
Constitution & Bylaws of the Electrical Engineering Graduate Students' Society (EEGSS) of McGill University



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P R E A M B L E

The Electrical Engineering Graduate Students' Society (EEGSS) of McGill University is a student organization serving graduate students in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. This organization serves as an essential link between the graduate students and their department as well as the Post Graduate Student Society (PGSS) of McGill University. Therefore, as a representative organization of graduate students, the EEGSS not only voices students concerns to their department but also conveys information from the department to the students. In order to encourage a balance between academic and non-academic life for students, the EEGSS provides a number of services to the graduate students of the department. These services include, but are not limited

to, the sponsorship of graduate student group activities, maintaining non-research related facilities for use by ECE graduate students, and the promotion of social interaction among ECE graduate students through organized events and outings.

C O N S T I T U T I O N

Article I. NAME

- 1.01 The official name of this organization shall be the Electrical Engineering Graduate Students' Society (EEGSS) of McGill University, hereinafter referred to as "EEGSS" or "the Society."

Article II. OBJECTS

- 2.01 The purpose of this organization is to serve the needs of graduate students registered in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (the Department) of McGill University (the University).
- 2.02 The objectives of this organization are to:
- (a) improve communication and the distribution of information to graduate students.
 - (b) represent graduate students' interests and concerns to the Department.
 - (c) create an informal setting for interaction between students, faculty, and staff.
 - (d) to provide services for Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) graduate students.
 - (e) to promote social interaction among ECE graduate students.
 - (f) to participate in the development of policies which relate to ECE graduate students.
 - (g) to sponsor and fund organizations and activities which improve the quality of life for ECE graduate students.

Article III. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.01 The EEGSS membership shall consist of all students currently enrolled in the graduate program of the Department, subject to payment of the society fee as prescribed in the Constitution, Article IV. Aside from this stipulation, the Society shall not discriminate in any way deemed unlawful or inappropriate within the PGSS Constitution, McGill University ethics guidelines, or municipal, provincial, and federal law.
- 3.02 Any individual which satisfies these requirements will be referred to as a Member.

Article IV. MEMBERSHIP FEES

- 4.01 The EEGSS may request a fee levy from the PGSS in accordance with the PGSS Constitution, Bylaws, and Regulations.
- 4.02 The membership fee collection process shall follow the PGSS Constitution, Regulation 11.
- 4.03 Membership fees shall be approved by the Members of the EEGSS at its General Meeting. The approval of this fee shall be renewed at least once every three (3) years even if an increase is not sought. On March 1, at the latest, preceding the start of the financial year in which the fee will be levied, results of the approval vote shall be forwarded to the PGSS VP (Finance).

Article V. FINANCES

- 5.01 The EEGSS shall conduct fundraising for such programs and activities as it sees fit.
- 5.02 The EEGSS may seek funding from the PGSS in accordance with the PGSS funding program guidelines.
- 5.03 The financial year of the EEGSS shall be from June 1st to May 31st of the following year.
- 5.04 There shall be a bank account under the EEGSS' name with at least two (2) joint signing officers. These must include at least the President and Vice-President (Finance). The name and contact information of these two (2) signing officers shall be forwarded to the PGSS

- VP (Finance) no later than September 1st after the start of the fiscal year.
- 5.05 Both the budget and the final annual financial statement shall be approved annually by the EEGSS at its General Meeting. The approved budget and final annual financial statement of the previous year shall be forwarded to the PGSS VP (Finance) no later than September 1 after the start of the fiscal year.
- 5.06 The accounts of the EEGSS shall be maintained according to standard accounting practices and shall be made available to the University auditors upon demand.
- 5.07 The EEGSS is a non-profit organization.
- 5.08 Financial decisions can only be made the Executive Officers of the EEGSS in accordance with the regulations in the Bylaws, Article VIII.
- 5.09 The EEGSS will not run at a deficit.
- 5.10 The funding available to EEGSS can never be used for personal activities, even if the money borrowed is paid back.
- 5.11 Subsidies and/or refunds for lab events shall be made in accordance with the Bylaws, Article VI.

