CAC Transition Manual

Information for the Chair of the Council Administration Committee

Last updated: November 2014

Where this transition manual deviates from Standing Orders or Bylaw, the Standing Orders or Bylaw will be taken as correct. You should always read them in addition to this manual in case information in the manual has become out-of-date.

What is CAC?

The Council Administration Committee handles certain administrative needs of Council. Most of the basic needs, like putting together Order Papers, getting Votes and Proceedings online, or ordering food for meetings, are handled by a hired administrative assistant or the Speaker. However, some of the more in-depth administrative needs should really be handled by elected representatives, and that’s where CAC comes in.

CAC’s duties are outlined in its Standing Orders and in Bylaw, and they’re summarized here so they’ll be more readily accessible to you:

1. **Amend, adopt, or rescind Students’ Council Standing Orders.**

   Changes to Standing Orders mostly means changes to the way Council conducts business and meetings. This is something you should only ever have to do if there’s a problem. If you are adopting or amending Standing Orders and the committee is having trouble with wording, formatting, or content, you can get advice from Bylaw Committee, Policy Committee, Governance Committee, or Discover Governance. If you want a rough draft that CAC can make edits to, you can ask Discover Governance to prepare one for you if you want.

2. **Make recommendations to Students’ Council on the structure of Council and its Standing Committees.**

   Changes to structure mostly means changes to the decision-making process. It includes adding, removing, or combining committees, changing the number of seats in Council, or other such structural items. If you’re ever short on work to do as a committee, you can consider doing a review of the Council and Committee structure. Even if you find that everything is running fine as it is and don’t make any changes, it doesn’t hurt to have it reconsidered and reported on once in a while.

3. **Oversee the Speaker and Chief Returning Officer.**

   The Elections office is mostly self-sufficient, and you don’t have to do a lot in the way of management of its staff. They do report to CAC, however, and as Chair it’s your responsibility to keep an eye on the CRO and ensure everything is running smoothly. Consider requiring the CRO to attend CAC meetings or send in a report on what they’ve been working on, so you can stay on top of it more easily.

   The Speaker is also mostly self-sufficient, but if there’s ever a problem with the conduct of the Speaker, it’s CAC’s job to deal with it. If CAC needs help in dealing with such problems, they can get advice and support from Discover Governance or the General Manager.
4. **Oversee the progress of Students’ Council legislative agenda.**

   Make sure Council is running smoothly and things aren't falling through the cracks. It wouldn't hurt to keep a list or spreadsheet of everything Council and its committees are working on, and tracking where those things are in the governance process. You can also facilitate regular Council strategic planning sessions, or ask DG to help you do so.

5. **Recommend a candidate for Chief Returning Officer.**

   Discover Governance handles the administration of the hiring process, including getting ads out, collecting applications, organizing the hiring committee, booking interview times and places, providing materials to the hiring committee, and contacting candidates. However, it doesn't hurt for CAC to be aware of hiring timelines and to make sure DG is on top of it. The CAC Chair sits as a non-voting member on the hiring committee, attending interviews and recommending the final candidate chosen by the committee to Students’ Council. CAC also appoints the Deputy Returning Officer(s) via a hiring committee. The DRO decision does not need to go through Council.

6. **Recommend a composition of the Awards Committee.**

   Recommending the composition has more to do with recommending how many and what kinds of people are on the committee (ie. 2 Councillors, 2 students at large, 1 staff, or something like that) rather than recommending individual people for positions. Generally, individuals for the committee are chosen by application in October.

7. **In conjunction with the VP External, recommend nominations to the Senate as required.**

   Talk to the VP External and the Nominating Committee about what they think your role can or should be in this. For the most part, Senate nominations can happen without CAC’s input, so whether or not you get involved is up to CAC.

8. **Responsible for funds designated for Council Outreach.**

   30% of the funds are for Council-led initiative, that’s anything Council wants to take on as a whole, and 70% are for member-led initiatives, that’s anything a single Councillor or small group of Councillors wants to do.

   The funds for Council-led initiatives can be disbursed at CAC’s discretion.

   The funds for member-led initiatives are to be divided evenly among all members of Students’ Council (excluding the Speaker and Executive Committee) following the Fall by-election, and won’t be available to members until after this calculation is complete. Each Council member must seek approval before disbursing their funds, and has to indicate no later than the end of Fall term whether or not they will use the funds. If they won’t use the funds, or they don’t give any indication, CAC can disburse those funds at their discretion.
9. **Conduct surveys of Councillors' knowledge, experiences, and perceptions of Council at the beginning and end of their terms.**

You can ask Discover Governance to write the survey, and then edit the questions DG has come up with as necessary. Then, the survey goes out either over the Council mailing list or through DG. It’s a good idea to keep survey questions neutral and more or less the same in each survey so that you can collect some consistent, useful data over time.

There are also some duties CAC tends to take on even though they aren’t mentioned in Standing Orders, such as ordering clothing for Councillors. You should contact the outgoing CAC Chair to find out what kinds of things they did that weren’t outlined in Standing Orders.

**Duties of Chair**

Generally, your duties as the Chair involve making sure that the duties of CAC are fulfilled. This can mean handling them yourself, delegating them to other Councillors or SU staff, or facilitating the entire committee in carrying them out, depending on the situation. However you get things done, everything should be discussed and approved at CAC first.

