

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH DEBATING UNION

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PREAMBLE

We, the members of the University of Stellenbosch Debating Union -

view the Debating Union as an institution through which public debate and oration is developed;

believe that the Debating Union should play a dynamic role at the University of Stellenbosch through the promotion of lively debate and critical thinking amongst society members and students alike;

commit ourselves to justifiable and transparent conduct towards any individual or group of individuals;

recognise the right to freedom of speech, association, assembly, protest and all other rights recognised by the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa insofar as the rights of others are not unjustly affected;

and reject all forms of unfair discrimination.

ARTICLE 1: INTERPRETATION

1. Definitions

In this Constitution, unless the context indicates otherwise,

1. **“closed portfolio”** refers to a type of portfolio which is not elected within the ranks of the Debating Executive, but which is specifically voted for by registered voters. Accordingly, registered members must explicitly state their intention to run for such a category. A nominee has the right to run in both this category, as well as in the open category.
2. **“common majority”** means at least fifty (50) percent of the members present who are voting, including proxy votes.
3. **“Debating Executive”** or **“Executive committee”** or **“USDU Executive”** refers to registered members who are elected and/or (when applicable) co-opted to fulfil organisational and administrative functions for the society during their term of office.
4. **“end of office”** means the date on which the members of a given year’s committee cease to be members of the Debating Executive, and a new Debating Executive is elected. This will be the date on which the annual general meeting is held.
5. **“extraordinary meeting”** refers to a society meeting which is not the annual general meeting.
6. **“general election”** means an election held at the end of the term of office of a Debating Executive in order to elect a complete Debating Executive consisting of persons available for the following term of office.
7. **“key portfolio”** refers to portfolios positions that must be filled by the Debating Executive before any other portfolios are distributed.
8. **“nominee”** refers to a registered member who is nominated, or nominates themselves, to stand for a position on the committee, and accepts this nomination.
9. **“notice in writing”** means a formal notice served either by electronic mail, typed or printed script.
10. **“postal vote”** means a call for votes by way of electronic mail for or against a

given motion.

11. **“quorum”** refers to the percentage of the total membership of the society partaking in a vote, either tacitly or expressly, which is required in order for such a vote to carry force.
12. **“registered member”** refers to anyone who has become a member of the union in a manner described in article 4.
13. **“registered voter”** refers to any member of the Debating Society who has been successfully registered as a fully paid member of the Debating Union for at least one semester.
14. **“sub-committee”** refers to a group of members who have been assigned to fulfil certain administrative, advisory, and/or organisational roles for a specific project, under the management of a Debating Executive member.
15. **“USDU”** refers to the University of Stellenbosch Debating Union as a registered society at the University of Stellenbosch.

2. General Interpretations

- a. Should dispute arise, all sections of this Constitution must be interpreted with a reasonable and purposive approach, in line with the core values of the USDU and the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.
- b. Should a dispute arise concerning the interpretation of a clause in this constitution, any registered member of the USDU may approach the Student Court for a declaratory order. The Student Court should, insofar as is possible, interpret this constitution by using the standard rules of interpretation, subject to the principles of natural justice.
- c. This entire constitution is subject to the regulations and procedures regarding students and society members as laid out in the Student Union Constitution of the University of Stellenbosch, the constitution of the Societies Council, and the Rules for Students at the University of Stellenbosch.

ARTICLE 2: MISSION STATEMENT

The University of Stellenbosch Debating Union strives to promote debate, dialogue and critical discussion to the University of Stellenbosch and the broader community. We aim to create positive discourse in society and promote the growth of our debaters. We commit ourselves to the development of debaters at both a competitive and an informal level and strive to create a platform where debate can prosper. We seek to uphold a space that is centred around our values of accountability, inclusivity, equity, development, and respect.

ARTICLE 3: COAT OF ARMS

The coat of arms of this society comprises two concentric circles with a pleated ribbon underneath, on a maroon background. In the white outer circle, South Africa's inferred motto of Unity through Diversity is repeated in Afrikaans, English, and isiXhosa. In the inner circle, the society's motto *Nil Mortalibus Arduum* (Latin - Nothing to mortals is impossible) are found on a blue shield. The name of the society is indicated on the pleated ribbon along with the year of our reinstation as a society, 2012.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

1. General

- a. Registered students and lecturers at the University of Stellenbosch become members of the society upon payment of membership fees as prescribed by the Debating Executive.
- b. Membership lasts as from the first day of the academic year and terminates on the first day of the following academic year. Should a person join during the course of the year, membership fees will be paid in full regardless of the time already expired.
- c. The Debating Executive may further approve applications for membership to the society from members of the general public, provided such membership would promote and further the society and its stated goals, and that the total percentage of these members is no greater than 15%.