Article VI. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

- 6.01 There shall be five executive Officers of the EEGSS, namely:
- (a) President
 - (b) Vice-President (Finance)
 - (c) Vice-President (External)
 - (d) Vice-President (Internal)
 - (e) Vice-President (Facilities)
 - (f) Vice-President (Social)
 - (g) Vice-President (Operations)
- 6.02 The term of office for all executive officers begins on June 1st of each year until the following May 31st.
- 6.03 The duration for the term of office is one year.
- 6.04 Only a Member at the time of the call for nominations can run for executive office.

- 6.05 A Member can be re-elected to the same executive officer position a maximum of two (2) consecutive times, meaning a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms in the same position
- 6.06 The executive Officers shall coordinate the activities of the EEGSS, with duties to be specified by the Bylaws, Article I.
- 6.07 The election/appointment for each executive officer shall be done so in accordance with the Bylaws, Article II.
- 6.08 In the event that the President resigns, the Vice-President (Internal) will become President for the remainder of the term of office.

Article VII. IMPEACHMENT

- 7.01 In the eventuality that an executive officer, other than the President, appears to be no longer capable of fulfilling his/her obligations, the other executive Officers must agree unanimously in writing (with signatures) to have him/her removed.
- 7.02 If the President is incapable of fulfilling his/her obligations, a general referendum (see Constitution, Article X) must be called and the question put forth to all Members.

Article VIII. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 8.01 The EEGSS Executive Council meetings are closed to the public.
- 8.02 The EEGSS Executive Council shall have regular meetings at the beginning of each month.
- 8.03 Emergency meetings can be called at any time given a sufficient reason.
- 8.04 The meetings shall be presided over by the President and all orders of business shall be conducted on an informal basis.
- 8.05 The President and three (3) of the other executive Officers constitutes quorum for an executive meeting.
- 8.06 The procedure for the handling of the agenda, minutes, and meeting dates shall be specified by the Bylaws, Article III.

Article IX. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 9.01 There shall be one (1) General Meeting of the Members of the EEGSS per semester.
- 9.02 The General Meeting shall be called by decision of the EEGSS Council.
- 9.03 Notice of a General Meeting shall be given by posting announcements on departmental notice boards and by the EEGSS e-mail mailing list at least one (1) week before the meeting.
- 9.04 Quorum for the General Meeting shall be 10% of the total membership of the EEGSS.
- 9.05 All motions shall be passed on a simple majority vote (50 % + 1).

Article X. RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- 10.01 The rights of Members in the EEGSS are:
- (a) Each Member is eligible to a single vote in the EEGSS general elections or referenda.
 - (b) Nominate a Member for an executive position.
 - (c) Initiate general referenda.
- 10.02 The privileges of Members in the EEGSS are:
- (a) Hold office in the EEGSS executive council subject to the regulations specified in the Bylaws, Article I.
 - (b) Make use of the EEGSS services.
 - (c) Receive subsidized prices for events, where available.
- 10.03 No Member (other than executive officers of the EEGSS) can make purchases in the name of the EEGSS or to financially obligate the EEGSS under any circumstances.
- 10.04 No Member can officially represent the EEGSS unless permission has been granted by the Executive Council.

Article XI. GENERAL REFERENDUM

- 11.01 The purpose of a general referendum is to resolve important issues in a democratic fashion when it is not possible to address them in one of the General Meetings described in the constitution, Article IX.
- 11.02 A general referendum can be called in one of two ways:
- (a) By majority agreement of the EEGSS Executive Council
 - (b) By a petition with signatures from 25 % of the EEGSS membership
- 11.03 Situations in which a general referendum may be used instead of a General Meeting are:
- (a) Impeachment process of a standing President (see Constitution, Article VIII)
 - (b) Expenditures of or greater than \$2500 CDN (see Bylaws, Article VI)
 - (c) To increase the EEGSS society fee (see Constitution, Article IV)
- 11.04 Any motion put forth in a general referendum must have 2/3 of the ballots cast in order to pass.
- 11.05 For the general referendum to be valid, 10 % of the Membership must have voted.
- 11.06 Guidelines on the procedure for a general referendum are stipulated in the Bylaws, Article V.