In addition to making sure CAC fulfills its mandate, the CAC Chair also has some more specific duties outlined under the Standing Orders:

1. Arrange for booking a meeting room: This just involves informing the Discover Governance Manager of all upcoming meeting times, and the rest will be taken care of. Since CAC usually just meets the hour before Council, the rooms and recording secretaries are usually all booked ahead during the summer.
2. Prepare and distribute the Committee agenda.
3. Moderate debate at Committee meetings: There are some pointers on facilitating meetings at the end of this document.
4. Respond to Committee member questions.
5. Assign duties to Committee members that pertain to the fulfillment of CAC’s mandate.
7. Submit reports to Council: Your recording secretaries will send a summary of votes and proceedings, so always forward that to whoever is taking care of Council Order Papers. You can also submit more detailed reports, or give oral reports in Council, if necessary.
8. Sit as a non-voting member on the hiring committees for CRO and DRO.
9. Sit as a voting member on the Governance Committee: This is a fairly unofficial committee where various governance units of the Students’ Union can come together regularly to share information and advice on governance-related issues. It’s unofficial because it consists mostly of SU staff, has no actual decision-making power, and its minutes are not posted online. It’s mostly there for advice and easy information sharing, to ensure that all governance units are communicating regularly and aren’t duplicating efforts or trying to come up with new solutions to problems someone else has already solved.

Being a Chair can be stressful and time-consuming, so don’t be afraid to ask for support from SU administrative staff, Discover Governance, fellow Councillors, or SU Executives.
So, you’ve just become CAC Chair…

If you’re starting at the beginning of the year, the Speaker should have coordinated the first meeting of CAC at which you were elected Chair. Now you have a set Standing Orders for the year and a meeting schedule, so it’s time to get to work on CAC stuff. Your first meeting as Chair should include:

1. A review of the current Standing Orders and mandate – this is to make sure everyone has read and understood them.
2. Some kind of strategic planning and goal-setting session to keep the Committee on track during the year. Your plan/goals should reflect your mandate, the broader goals of Council, and the SU’s strategic plan.

If you've taken this position in the middle of the year, you should read the Standing Orders to better understand the committee and check up on the following:

1. Does CAC have a strategic plan for the year and, if so, what is its progress? If it doesn’t, consider creating one at your first meeting as Chair. It will help you get into the leadership role, and give you an idea of how you should be directing the committee.
2. When was CAC’s last progress check on the activities of Council and its Committees? Does one need to be done?
3. Who is your recording secretary, and have all minutes been received, approved, and updated on the committee page of the SU website? Discover Governance should be able to help you with this.
4. Has CAC missed any important deadlines, and have all time-sensitive duties of CAC been fulfilled up to the current date? Check the timeline below for important dates and deadlines.
5. What projects has CAC been working on, and what’s its progress so far? Ask other committee members, or check past meeting minutes.

CAC Timeline

May:
- Create a strategic plan for CAC’s activities and goals for the year.
- Prepare a survey to measure Councillor knowledge, experiences, and perceptions of Council – DG can help you with this; it should include most of the questions that were asked in the previous survey so that results can be measured over time.
- Attend GovCamp at the end of the month.

June:
- At your first June meeting, review Standing Committees to ensure they've met, have set a meeting schedule for the summer, have a set of Standing Orders, and have set goals and started on their legislated agenda. If they haven’t, let them know that they have to ASAP. Be sure to keep a list or spreadsheet of their goals so you can check up on their progress later.
- Distribute the Council survey within two weeks after GovCamp.

July:
- The CRO should have set a by-election date and created draft nomination packages by the end of the month.
- Analyze survey results (or ask an SU staff/department to) and present them to Council. Presentation should include results from previous years.

August:
- At your last meeting in August, check in on the progress of Standing Committee goals.
- Make sure Council is ready to participate in Week of Welcome, if applicable.
• End of August is the deadline for Councillors to resign their position if it is to be filled in the September by-election.

**September:**
- Week of Welcome
- By-elections
- DRO hiring begins

**October:**
- CAC must divide 70% of the Council Outreach Fund between all Council members (except the Speaker and Executives) after the by-election.
- GovCamp Lite – a condensed version of GovCamp held on campus for newly elected Councillors and GFC Representatives. There is usually a social event for all representatives afterwards.

**November:**
- The CRO should have officially called the March General Election dates by the end of the month.
- You should contact all Councillors by the end of the month and remind them to notify CAC as to whether or not they will be using their Outreach Fund allocation.

**December:**
- Members must indicate whether or not they will use their Outreach Fund allocation before your last meeting.
- At your last meeting in December, check in on the progress and activities of Standing Committees.

**February:**
- Nominations for SU General Elections are due, and Campaigning begins.
- Approve GovCamp programming.

**March:**
- At your first meeting in March, check in on the progress of Standing Committee goals.
- Prepare Councillor exit survey (or ask Discover Governance to). This must be passed out with enough time for you to analyze the results and present it at Council by the end of the term.
- CRO hiring takes place.
- General Elections and Councillor/GFC elections are held.

**April:**
- Recommend a candidate for CRO before the last meeting in April.
- Present survey results before the last meeting in April.
- Ensure that all necessary documents, such as committee goals tracking documents and survey results, are prepared to be passed on to the next CAC Chair.