2. Specific

- a. Any person is allowed to attend the gatherings of the society and participate in its official competitions, subject to article 7 and any equity judgments.

- b. All registered members have the right to request an application for funding for any official tournaments.
- c. All registered students of the university may attend the annual general meeting, subject to article 6(2)(d) and (e).
- d. Only registered members may attend extraordinary meetings, unless a specific request is made to the Debating Executive, in writing, for an individual to attend. Should any member of the Debating Executive object to the request, the request will be denied. This is subject to article 6(2)(d) and (e).

ARTICLE 5: MEETINGS

1. Annual general meeting (AGM)

- a. The annual general meeting (AGM) will be held on a date which must be decided by that year's Debating Executive, in compliance with the requirements of the SRC, or any body which is delegated by them to determine these requirements.
- b. The Debating Executive will host the AGM in any format which is conducive to the purpose of the AGM.
- c. The AGM is to be chaired by the outgoing Chairperson, except when the elections are taking place, which are subject to article 6(2)(a).
- d. At the AGM the Chairperson, Treasurer and Schools director are to submit an annual report, in which recommendations are to be made which should serve as guidelines for the new Debating Executive. Reports presented at the AGM may be preliminary, subject to the provision that full reports are made available in writing within two weeks.
- e. Members choose a new Debating Executive at the annual general meeting according to the procedure set out in article 6.
- f. Members are to be notified in writing of a pending annual general meeting at least seven (7) days in advance.

2. Extraordinary meetings

- a. An extraordinary meeting will take place in the event of the chairperson or the Debating Executive requesting it, or if at least twenty registered members, or 10% of the total registered members (whichever quantity is larger) requests such a meeting from the chairperson in writing.
- b. Only motions in writing are allowed to be submitted to the assembly.
- c. Motions of mistrust of a member of either the society or the Debating Executive must be made available to all parties concerned.
- d. If there is a motion of mistrust in the chairperson, then the meeting will be chaired by the deputy chairperson.
- e. In all other aspects, rules, regulations and powers are the same as for that of the annual general meeting as set out in article 5(1), *mutatis mutandis*.

3. Debating Executive Meetings

- a. The Debating Executive shall attempt to meet at least once every two weeks during times when the university is in session.
- b. All Debating Executive members must be given due notice of these Executive meetings, by wither the Secretary General or the Chairperson.
- c. Should there be an appointed or fixed time for such meetings, article 5(3)(b) lapses and is no longer applicable. Additional meetings are to be arranged on a consensual basis.
- e. Debating Executive members are only allowed to excuse themselves from a meeting with the prior consent of either the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Secretary General.
- f. Decisions are taken by means of a common majority of votes of the members present. Half of all the members of the Debating Executive plus one constitutes a quorum. The Chairperson holds a common vote, as well as a casting vote.
- g. Debating Executive meetings are open to the public, but management

retains the right to arrange and conduct meetings in camera.

ARTICLE 6: MANAGEMENT

1. Composition of the Debating Executive

- a. The Debating Executive comprises of no less than three (3) and up to (12) members which must include a Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary.
- b. The provisional size of the Debating Executive is decided by the Chairperson and the Treasurer after they have been elected, taking into consideration the number of nominations, as well as whether any nominees have portfolio preferences.
- c. Should the number of elected Executive members be equal to the provisional size, set by the Chairperson and the Treasurer in subsection (b), then this will become the final committee size.
- d. Should the number of elected Executive members be less than the provisional size set by the Chairperson and the Treasurer in subsection (b), then they may either set the final size equal to the number of elected committee members, or they may declare a number of committee positions to be vacant. In the latter case, such vacant positions are governed by article 7(3). The number of positions declared to be vacant will be equal to or less than the difference between the number of elected members and the provisional size. The sum of the number of elected members and the number of positions declared vacant will be the final committee size.

2. Election of the Debating Executive

- a. The election of the Debating Executive will be chaired by the election convenor. The election convenor must be appointed by the outgoing committee.
- b. A quarter of the registered voters must be present in order to form a quorum.
- c. Should a quorum not be formed at the annual general meeting, the new

Debating Executive, as well as any decisions made at the AGM which requires a vote, shall be approved by way of postal vote. The postal vote is subject to the following requirements:

- i) The election convenor, or a member of the outgoing Executive committee delegated by the election convenor, must email all the registered voters, and ask them for their votes.
 - ii) The email addresses to be used for the registered voters are those provided by the registered voters when they signed up, subject to subsection (iii).
 - iii) If a registered voter has since notified the Executive committee, in writing or by email, of changes to their email address, then the updated email address of the member must be used.
 - iv) Should a registered voter not reply with a vote within two weeks, it will automatically be considered as an assenting vote, subject to subsection (v).
 - v) If a registered voter informs the Executive committee within two weeks, in writing or by email, that they did not receive the call, then the onus will fall on the election convenor to show that the email was sent to the member's email address, as stipulated in subsection (ii). If they are able to, then subsection (iv) will not be affected. If not, then the email must be sent to the registered voter, in accordance with subsection (ii), and they will have two weeks from that point to reply, failing which their vote will again be considered an assenting vote.
- d. Every registered member of the society, and only registered members of the society, are eligible for nomination for the Debating Executive, subject to the provision that every nomination be seconded by at least two (2) registered members. However, the Chairperson and the Treasurer must be registered members Stellenbosch University specifically.
 - e. Registered voters, and only registered voters, elect a new Debating Executive during the annual general meeting.
 - f. The portfolios of Chairperson and Treasurer are closed portfolios that may

not be held by the same person.

- g. The Chairperson may not hold any other key portfolios.
- h. A nominee must state if they wish to stand for one of the key portfolios in the Constitution and will be voted for based on their standing for the portfolio. The election of the Chairperson must take place first. If a nominee stands for Chairperson and is not elected, they may then stand for Treasurer, or to be on the committee.
- i. The Treasurer is elected second. If a nominee stands for Treasurer (including a nominee who previously stood for Chairperson), and is not elected, then they may stand for election to the Executive.
- j. In the event that more than two members stand for the portfolio of Chairperson, a prior vote must be held in order to bring the number down to two, in a manner decided by the election convenor. Likewise, if more than two members then stand for the portfolio of Treasurer, a prior vote must be held in order to bring the number down to two, in a manner decided by the election convenor.
- k. The number of names which a registered voter may write on his sealed ballot during the election of the Executive committee, will be equal to the provisional size of the committee, less the sum of two (2) and the number of committee members who have or will be elected in terms of article 3.
- l. The Debating Executive will appoint the rest of the portfolios amongst themselves at their first meeting, in accordance with article 8.
- m. The election shall take place by means of sealed ballots. The election convenor may manage the election in any way he/she sees fit to the purpose of the election, subject to the provisions of article 6(2) and the Student Constitution of Stellenbosch University.
- n. Members of the Debating Executive are elected by a common majority.
- o. In the event of the votes resulting in a tie, the election convenor is to call for a further vote to elect one candidate over the other(s).
- p. A member who cannot be present during the election, may stand as a

candidate by proxy and/or may vote by proxy. In the case of voting by proxy, a registered voter must delegate this authority in writing, and with specific instructions, to another registered voter. No registered voter may hold more than two (2) votes by proxy.

ARTICLE 7: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. General

- a. A member ceases to be part of the society when such a person submits a written resignation to the Chairperson.
- b. The Debating Executive retains the right to terminate or suspend the membership of any member of the society should such a person be found guilty by the Debating Executive of any serious misconduct towards the society or its good name, in line with the guidelines stipulated in the Equity Policy in Schedule 1.
- c. Any registered member of the society has the right to appeal to the Student Court concerning the suspension or termination of their membership.
- d. A registered member will not be refunded for their membership fees if their membership is ceased. The exception to this only exists for cancellation of membership with due notice, as regulated by the Societies Council and their governing bodies.

2. Termination of Debating Executive Membership

- a. A member ceases to be part of the Debating Executive when such a person:
 - i) submits a written resignation to the Chairperson; or
 - ii) is discharged from an office in terms of a valid motion of mistrust.
- b. In order for a motion of mistrust to be regarded as valid, it must be duly motivated by the registered member proposing it, must be seconded by at least five (5) members of the society, and must be approved by a common majority of registered voters at an extraordinary meeting or AGM. Should a quorum not be formed at the particular AGM or extraordinary meeting, the motion of mistrust must be approved by means of postal vote.

- d. The Debating Executive retains the right to take disciplinary action against, or dismiss, any member of the Debating Executive who neglects to carry out any duty assigned to him in terms of his office as set out in article 8. Such disciplinary action may include revocation of some subset of the duties assigned to that committee member, banning from tournaments, or in general the termination of any of the active benefits that that committee member enjoys as a member of the union.
- e. The Debating Executive retains the right to dismiss from office any member who misses two consecutive Debating Executive meetings without any official or prior leave or pardon.
- f. Any member of the Debating Executive has the right to appeal to the Student Court concerning their dismissal from the Debating Executive.
- g. A member of the Debating Executive who is being dismissed must be informed of their right in (f).

3. Vacancies

- a. If a vacancy in the Debating Executive arises, the society must be notified in writing, and the Debating Executive has the right to then appoint a new member to the Debating Executive.
- b. The Debating Executive must notify the society in writing of the newly appointed member, and the decision must be ratified by means of postal vote.
- c. Should the decision not be ratified by the postal vote, the Debating Executive vacancy will again open up.
- c. In the case of the termination of membership of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall automatically become the new chairperson, and a new Vice-Chairperson shall be elected from within the ranks of the remaining members of the Debating Executive.
- d. In the case of the termination of membership of the Vice-Chairperson, a new Vice-Chairperson shall be elected from within the ranks of the remaining members of the Debating Executive.