Article XII. AFFILIATION AND REPRESENTATION

- 12.01 The EEGSS shall be affiliated with the Post Graduate Students' Society of McGill University (PGSS) as outlined in the PGSS Constitution.
- 12.02 The EEGSS may choose to be affiliated with other bodies as its membership sees fit.
- 12.03 The EEGSS Executive Council shall elect representatives to the PGSS Council and/or committees and to any committees and bodies within the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and/or the Faculty of Engineering on which graduate students and/or postdoctoral fellows are entitled to representation.

Article XIII. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

- 13.01 This Constitution was adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of a General Meeting of the EEGSS.
- 13.02 This Constitution supersedes and repeals all previous constitutions of the EEGSS.
- 13.03 This Constitution takes effect March 1st, 2005.
- 13.04 Amendments to this Constitution shall only be made by a two-thirds (2/3) majority at a General Meeting.
- 13.05 The Bylaws shall be amended by a majority vote by the EEGSS Executive Council.
- 13.06 The motion to put forth an amendment can be made by any Member.
- 13.07 The details for Constitution and Bylaw amendments are specified in the Bylaws, Article IV.
- 13.08 Any changes to the EEGSS Constitution and Bylaws shall be forwarded to the PGSS within one (1) month of their implementation.

B Y L A W S

Article I. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

1.01 The duties of the executive officers are as follows:

- (a) President
 - i. Preside at the meetings of the EEGSS Executive Committee.
 - ii. Have general supervision of the affairs of the EEGSS.
 - iii. Represent the EEGSS at Departmental meetings.
 - iv. Act as one of the signing officers, responsible for signing cheques in payment of authorized accounts and bills.
 - v. Approves all PGSS council representatives from the EEGSS.
 - vi. Represent the EEGSS on the Departmental Graduate Committee.
- (b) Vice-President (Finance)
 - i. Receive all moneys, issue and sign cheques (acting as one of the signing officers) for all authorized expenditures and present such cheques to the President for signature.
 - ii. Keep a receipt of every transaction.
 - iii. Keep a proper account of all financial affairs of the Association. Report and/or present financial statements at meetings as required.
- (c) Vice-President (External)
 - i. Deals with issues external to the Department which affect ECE graduate students.
 - ii. Represent the EEGSS in all external functions and meetings when the President is not in attendance.
 - iii. Represent the EEGSS at all PGSS council meetings, as one of the department's PGSS Council representatives.

- iv. Represent the EEGSS at all Faculty of Engineering Council meetings.
- (d) Vice-President (Internal)
 - i. Handles all issues between the Department and the EEGSS.
 - ii. Represent the EEGSS at all departmental functions and events whenever the President is not in attendance.
 - iii. Represent the EEGSS on the Departmental Curriculum Committee.
 - iv. Represent the EEGSS on the Departmental Space Planning Committee.
 - v. Represent the EEGSS on the Departmental Graduate Committee.
 - vi. Represent the EEGSS on the Departmental Student Issues Committee.
 - vii. Handle the elections of the next EEGSS executive council.
 - viii. Handle (in conjunction with Vice-President (Operations)) any general referendum.
 - ix. Update the EEGSS webpage as needed.
- (e) Vice-President (Operations)
 - i. Records the minutes of all the EEGSS executive council meetings.
 - ii. Prepare the agenda for each executive council meeting.
 - iii. Keep Members notified of any EEGSS events, as well as of referenda and General Meetings (including the posting of announcements of referendum questions and proposed amendments).
 - iv. Organize the First-Year Graduate Student Orientation in September.
 - v. Handle (in conjunction with Vice-President (Internal)) any general referendum.
- (f) Vice-President (Facilities)
 - i. Responsible for the monitoring and upkeep of all the EEGSS facilities, including the Graduate Student Lounge.
 - ii. Responsible for bringing any needed purchases or upgrades for facilities to the attention of the VP Finance.
 - iii. Responsible for security in the EEGSS Graduate Student Lounge.

