ERSA, and for the accounting of all bills, receipts, and vouchers
 - 2) Responsible for providing information to students on possible sources of funding or scholarships for ERSA programs
 - vii) Duties as GSS Representative include:
 - 1) Attends regular GSS meetings and represents ER MSc students. Meetings occur once per month and occur in every month (i.e., September to August)
 - 2) Keeps ERSA informed of GSS business and relays information to Executive Council and Secretary
- c) Second Year Representative
- i) Represents the Year 2 cohort and acts as BCIT Year 2 cohort Set Rep.
 - ii) Co-responsible (with First Year Representative) for liaising ER MSc students concerns to the SFU Faculty of the Environment and the BCIT School of Construction and the Environment
 - iii) Assists Year 2 cohort as needed to find resources and manage conflict resolution with instructors, faculty, supervisors, administration, or disciplinary committees
 - iv) Acts as Ombudsman for Year 2 students by providing a structured avenue for student feedback and participation in matters pertaining to the program (e.g., student feedback surveys)
 - v) Attends the Ecological Restoration MSc GPC and Ecological Restoration PAC (and other BCIT/SFU faculty meetings) as the Year 2 cohort representative
 - vi) Acts as ERSA Year 2 cohort liaison with the BCITSA, including attending regular meetings, representing Year 2 students, keeping ERSA informed of BCIT Student Association business, and relaying information to Executive Council and Secretary
 - vii) Acts as student contact liaison for newly admitted students in the summer prior to their first fall semester. Connects new students with each other and ERSA and provides information about housing, transportation, program requirements, et cetera as required.

- viii) Supports and mentors the First Year Representative in carrying out their duties
 - ix) This is an elected position
 - x) At the behest of the Year 2 cohort, there may be multiple Second Year Representatives (i.e., Co-Representatives). However, additional Second Year Representatives increase the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings.
- d) First Year Representative
- i) Represents the Year 1 cohort and acts as BCIT Year 1 cohort Set Rep.
 - ii) Co-responsible (with Second Year Representative) for liaising ER MSc students concerns to the SFU Faculty of the Environment and the BCIT School of Construction and the Environment
 - iii) Assists Year 1 cohort as needed to find resources and manage conflict resolution with instructors, faculty, supervisors, administration, or disciplinary committees
 - iv) Acts as Ombudsman for Year 1 students by providing a structured avenue for student feedback and participation in matters pertaining to the program (e.g., student feedback surveys)
 - v) Attends the Ecological Restoration MSc GPC and Ecological Restoration PAC (and other BCIT/SFU faculty meetings) as the Year 1 cohort representative
 - vi) Acts as ERSA Year 1 cohort liaison with the BCITSA, including attending regular meetings, representing Year 1 students, keeping ERSA informed of BCIT Student Association business, and relaying information to Executive Council and Secretary
 - vii) This is an elected position
 - viii) At the behest of the Year 1 cohort, there may be multiple First Year Representatives (i.e., Co-Representatives). However, additional First Year Representatives increase the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings.
- e) Ecological Director
- i) Responsible for organizing social events and community outreach events for ERSA members
 - ii) Organizes at least one ERSA social event per academic semester to foster collaboration and community with the ER MSc program (e.g., bowling, games night, pub night, etc...)
 - iii) Organizes at least one outreach/ecological/community engagement event per academic semester that gives ER MSc students an opportunity to volunteer and give back to our community (e.g., invasive species removal, stream/beach clean- up, tree planting, etc...). This can be a collaboration with BCIT ER undergrads, BCIT SER Chapter, other master's students in the SFU Faculty of Environment, or ERSA alumni.)
 - iv) Provides information on current and past events and ecological/community initiatives to the Website Director
 - v) This is an elected position
 - vi) There may be multiple Ecological Directors (i.e., Co-Representatives). However, additional Ecological Directors increases the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings.
- f) Web & Media Director
- i) Sets up and maintains the ERSA website
 - ii) Updates the ERSA website and ERSA Facebook group to include information on current