ARTICLE 8: POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE DEBATING EXECUTIVE

1. General Powers and Duties of All USDU Executive Committee Members

- a. Each and every member of the Debating Executive is directly responsible towards the Chairperson and the society members for maintaining, enforcing, and promoting the spirit of this Constitution.
- b. Each member of the Debating Executive is directly responsible and liable towards the Chairperson and the society members for performing the duties required by the portfolio assigned to them.
- c. All members of the Debating Executive are expected to actively assist, in any manner possible, any other member(s) of the Debating Executive.
- d. Each member of the Debating Executive is expected to:
 - i) Attend all functions and events organised by the society unless unable to do so owing to reasonable exception;
 - ii) Read and act timeously on minutes and action lists;
 - iii) Make themselves available for duty in the society office.
- e. Each member of the Debating Executive is to assist in drawing up the following year's calendar of events which is to be completed no later than the third week of the fourth quarter.
- f. Each member of the Debating Executive is to submit a year-end report to the secretary and chairperson within two weeks after the conclusion of their term of office.
- g. The Debating Executive may implement and bestow any awards or prizes that they deem to be applicable upon individuals that are considered deserving of such awards or prizes.
- h. If the society must be represented or has a seat in any structure or forum, with the exception of management of the society, the Debating Executive must nominate a member for this purpose.
- i. Each member of the Debating Executive must sign the Constitution, within

three weeks after their appointment.

2. General Powers and Duties of Sub-committees

- a. *Ad hoc* member(s) may be appointed for a specific project or purpose. This appointment must be:
 - i) due to a request by a member of the Debating Executive; and
 - ii) confirmed by a common majority of votes within the Debating Executive.
- b. These *ad hoc* member(s) will carry a similar status to that of a member of the Debating Executive for the duration of the project or duty for which they have been appointed, with the exception of voting rights.
- c. Each member of the Debating Executive has the right to call for applications and set up a sub-committee to assist them in their portfolio. They have exclusive powers in terms of the composition and appointment of such a committee, under the parameters set out by the Equity Policy and the rest of this Constitution.
- d. Sub-committee members who are registered members of the USDU are not automatically terminated of their general membership upon the termination of the sub-committee position.

3. Key Portfolios

- a. Key portfolios must be filled by the Executive committee before the delegation of any other portfolios.
- b. The Chairperson is considered a key portfolio. Their duties include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i) The Chairperson is to see to it that the members of the Debating Committee carry out their duties and will facilitate meetings.
 - ii) The Chairperson will, when and if nominated, represent the society in negotiating and co-operating with other societies, and with the students' representative council (SRC).

- iii) The Chairperson sees to it that the society complies with the regulations of the students' representative council and will compile a year-end report for submission to the students' representative council as per their regulations.
 - iv) The Chairperson shall officially open all functions and introduce the master of ceremonies for each function.
 - v) The Chairperson shall actively seek to secure sponsorship for the society in any form obtainable or shall appoint persons to undertake these tasks.
 - vi) The Chairperson shall manage the society's representation at debating championships and act as contact person (along with the secretary) for the organising committees of such championships or shall appoint persons to undertake these tasks.
 - vii) The Chairperson shall represent the society in official capacity regarding University matters.
- c. The Treasurer is considered a key portfolio. Their duties include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i) The Treasurer must have insight into the financial records and bookkeeping system of the University and is responsible for the settlement of accounts.
 - ii) The Treasurer shall liaise with the University of Stellenbosch's budget control department and shall administer the society cost point account.
 - iii) The Treasurer shall collect membership fees and will administer the extraction of membership fees from student accounts liaising with the University's Student Monies department.
 - iv) The Treasurer must submit an audited financial report to the Chairperson at the conclusion of the last Debating Executive meeting.
 - v) The Treasurer is to assist the chairperson in representing the society to all existing or potential sponsors and donors. The Treasurer is furthermore responsible for providing

donors/sponsors with reports on the application of the funding that they provide, should it be requested.