- iv. Responsible for keeping the Graduate Student Lounge clean and tidy.
 - v. Responsible for maintaining and lending out any sports equipment that the EEGSS holds for use of its Members.
- (g) Vice-President (Social)
- i. Arrange regular sporting activities in which all Members may participate.
 - ii. Organize regular events and dinners (at least 2 per semester) in order to promote social interaction within the EEGSS community.
 - iii. Responsible for collaborating with the Department for any joint events organized by the EEGSS and the Department.

Article II. ELECTION/APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

- 2.01 Elections shall be held once per year prior to March 1 preceding the start of the financial year at a General Meeting (as described in the Constitution, Article IX). This specific General Meeting is hereafter referred to as the “General Meeting for Elections” (GME).
- 2.02 Notice of open positions shall be given at least two (2) weeks in advance of the General Meeting for Elections by means laid out in Article IX of the EEGSS Constitution. The date of the GME and the closing date for nominations must appear in the notice.
- 2.03 Any Member of EEGSS (at the time of nomination) may seek election for open positions, providing they acquire the nomination of three (3) other EEGSS regular Members.
- 2.04 Nominations for open positions must be given to the EEGSS executive council before the closing date for nominations, which is one (1) week in advance of the GME.
- 2.05 Ballots shall be secret.
- 2.06 The executive council shall appoint, prior to the date of the GME, a Chief Returning Officer (CRO), who is an EEGSS Member but not a candidate, to count the votes. The duration of the appointment is one (1) day and occurs on the date of the GME.
- 2.07 The CRO shall count the votes in the presence of at least two other non-candidate Members.

- 2.08 When there is more than one candidate running for a position, the candidate with the most votes wins (in the case of a tie, a toss of a fair coin shall decide the winner). When there is only one candidate that has been nominated for a position by the closing date for nominations, the candidate is acclaimed and no election for that position is required.
- 2.09 The officers of the EEGSS shall be elected at the latest by March 1 preceding the start of the financial year.
- 2.10 The list of elected officers for the coming year shall be forwarded to the PGSS VP (Finance) no later than March 1st.
- 2.11 Vacancies during the course of the year shall be filled through by-elections, to take place at a special General Meeting. Notice of position, nomination, and voting shall take place as stipulated in Article II of the EEGSS Bylaws.

Article III. CONDUCT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 3.01 The date, time, and place of the EEGSS Executive Council meeting must be announced and agreed upon 48 hours prior to the meeting by all the executives.
- 3.02 The agenda for the meeting must be provided to the executive council at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Amendments to the agenda can be made at the meeting but only with a majority vote by the executive.
- 3.03 Minutes of the previous meeting must be either approved or amended at the beginning of each meeting.
- 3.04 Minutes must be posted one week after the respective meeting has taken place.

Article IV. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

- 4.01 Proposals for amendments shall be presented to the President who, in turn, will present them at the next Executive Council meeting for discussion.
- 4.02 The proposal for the amendment must be submitted via a letter signed by the Member making the proposal. The proposal must specify the Article/Section in question and corresponding modification.

- 4.03 Once the proposal has been presented to the EEGSS Executive Council, then the following actions are taken, depending on the nature of the amendment:
- (a) If it is a Constitution amendment, a General Meeting is called (see Constitution, Article IX), and it will be voted on by open ballot, and shall pass by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present at the General Meeting.
 - (b) If it is a Bylaw amendment, a majority vote (50 % + 1) by the EEGSS Executive Council is required.
- 4.04 Notice of proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be posted at least one (1) week before the General Meeting, in the manner stipulated in Article IX of the EEGSS Constitution.
- 4.05 Upon approval of the amendment by either of these processes, the amendment is immediately included.

Article V. GENERAL REFERENDUM PROCEDURE

- 5.01 A general referendum must be held thirty (30) days after it has been called. If this date is not a regular business day, the election date shall be moved forward to the nearest day that is a regular business day.
- 5.02 The referendum is held from 10h00 to 17h00 for one day.
- 5.03 During the period of time between the initial call for a general referendum and the actual referendum itself, the EEGSS Executive Council must advertise to its constituents that a referendum is taking place, providing the date, time, and location, and summarize the issues to be voted on.
- 5.04 The EEGSS Executive Council must appoint a CRO to count the votes of the referendum. The CRO's mandate lasts one day, the day of the referendum.
- 5.05 Voting is done by anonymous ballot.

