



# **Voting Director Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy**

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# **1. Code of Conduct**

## **1.1 Context**

The Student Association of George Brown College is committed to providing services and programs to the student population of George Brown College in a manner that maintains the highest of ethical standards. The purpose of the following Code of Conduct is to articulate the Student Association's expectations regarding conduct by Student Association Voting Directors.

## **1.2 Job Performance**

As elected representatives, it is expected that Directors will:

- a. Demonstrate a readiness to perform all duties and responsibilities as a Voting Director, including:
  - i. those outlined in the duties and responsibilities section of the Voting Directors Accountability Manual, and
  - ii. those duties assigned by the Board of Directors or a committee of the Board
- b. Demonstrate a readiness to learn and grow in their position.
- c. Make themselves available to the members of the Student Association to answer questions and explain decisions of the Board of Directors.
- d. Demonstrate an ability to work effectively independently, and in teams, as required.
- e. Understand the scope of the portfolios for which they are responsible.
- f. Abide by the By-Laws, Polices and Procedures, Constitution, Voting Directors Accountability Manual and the Mission Statement of the Student Association of George Brown College.
- g. Conduct all duties as outlined in the duties and responsibilities section of the Voting Directors Accountability Manual.
- h. Respect the distinction between the roles of staff, volunteers and Voting Directors and their responsibilities.
- i. Ensure accuracy and thoroughness in the performance of their assigned duties.
- j. Meet, to the best of their ability, targets regarding work to be performed.
- k. Manage time effectively.
- l. Be well organized.
- m. Show initiative.
- n. Ensure efficient and responsible follow-through on assigned duties.

## **1.3 Professionalism and Professional Conduct**

As elected representatives, it is expected that Directors will:

- a. Establish and maintain cooperative and collegial relationships with other Voting Directors, staff and students.
- b. Demonstrate respect for the professionalism of their colleagues, staff and college employees (i.e., faculty, administration and support staff).
- c. Not engage in any conduct, which is dishonest, fraudulent, deceitful or misrepresentative.

- d. Not accept anything of value in exchange for influencing their actions or decisions.
- e. Not consume alcohol at any activity, event or function of the Student Association in which the Director holds responsibility, and only drink in moderation at Student Association activities, events or functions provided that such conduct does not contravene any other section of this Code.
- f. Respect confidentiality in all matters including information discussed in “In Camera” sessions of the Board of Directors.
- g. Only publicly represent the Board of Directors on opinions, standpoints or positions, that have been officially adopted by the Student Association.
- h. Clearly indicate when opinions are their own and are not the official position of the Student Association.
- i. Refrain from participating in the spread of negative, malicious, or unkind remarks or rumours.
- j. Demonstrate professionalism in all meetings of the Board of Directors and/or committees of the Board. Directors will:
  - i. Address the speaker when debating
  - ii. Refrain from personal attacks.
  - iii. Discuss issues based on their merit and not on personal perception.
- k. Demonstrate courtesy and respect in all dealings with other Directors, students, staff, academic employees, and support staff. Directors will not, for example:
  - i. Engage in antagonistic discussion.
  - ii. Use offensive language.
  - iii. Make remarks or engage in behaviour that could reasonably be considered racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory according to the Ontario Human Rights Code, and will intervene if they witness such behaviour on the part of the Student Association and George Brown College.
  - iv. Engage in behaviours or make remarks that could reasonably be interpreted as threatening, and will intervene if they witness such behavior.
  - v. Intimidate any employee or student verbally, and will strive actively to prevent others from engaging in such behavior.
  - vi. Encourage, by action or innuendo, the development of an environment that is fractious, disrespectful to others or intolerant of order and good manners.

#### **1.4 Conflict Resolution**

As elected representatives, it is expected that Directors will:

- a. Strive actively to avoid conflict between themselves and other Directors, staff or students.
- b. Demonstrate professionalism in conflict resolution by:
  - i. Going first to the source of the conflict to attempt resolution.
  - ii. Respecting the dignity of all parties involved.
  - iii. Refusing to allow their own perceptions of the importance of the nature of a conflict to preclude attempts to achieve its resolution.
  - iv. Ensuring that specific complaints are resolved by negotiating with all parties concerning a specific timetable for the resolution to occur.
  - v. Refusing to permit the same complaints or concerns to be raised and appropriate efforts to attain resolution.

- vi. Ensuring that the terms of all resolutions of specific complaints are appropriately documented.
- vii. Following resolution of the immediate conflict, work to ensure that the behaviour that led to the conflict does not recur.
- viii. Following the Voting Directors Accountability Manual to resolve issues with other Directors.
- c. In the event of conflict, maintain an open, non-confrontational attitude with a view to resolving the problem at hand and making referrals as required.

## **1.5 Management**

As elected representatives, it is expected that Directors will:

- a. Exercise caution in the expenditure of Student Association funds and ensure that due process and fair bidding practices are observed.
- b. Exercise only authority given to them by virtue of their positions as defined by the Student Association.
- c. Ensure that any direction to, or concern regarding, staff are addressed through the Chair of the Human Resources Committee.

## **1.6 Violations**

Violations of the Code of Conduct for Voting Directors of the Student Association are punishable by the actions defined by the Board of Directors, the Board Mediation Committee and by the Voting Directors Accountability Manual. (Penalties may include warnings, demotions, and suspensions with or without pay, censure or impeachment.)

# **2. Conflict of Interest**

## **2.1 Context**

Members of the Board of Directors and staff are expected to reveal any personal, family or business interests that they have that, by creating divided loyalty, could influence their judgment and hence the wisdom of their decisions.

A conflict of interest exists wherever an individual could benefit, disproportionately from others, directly or indirectly, from access to information or from a decision over which they might have influence, or where someone might reasonably perceive there to be such a benefit and influence.

Examples of possible conflict of interest situations include the following:

- a. A Board member has a personal or business relationship with the Association as a supplier of goods or services or as a landlord or tenant.
- b. A Board member has a personal or financial relationship with a client of the Association outside the workplace.
- c. The Association is employing someone who is directly related to a Board member.

Conflicts of interest (real and perceived) are sometimes unavoidable and should not prevent an individual from serving as a Director unless the extent of the interest is so significant that the potential for divided loyalty is present in a large number of situations.

## **2.2 Procedure**

The following is the procedure for handling a conflict of interest:

- a. Duty to Disclose – In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose all material facts to the Board of Directors.
- b. Recusal of Self – Any Voting Director may recuse him or herself at any time from involvement in any decision or discussion in which the Voting Director believes he or she has or may have a conflict of interest, without going through the process of determining whether a conflict of interest in fact exists.
- c. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists – After disclosure of the interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interest person, he or she shall leave the Board meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

## **2.3 Violations**

- a. If the Board has reasonable cause to believe a Voting Director has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the Voting Director an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the Voting Director's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board determines the Voting Director has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.