- vi) The treasurer is to set up a budgeted amount for incomes and expenditure relating to the various portfolios of the Debating Executive and must, along with the Debating Executive as a whole, set up the annual society budget.
- d. The Secretary General is considered a key portfolio. Their duties include, but are not limited to, the following:
- i) The Secretary is responsible for the administration of the society.
 - ii) The Secretary shall take minutes of all Debating Committee meetings.
 - iii) The Secretary shall register new members and compile and administer a membership database.
 - iv) The Secretary shall set up action plans and duty lists in order to promote efficiency in the Debating Committee.
 - v) The Secretary shall administer and add to society archives. This includes:
 - i. Filing hard copies of all agendas, minutes, and action lists as well as membership registration in one central and accessible location.
 - ii. Filing of all society produced marketing / media and external press coverage, including photographs.
 - iii. Filing annual reports.
 - vi) The Secretary is solely in control of the society office and the physical maintenance and upkeep of the office and must set up a general schedule for office duty for Debating Committee members.
- e. The Schools Director is considered a key portfolio. Their duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i) The Schools Director is responsible for liaising with local high-schools and is responsible for training and development of high-school debating in order to garner future debaters.
 - ii) The Schools Director is furthermore responsible for arranging and administering a Boland Schools Debating League (BSDL).
 - iii) The Schools Director is responsible for arranging and administering the Winelands Schools Debating League (WSDL).
 - iv) Administration of the BSDL and WSDL encompasses the training of debaters, tabulating the league and coordinating venues and times insofar as reasonably possible. It also includes ensuring adequate representation at any boards deemed to assist with the governing of the schools leagues.
 - v) The Schools officer should establish a schools sub-committee, in accordance with the relevant articles, to assist in the BSDL administration.
- f. The Internal Debate Director is considered a key portfolio. Their duties include, but are not limited to:
 - i) The Debate Director is responsible for organising and coordinating all training of registered members seeking schooling in any form of debate, public speaking, or adjudication. This training should be assisted by experienced members of the society, insofar as possible.
 - ii) The Debate Director shall facilitate at least one large scale training evening in debating for all members within the first two quarters of the term of office.
 - iii) The Debate Director is furthermore to facilitate any and all training requested by members of the society at any reasonable time within the year.
 - iv) The Debate Director is to maintain a high standard of debate through actively liaising with other debating societies in order to debate and adjudicate at a high standard.

- v) The Debate Director is responsible for coordinating debaters for all debating functions – including the general and specific leagues as well as competitions.
- vi) The debates director shall furthermore be responsible for the booking of venues for the general society league.

4. General Portfolios

- a. The delegation of the non-key portfolios will occur at the first sitting of the Executive committee, and in line with article 6 provisions. These general portfolios are optional insofar as it serves the best interest of the USDU and its stakeholders and insofar as their general purposes are still fulfilled by the Executive Committee. The composition, creation, and delegation of the Debating Executive's portfolios is their decision.
- b. Highly suggested general portfolios include, but are not limited to:
 - i) The Vice-Chairperson, who would have the duty and responsibility to –
 - i. Assist the Chairperson in any which reasonable manner they deem fit
 - ii. act on behalf of the Chairperson in their official capacity in their absence. In the case of the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall have all the according powers and duties of the Chairperson.
 - iii. the resolution of any disputes within the Debating Executive. If the Vice-Chairperson is party to the dispute, then a member of the committee who is not party to the dispute will be appointed by those members of the committee who are not party to the dispute.
 - ii) The Equity Officer, who would have the duty and responsibility to –
 - i. Actively seek ways to progress the Union to a more inclusive and safe space


- ii. Lead all issues, procedures, and recommendations and duties of the Equity Office(r), as stipulated in the Equity Policy
 - iii. Lead the Equity Office at all tournaments hosted by the USDU
- iii) The Head of Public Relations, who would have the duty and responsibility to –
 - i. lead all marketing, advertisements, social media engagements, and press releases of the society, and is responsible for ensuring and promoting a professional and uniform image of the society.
 - ii. Strategize the recruitment for new members of the society as well as for the extension of the image of the society on campus and generally.
 - iii. organise sign-up drives for competitions and events.
- iv) The Operations and Events Director, who would have the duty and responsibility to –
 - i. organize all events and operations undertaken by the society
 - ii. appoint a sub-committee to assist them in the fulfilment of their duties, insofar as considered necessary.
 - iii. organize venues, refreshments, catering, audio-visual equipment, and general equipment required for events and functions.
 - iv. compile and administer a contacts database for the society with previously used venues, suppliers, etc.
 - v. initiate any and all new events that they deem to be suitable and viable.
- v) A co-Schools Director, who would have the duty and responsibilities of the Schools Director

ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be provisionally amended or altered by a two-thirds majority of the Debating Executive. Such an amendment shall be declared valid by a two-thirds majority of all registered voters present at an annual general meeting or extraordinary meeting. All registered members must also be presented with the provisional amendment(s) by means of notice in writing at least two (2) weeks before the AGM or extraordinary meeting. Should no quorum exist at the aforementioned AGM or extraordinary meeting, a postal vote requiring a two-thirds majority of all registered voters shall be needed in order to invalidate any and all provisional amendments or alterations.

