



LFS|US Respectful Behavior & Environment Policy

For all of Society

March 2023



LAND  FOOD SYSTEMS
UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY

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ARTICLE 1: GENERAL INFORMATION & INTRODUCTION

Section 1.1 Preface

The LFS|US strives to foster a working and learning environment that is inclusive and respectful towards all members of society. In 2023, the Respectful Behavior and Environment Policy was established by the current Executive Council to ensure that the council and all committees can uphold this commitment.

Section 1.2 Definitions

In the LFS|US Respectful Environment and Behavior Policy:

- I. **AMS** shall mean the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia - Vancouver.
- II. **AMS Code** shall mean the Code of Procedure of the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia - Vancouver.
- III. **Policy** refers to the LFS|US Respectful Behavior and Environment Policy document
- IV. **Law** refers to the Laws of British Columbia.
- V. **Approval** shall mean when more than two-thirds of the votes cast approves the motion, excluding blanks and abstention.
- VI. **Constitution** shall refer to the Constitution of the Land and Food Systems Undergraduate Society.
- VII. **Councillors** shall mean all members of the General Council who are the Executive Councillors, voting Councillors, and non-voting Councillors.
- VIII. **Executive Council** shall be comprised of the elected Executive Councillors and appointed Executive Councillor
- IX. **Executive Councillors**, also referred to as Executives, shall mean the non-voting Senior Advisor and the voting members of the Council to assist in the direction and execution of the Council's agenda.
- X. **Faculty**, also referred to as LFS, shall refer to the Faculty of Land and Food Systems of the University of British Columbia - Vancouver.
- XI. **General Council**, also referred to as Council, shall mean the governing body of the Land and Food Systems Undergraduate Society, comprised of Executive Councillors, voting Councillors, and non-voting Councillors, designated as delegates by the active members of the Society.
- XII. **LFS|US**, also referred to as the Society, shall mean the Land and Food Systems Undergraduate Society of the University of British Columbia - Vancouver.
- XIII. **Mandate**, also referred to as a Community Agreement, shall mean the initial contract signed by non-voting councillors and their Portfolio Chair.
- XIV. **Members of Society**, also referred to as Members, shall mean all undergraduate students who are active members of the Alma Mater Society and who are registered in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems as an undergraduate student.
- XV. **Non-voting Councillors**, also referred to as Council Coordinators, shall mean the non-voting members of Council who are appointed by Executive Councillors to assist in the execution of the Council's agenda.
- XVI. **Internal** refers to all processes within the Council that do not require input from wider members of society.
- XVII. **External** refers to all processes related to the LFS|US that require input from wider members of society.
- XVIII. **Pecuniary** shall mean financial or personal conflict of interest.

- XIX. **Quorum**, shall mean the minimum number of members required to be present at a meeting to be valid.
- XX. **University**, shall refer to the University of British Columbia - Vancouver.
- XXI. **Voting Councillors**, also referred to as Representatives, shall mean the voting members of Council who are elected representatives to assist in the execution of the Council's agenda.

Section 1.3 Authority & Interpretation of the Policy

The Policy is to be interpreted by the voting Councilors by 2/3 approval, however an alternate interpretation can be made by the Executive Council by 2/3 approval. No items in the Policy shall contravene the rules of the University.

Section 1.4 Suspension of the Policy

The Policy may be suspended by the voting Councilors by 2/3 approval; however, an alternate suspension can be made by the Executive Council by 2/3 approval. Suspension of the Policy may only occur under the condition that the Policy is under amendment.

ARTICLE 2: THE LFS|US CORE VALUES

Section 2.1 The LFS|US Core Values

The LFS|US is guided by three core values:

1. Fostering a welcoming space for all bodies to feel safe and celebrated;
2. Treating others with respect and courtesy, regardless of race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, ability, and/or any other characteristic protected by law;
3. Taking ownership of one's actions, being accountable for one's behavior, and striving to improve continually.

Section 2.2 Amendments to the LFS|US Core Values

Amendments to Section 2.1 may be made by the Executive Council and Voting Councilors by 2/3 approval.

Section 2.3 Terms of Engagement

All Members of Society participating in any internal or external LFS|US activities or processes are expected to acknowledge the following Terms of Engagement which include, but are not limited to:

- I. Inclusivity – Creating a welcoming and accepting environment where everyone feels valued and respected.
- II. Accessibility – Ensuring that everyone, regardless of their physical, cognitive, and/or sensory characteristics, can access and benefit from the same opportunities and resources.
- III. Community Building – Creating a sense of belonging and connection among members of a community, promoting participation and collaboration, and fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

- IV. Sustainability - All internal and external processes and activities aim to minimize negative impacts on the environment and wider society while maximizing benefits for all involved parties.
- V. Respect– Treating others with respect, empathy, and understanding, in all situations to foster positive relationships and build/maintain trust.