Article VI. FINANCIAL DECISIONS

- 6.01 Expenditures of \$2500 CAD or greater by the EEGSS Executive Council must be approved by a general referendum (see Constitution, Article XI).

- 6.02 All expenditures below \$2500 CDN require a majority vote of the EEGSS Executive Council.
- 6.03 Refund/subsidy of lab events/activities can be made in accordance with the following constraints:
- (a) Each lab group will have allocated to it a certain amount of funds per year (September 1st - August 31st) depending on group size:
 - i. The following groups have \$100 allocated to them: CADLab, TSP, MACS, Photonics, CIM (ECE component only).
 - ii. The following groups have \$50 allocated to them: Electronic Devices, Power.
 - (b) These funds are only applicable to activities and services (not materiel, furniture, equipment, etc).
 - (c) Application for refund/subsidy must be done so in writing (both a hardcopy and electronic copy submitted to EEGSS).
 - (d) The hardcopy version must have the original receipt attached as well as 10 signatures of lab members (from the same group) who are participating in the activity.
 - (e) The subsidy/refund can only be made within the September 1st - August 31st period that the activity has taken place.

Article VII. COMMUNICATIONS WITH CONSTITUENTS

- 7.01 To avoid e-mail harassment of its constituents, the EEGSS will observe the following e-mail etiquette when employing its e-mail list:
- (a) No PGSS news will be forwarded using the e-mailing list.
 - (b) Announcements of upcoming EEGSS events, elections, nominations for elections, and general referenda shall be made once (with links to the EEGSS' website for further information).
 - (c) Where possible, a single e-mail shall be sent out with several bits of information rather than several e-mails with a single portion of information.
 - (d) E-mails over 1 Megabyte will not be sent.
- 7.02 The EEGSS will use its website to:

- (a) Post information and updates on upcoming events.
 - (b) Announce elections, nominations for elections, and general referenda.
 - (c) Post PGSS news links.
 - (d) Distribute photographs from EEGSS events.
 - (e) Disseminate important information pertaining to graduate students within the Department.
- 7.03 The EEGSS will use posters to:
- (a) Advertise upcoming events.
 - (b) Announce elections, nominations for elections, and general referenda.
- 7.04 Posters will be placed in areas where only graduate students have access.

Article VIII. EVENT ORGANIZATION

- 8.01 Proposals for events shall be submitted to the EEGSS Executive Council via a letter signed by the EEGSS Member making the proposal. The proposal should contain some information about the nature of the event, the cost per person, and the date/time/location for the event.
- 8.02 If any element of risk or danger is perceived by the EEGSS Executive Council, all participants must sign a waiver releasing the EEGSS of any responsibility.
- 8.03 The EEGSS will subsidize only its own Members for any event. All non-Members who attend an EEGSS event are obliged to pay the full price.
- 8.04 Refunds for all EEGSS events will only be made prior to the deadline for payment. After the deadline, no refunds shall be made unless backed by a medical reason (with proof).
- 8.05 All details of the event will be posted from the time the event is advertised. These details include the requirements of any third party involved in arranging this event.
- 8.06 Events where food is involved must have a vegetarian alternative.
- 8.07 All EEGSS events must be made available to all members, unless:

- (a) The event has a limited physical capacity.
- (b) Safety restrictions prevent the access of certain members who fail to meet them.

Article IX. EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

- 9.01 Equipment owned by the EEGSS shall be managed by the Vice-President (Facilities).
- 9.02 Equipment can only be used for activities and events supported and/or sponsored by the EEGSS and can only be loaned out to Members only.
- 9.03 Equipment which may pose a risk or danger, such as barbecue equipment, cannot be loaned.
- 9.04 All equipment must be signed out with the Vice-President (Facilities).
- 9.05 The duration of a loan is 2 weeks, unless otherwise agreed upon by the EEGSS executive council.