ARTICLE 10: REVOCATION AND RETRACTION

This Constitution revokes all previous Constitutions of the University of Stellenbosch Debating Union.



Signed – USDU 2020 Chairperson on behalf of the 2020 USDU Executive
24 July 2020

SCHEDULE 1: USDU EQUITY POLICY

1. Preamble

1.1. Preamble

The University of Stellenbosch Debating Union (USDU) is committed to establishing an organisation that is free from discrimination, harassment, vilification; and one that cultivates a culture of inclusion and equity. This policy aims to also be both educational and punitive, by providing guidance as well as disciplinary processes for non-compliance to the guidelines in this policy.

This equity policy deals with individual grievances, as well as those of communities in debate.

This policy outlines the kind of behaviour that is prohibited in our union and/or tournaments the USDU hosts.

1.2. Background and Principles

The USDU has been a majority white union, which has been previously problematic and exclusive of marginalised groups within debate.

It now strives towards using its resources and knowledge to empower and include marginalised groups in the debate community. It aims to cultivate safe spaces within the union and tournaments that we host by strongly encouraging the respectful exchange of ideas and prioritising the physical, psychological, and emotional safety of members and participants.

The equity office also acts as a mechanism to facilitate reconciliation or disciplinary action within the union and/or tournaments. It therefore acts as a mediator to ensure that the most equitable and fair solution is reached.

Ultimately, the equity office's most important role is to breed and nurture a culture of creating welcoming spaces and facilitating a culture of education between participants.

2. Scope

2.1. General Application

The policy applies to all members of the USDU and participants of tournaments hosted by the USDU including, but not limited to:

- Debaters
- Adjudicators

- Members of the Adjudicators Committee
- Tab team
- Members of the Organising Committee
- The Executive Committee of the USDU

2.2. Temporal and Geographical Application

This policy applies to the entire duration of one's membership in the USDU and/or tournaments hosted by the USDU including, but not limited to:

- During internal league
- During Boland and Cape Winelands internals and competitions
- During events and tournaments hosted by USDU (as part of tournaments and the union)
- During debates
- In accommodation, as organised as part of tournaments
- On transport organised as a part of tournaments

This policy applies to conduct in person, third party violations, as well as on social media.

3. Prohibition of Discriminatory Conduct

3.1. Definitions of Prohibited Behaviour

Bullying:

Bullying is the repeated and aggressive behaviour by an individual or group, against another individual or group. It degrades, humiliates, intimidates, offends and undermines the victimised individuals(s) or group.

Direct Discrimination:

This involves treating individual(s) unfavourably on the basis of a protected attribute, when individual(s) without are that protected attribute are treated fairly under the same/similar circumstances.

Harassment:

Harassment is the unwelcome behaviour that humiliates, belittles, offends and intimidates an individual or group on the basis of a protected attribute.

Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment is unwelcome advances of a sexual nature.

Indirect Discrimination:

Indirect treatment is enforcing, or proposing to enforce, a requirement that somehow

excludes individuals or groups on the basis of a protected attribute.

Victimisation:

Victimisation involves harassing or causing the detriment of someone because they have made an equity complaint or taken part in complaint proceedings.

Vilification:

Vilification involves publicly inciting hatred, violence or ridicule on the basis of a protected attribute.

3.2. Protected Attributes

According to the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (section 9), no person may be unfairly discriminated against on the basis of (not limited to):

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Sex
- Pregnancy
- Marital status
- Ethnic or social origin
- Colour
- Age
- Disability
- Religion
- Conscience
- Belief
- Culture
- Language
- Birth

4. Sexual Interactions and Positive Consent

4.1. Positive Consent and Participant Responsibility

When engaging in any sexual activities, one must make sure that their sexual partner(s) positively consent to it. Moreover, it is important for participants to be adequately informed on what sexual acts are to be performed and/or acts that are sexual in nature.

In addition to that, positive consent is only legitimate if the party is able to make rational decisions. If positive consent cannot be determined, the sexual interaction should be ended by the party enquiring.

Inebriation or “being high” will not be accepted as reasons or excuses for sexual assault; alcohol and drugs are not mitigating factors.

You have not obtained consent if:

- a. The other party has explicitly said no.
- b. There was coercion, intimidation, or pressure to engage in sexual activities
- c. The other party does not give an explicit “yes”; as not saying anything is not consent.
- d. The other party is unable to make an informed and/or rational decision because they are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol or under duress.

4.2. Participant or Member Conduct at Social Events

Participants and members must adhere to this policy, even outside of debate rounds. This includes socials, yakka parties, opening functions and closing functions. Again, alcohol and drugs will not be accepted as mitigating factors when one fails to adhere to this policy.