- social and academic events and meetings
 - iii) Communicates regularly with the ERSA Executive to determine ways to improve ERSA's online presence and e-communication with current and past members
 - iv) Communicates relevant ecological restoration news and events to members as required
 - v) This is an elected position
 - vi) There may be multiple Web and Media Directors (i.e., Co-Representatives). However, additional Web and Media Director increases the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings.
- g) Member-at-Large
 - i) This is an appointed position.
 - ii) Students may become Members-at-Large by contributing to ERSA activities.
 - iii) A Member-at-Large must be appointed with a specific portfolio to which they are held accountable by the ERSA Executive. A Member-at-Large may be assigned to assist an Executive Member with their portfolio.
 - 1) For example: Member-at-Large for the Research Symposium, Elections Officer Member-at-Large, Plebiscite Officer Member-at-Large, Member-at-Large for Web & Media, Treasurer Member-at-Large, New Student Liaison Member-at-Large
 - iv) A Member-at-Large may have a maximum of three designated portfolios
 - v) There may be multiple Members-at-Large, however additional Members-at-Large increase the number of ERSA Executive members required to reach quorum for Council meetings

4.3. Any given individual shall not concurrently serve in more than one of the ERSA's Executive positions unless there are not enough members or interested members to fill all the roles.

4.4. Signing Authority

- a) The Chair and the Secretary shall have signing authority up to \$500.

4.5. Meetings

- a) Regular meetings shall be open to all ERSA members and shall be held at least once per month during the academic year.
- b) General meetings must be advertised at least five days prior to the meeting date and in such a manner as to inform all ERSA members that the meeting has been called. Notice must include a statement of the meeting's purpose and agenda.
- c) Emergency meetings may be called by the Chair on short notice, and may be open exclusively to the Executive.
- d) Upon invitation from the Chair, ERSA alumni or other non-members may be permitted to attend an ERSA meeting. Permission for a non-member to attend an ERSA meeting may be revoked by a simple majority vote of Executive members.

4.6. Quorum

- a) Resolutions may only be passed at meetings in which a quorum, being two thirds of the ERSA Executive, is present. Appointed Executive members do not contribute to the number of Executive

members required for quorum.

- b) Executive members are considered present for meetings if they are physically present at the meeting or if they teleconference live into the meeting (e.g., via telephone or videoconferencing).

4.7. Voting

- a) ERSA resolutions may only be passed by a two-thirds majority vote.
- b) Each elected Executive member of the ERSA shall be entitled to one vote. Appointed Executive members may not cast a vote.
- c) Voting procedures on individual motions shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.
- d) Votes may not be cast by a designated proxy or in advance of reading the proposed resolution.

5. TERMS OF OFFICE

5.1. Terms of Office for elected members of the ERSA Executive voted from the Spring Election shall be from April 1st to March 31st.

5.2. Terms of Office for elected members of the ERSA Executive voted from the Fall Election shall be from the date of election to March 31st.

5.3. The ERSA Executive may fill vacant Executive positions by appointment.

5.4. Appointments to the ERSA Executive expire upon completion of the Fall and Spring Elections.

6. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

6.1. Election Requirements

- a) A nomination period consisting of a minimum of seven consecutive days shall be open no later than ten days before and shall close no later than three days before an election.
- b) Elections must be conducted so that votes are cast anonymously and voters are given the option to abstain from voting.
- c) The nominee who receives the greatest number of votes for an Executive position is elected to that position (i.e., first-past-the-post voting system).
- d) Nominees must be provided equal opportunity to address the members in advance of an Election. The Chair or designated Elections Officer will determine the nature of any address (e.g., <200 word descriptions of the nominees emailed to the membership at the close of the nomination period) and may impose limits on campaigning or campaign financing.
- e) ERSA Executive members may not be nominated for a position in the Spring or Fall Elections unless they resign from their current Executive position before the close of the nomination window.
- f) Members may be nominated for multiple positions in a Spring or Fall Election. If a member receives the greatest number of votes for multiple positions in a single election, they may choose which position to accept. Regarding the declined position, the nominee with the next greatest number of votes wins that election.
- g) All positions may be held by co-representatives. During the nomination period, the Chair will notify all nominees that they have been nominated, and they will ask for nominee(s) interest in running with a co-representative. Nominees will be informed of all other nominees for their position and must confirm whether they are interested in running for a co-position with specific

nominee(s). Co-positions will be designated prior to the election (if the need arises, the Chair can delegate positions after the election).

6.2. Spring Elections

The outgoing Chair is responsible for running the Spring election that occurs at the end of their elected term (i.e. outgoing Chair runs election in Spring for new chair and Second-year Rep, as well as interim summer positions).

- a) The following ERSA Executive members shall be elected no later than April 1st in the annual spring election: **Chair, Interim Secretary, and Second Year Representative**. Note: the term of Interim Secretary ends on September 1st.
- b) Only Year 1 students are eligible for nomination.
- c) Any member may nominate a Year 1 student.
- d) Only Year 1 students are eligible to vote, except in the event of 6.1.f.
- e) Spring Elections can be held for the following interim positions on an as-needed basis: Ecological Director and Web & Media Director. The term for interim positions filled during Spring Elections will be April 1st to September 1st.
- f) Any election resulting in a tie for the most votes must be resolved by a second election. If a second vote results in a tie, the outgoing Chair may cast a vote to break the stalemate.

6.3. Fall Elections

The incumbent Chair is responsible for running the Fall election that occurs midway through their term (i.e. Current chair will run Fall election for First Year Reps, Secretary/Treasurer/GSS Rep, Ecological Director, and Web & Media Directors).

- a) The following ERSA Executive members shall be elected no later than September 20th in the annual fall election: First Year Representative, Secretary, Ecological Director, and Web & Media Director.
- b) Nominations and election of the First Year Representative is excluded from the timelines in 6.1.a and 6.3.a. The election of the First Year Representative must be conducted before the end of the second week of classes in September. Voting must be conducted anonymously and overseen by an independent ERSA member or alumni (e.g., a second year student or first year student who is not nominated).
- c) Year 1 and Year 2 students are eligible for nomination, except for the position of First Year Representative for which only Year 1 students may be nominated.
- d) Any member may nominate a ER MSc student for an Executive position.
- e) Year 1 and Year 2 students are eligible to vote, except for the position of First Year Representative for which only Year 1 students may vote, or except in the event of 6.2.f.
- f) Any election resulting in a tie for the most votes must be resolved by a second election. If a second vote results in a tie, the current Chair may cast a vote to break the stalemate.

6.4. Appointments:

- a) The following ERSA Executive members shall be appointed: Members-at-Large.
- b) The ERSA Executive may appoint Members-at-Large, by resolution, at any point during their tenure.

- c) Appointed Executive members may not vote on Executive resolutions.
- d) Appointed Executive members do not contribute to the number of Executive members required for quorum.

6.5. Recalling Executive Members:

- a) Elected ERSA Executive members may only be removed from their Executive position by a recall vote in which at least two thirds of members cast a vote, of which two thirds of votes are cast in favour of recalling the ERSA Executive member.
- b) Appointed ERSA Executive members may be recalled by resolution of the ERSA Executive.

7. AMENDMENTS

7.1. The Constitution may be amended by a plebiscite in which at least two thirds of members cast a vote, of which two thirds of votes are in favour of a proposed amendment or amendments.

7.2. Any member may request a Constitutional amendment. A Constitutional amendment plebiscite may be initiated by resolution of the ERSA Executive.

7.3. Proposed amendments to the ERSA Constitution must be presented to the membership via email, after which all members must be given the opportunity to provide input.

7.4. Upon request by a member, all members must be given the opportunity to discuss proposed amendments to the ERSA Constitution at a general meeting.

7.5. All members are eligible to vote on proposed amendments and all members must be provided the opportunity to vote. Voting must be conducted anonymously. The plebiscite method (e.g., online poll) and timeline are chosen at the discretion of the ERSA Executive or designated Plebiscite Officer.

8. INTERPRETATION

8.1. Nothing in this constitution shall be interpreted in a manner repugnant of the Constitution, code, rules, regulations, or policies enacted from time to time by the GSS.

8.2. Members and membership refer to registered ER MSc students.

8.3. The Constitution is intended to guide the ERSA Executive and facilitate the membership to carry out the objectives of ERSA.

8.4. The Constitution is a living document and should be revised and updated as the ERSA Executive and membership see fit.