5. Conduct and Matters regarding Debates

5.1. General Conduct

Debaters are expected to treat each other and adjudicators with respect. This includes:

- a. Accepting adjudicators’ decisions
- b. Respecting the speaker at the podium, by not distracting them
- c. Adhering to the rules of the sport
- d. Not being aggressive or threatening towards adjudicators when the results don’t favour them.

Adjudicators must also treat debaters and other adjudicators by:

- a. Respecting the authority of the chair adjudicator
- b. Judging with as little bias as possible
- c. Refrain from distracting speakers at the podium
- d. Adhere to the rules of the sport

5.2. Language Guidelines

To make sure that the USDU is as inclusive as possible, members should be considerate when interacting with other members, especially when it comes to sensitive issues, such as race, sexuality, and gender.

Adjudicators are permitted to correct the language of speakers during rounds (after the speaker has spoken) if it could be harmful to other participants or observers, more so if it

continues to be said throughout the debate.

Generalisations:

It is important to avoid generalisations when debating or giving feedback, because it can lead to prejudice for adjudicators and speakers can take offence if other speakers are offensive.

Likewise, members of the USDU should not make general comment about members of the union who share a certain attribute(s).

Graphic language:

Although, it is common for debaters to use graphic language to invoke emotion, we urge debaters and members of the union to be sensitive to using graphic language because it could be triggering to others. Issues like wars, minority cultures and gender issues (in motions and social spaces) should be treated with the utmost care, as it could lead to violations of this policy.

Personal attacks:

Members and participants cannot use someone's life and background as a basis for an argument in debates; it just seeks to humiliate the other person and fails to add value to the debate.

Reclaimed language:

Marginalised or previously marginalised groups may have reclaimed a derogatory word. It is not okay for members of other communities to use these words, because it is still problematic (e.g. non-Black people saying the n-word).

Slurs:

Slurs are words or phrases used to insult others on the basis of any protected attribute. The use of slurs will not be allowed by the USDU.

5.3. Gender-neutral Language and Gender Pronoun Policy

No one should assume anyone's gender pronoun preference on the basis of their appearance. To avoid misgendering people, members are encouraged to use gender-neutral pronouns, if they do not know the other person's gender.

In the context of debates in tournaments, speakers will be given a chance to state their preferred gender pronoun before the debate begins. Other speakers and adjudicators are expected to respect this. For convenience, referring to members of their house according to the position they occupy is preferred.

5.4. Substance Use in Debates

Participants in tournaments hosted by the USDU are required to be sober in debates. If participants are found to be under the influence of any illegal drugs and/or alcohol, the Organising Committee reserves the right to remove that person from the tab.

Beer debates are informal debates that take up the form of a drinking game. Participants in tournaments should be made aware of a beer debate by the Chief Adjudication Panel, the rules should be explained thoroughly and those who consent to taking part, will do so.

6. Provisions for Participants or Members with Disabilities

The USDU will ensure that people with disabilities are always accommodated by making use of venues that are friendly to disabled persons. For tournaments, the Google form for registration will always have a section for participants to disclose their disabilities, so that provisions can be made by the USDU well in advance.

7. Complaints Procedures and Handling

If a member feels that there has been a breach of this policy, they are free to make an equity complaint. All complaints are confidential, and the complainant decides on how far they want the complaint to go.

Equity complaints can be made either formally or informally, depending on whether the complainant wants mediation (formal). Formal complaints can be sent in writing to the official USDU email address (currently usdv@sun.ac.za). Alternatively, especially if complaints involve members of the executive, the personal emails of the equity officers of that time or tournament will be released to members and participants to submit complaints.

Equity complaints can also be made anonymously, but that means that no mediation can be done, as that would expose the identity of the complainant. The complaint will, however, be resolved as well as is possible.

Equity officers who have a conflict of interest in equity complaints are required to excuse themselves from the process; other equity will handle the complaint.

In the case where institutions have equity officers, complaints can be raised to them and those equity officers can relay the complaint(s) to the tournament's equity officer.

Equity officers are required to be vigilant and deal with equity violations that they observe

themselves, if the victim(s) consents to that. Equity officers do not exist in a vacuum, so it is important to police equity violations, because victims are not always comfortable with coming forward or there is no clear victim.

7.1. Progressing with an Equity Complaint

If the complainant wishes to progress with complaint, the equity team will:

1. Get full details from the complainant
2. Speak to the offending party and get their side of the story
3. Speak with other participants or members, as required

The equity officer will then use the information and make a decision on how to resolve the equity problem.

A complainant may decide to withdraw the complaint at any time, and the equity office will cease investigations and nullify the complaint.

7.2. Resolution Mechanisms and Penalties

If, following investigations, a violation is found to have occurred, the equity office may do the following – based on the consent of the complainant:

1. Explain to the offender why what they did was problematic
2. Issue a warning to the offender
3. Request an apology from the offender
4. Mediate the dispute
5. If the conflict is between a speaker and an adjudicator, a clash can be registered with the tab team
6. In serious cases may make a recommendation to the Organising Committee or USDU executive to take formal action, involves parties will be given written notification. This includes:
 - i. Reporting the issue to the police
 - ii. Removing a participant from the tab team
 - iii. Expelling a member from the USDU
 - iv. Recommending to SANUDC to prohibit offending party from participating in any other tournaments in SADC, and anywhere else as a representative of the Southern African circuit.

7.3. Appeals

Any participant who feels that the decision taken by the equity office is unfair may write a formal to the equity office, the chairperson of the USDU and/or any members of the Organising Committee. Where applicable, reviews and further appeals may occur via the student court.

Reference: Dutch WUDC 2017 Equity Policy

SCHEDULE 2: JUDGE EDWIN CAMERON INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

Preamble

We, the members of the University of Stellenbosch Debating Union,

- recognise the need for the maintenance of a standard of excellence in South African debating;
- believe that it should be the aim of this society to play a dynamic role in the upholding and development of such a standard through the fostering of relationships and competition between the various debating societies of South Africa;
- commit ourselves to engage with other debating societies in South Africa which share these beliefs in order to reach our common goal;

and it is with this in mind that we establish the Judge Edwin Cameron Invitational Tournament.

1. Name

This tournament shall be known as the “Judge Edwin Cameron Invitational Tournament” or by the acronym “JECIT.”

2. General Provisions

1. The USDU shall maintain the exclusive right to host, coordinate, administer and organise JECIT, unless authority is explicitly delegated, either partially or in full, in a valid agreement to a mutually willing society.
2. The USDU shall maintain the exclusive right to invite any and all participants to JECIT, subject to the provision in article 2(1), *mutatis mutandis*.
3. The USDU shall endeavour to host JECIT annually, insofar as is practical and reasonably possible, subject to the provision in article 2(1), *mutatis mutandis*.

3. Administration

1. The registered voters shall annually appoint a Tournament Director for JECIT from the registered members of the society, by means of a common majority of votes, at the annual USDU AGM.

2. It shall be the responsibility of the Tournament Director to coordinate, administer and organise JECIT. In this regard, they are able to appoint an organising committee to aid them in this endeavour. The Tournament Director is able to appoint and administer the organising committee in any way they see fit, subject to the approval of and input by the Debating Executive.
3. The Tournament Director shall be charged with the duty of garnering funds and sponsorships, as well as the administration of such funds and sponsorships for JECIT.
4. The Tournament Director shall, subject to the approval of the Debating Executive, instate any awards and prizes they see fit, insofar as is reasonable and practical.
5. The Tournament Director shall, insofar as is possible, function independently of the Debating Executive but will report on the progress of JECIT to the Debating Executive on a regular basis.

SCHEDULE 3: NOVICE TOURNAMENT

Preamble

We, the members of the University of Stellenbosch Debating Union, recognise the standard of excellence in South African debating and believe that it should be the aim of this society to play a dynamic role in the upholding and development of such a standard through investment in the growth of newer debaters and healthy competition in the South African circuit. We strive towards the creation of an environment where new debaters can exercise their abilities in a safe setting, amongst fellow new debaters, without fear or judgment. It is with this in mind that we establish the Stellenbosch Novice Tournament.

1. Name

This tournament shall be known as the “Stellenbosch Novice Tournament” commonly referred to as “Novice”.

2. General Provisions

1. The USDU shall maintain the exclusive right to host, coordinate, administer and organise Novice, unless authority is explicitly delegated, either partially or in full, in a valid agreement to a mutually willing society.
2. The USDU shall endeavour to host Novice annually, before the start of the generally recognised season whereby major South African open tournaments begin, insofar as is practical and reasonably possible, subject to section 2(1).
3. The participants of the Novice Tournament may only be persons at a registered institution who have never competed in a university-level debating tournament.

3. Administration

1. The Debating Executive must appoint a registered member to lead the Organising Committee of Novice, as Tournament Director. This person may be a USDU Executive member, except for anyone appointed as the USDU Equity Officer.
2. The Tournament Director must work with a designated member of the USDU Executive to create an Organising Committee, Chief Adjudication Panel, Tab Master, and any other sub-committee member needed for the success of the tournament.

3. The Tournament Director shall be charged with the duty of garnering funds and sponsorships, as well as the administration of such funds and sponsorships for Novice.
4. The Tournament Director shall, subject to the approval of the USDU Executive, instate any awards and prizes they see fit, insofar as is reasonable and practical.
5. All decisions taken by the Tournament Director are subject to the approval of the USDU Executive.

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