Section 2.4 Amendment to the Terms of Engagement

Amendments to Section 2.3 may be made by the Council by 2/3 approval.

ARTICLE 3: STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Section 3.1 Inclusivity

“**Inclusivity**” is exhibited in how the LFS|US treats others with respect and courtesy, regardless of race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, ability, and/or any other characteristic that may make one feel excluded or marginalized.

All internal or external LFS|US activities and processes must follow the concept of inclusivity through the following:

- I. Zero-tolerance for discrimination as defined in section 4.1
- II. Respect and celebration of diversity by maintaining awareness of cultural relevance.
- III. By promoting accessibility of activities or processes to the best of ability to all individuals.
- IV. Utilizing inclusive language.
- V. Support and empower marginalized groups.
- VI. Creating clear lines of accountability and process for addressing discrimination if it occurs

Section 3.2 Respectful Interactions

“**Respect**” is defined as the ability to recognize the inherent dignity or worth of all individuals and treat them in a way which affirms their humanity and rights.

Some respectful behaviors that are highly encouraged within the LFS|US include but are not limited to:

- I. Professional conduct involving appropriate/respectful language and etiquette.
- II. Constructive feedback/criticism and constructive debates.
- III. Resolving conflicts instead of elevating them.
- IV. Inclusive language.
- V. Active listening.
- VI. Empathetic understanding.

Section 3.3 Confidentiality

“**Confidential Information**” includes any information or data disclosed by councilors to any individual or platform, whether in writing, orally, or by any other means, that is not generally known to the public. Confidential Information includes, but is not limited to:

- I. Names
- II. University student numbers
- III. Contact information
- IV. Undisclosed financial information outside of Financial Reports
- V. and any other information that would reasonably be considered confidential.

Any confidential information must not be disclosed from councillors to councillors of another portfolio, members of society nor the public without prior approval from an Executive Councillor and the consent of the person in subject.

All confidential information collected externally or passed internally within Council must be done through a secure means such as Qualtrics and Microsoft Teams.

ARTICLE 4: HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION

Section 4.1 Definition of Harassment & Discrimination

"**Harassment**" is defined as unwanted conduct or behavior that is intimidating, offensive, or hostile towards any recipient individual or group regardless of initial intention. Conduct or behavior may be represented by and not limited to:

- I. Verbal
- II. Physical
- III. Visual

“**Discrimination**” is defined as the unfair and prejudiced treatment of any individual or group based on characteristics such as but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, and/or any protected category under law. Discriminatory practices may include but are not limited to:

- I. Denial of equitable opportunities.
- II. Unfair segregation from community or groups.
- III. Disparate treatment
- IV. Retaliation

Section 4.2 Types of Prohibited Behavior

All behaviors and/or actions deemed illegal by law (B.C Human Rights Code) are prohibited in any external or internal LFS|US activities or processes regardless of circumstance and reason.

Prohibited behaviors not covered by law include but are not limited to:

- I. Any form of harassment or discrimination as defined by this Policy.
- II. Deliberate exclusion based on any protected categories under discrimination.
- III. Retaliation based on personal disagreements.

IV. Unwarranted actions or behaviors intended to spread negativity during external or internal LFS|US events or processes.

Discourses on the definition of prohibited behaviors may be settled by 2/3 approval from the executive council and approval from the Student Engagement Officer.

Section 4.3 First Responders Policy

If an LFS|US Councilor comes across a violation of this Policy during any internal or external LFS|US activity or process, they are responsible for halting and stopping the individual or group responsible for the violation if the degree of the infringement is within the Councilor's capability to resolve and if the Councilor feels safe to do so. In such cases, LFS|US Councilors have the responsibility to ensure that the situation is resolved as safely and quickly as possible.

If the degree of the infringement goes beyond what the Councilor can handle or if the Councilor feels unsafe to take action, they must prioritize their own safety before prioritizing the safety of other attendees and the wider community.

LFS|US Councilors have the right to decline to assist or resolve a situation if doing so would endanger their own well-being. In such cases, LFS|US Councilors should focus on harm-reduction to third parties and damage control.

LFS|US Councilors have the right to immediately remove any guest that infringes upon this Policy from the LFS|US event where the infringement took place.

Section 4.4 Incident Reports

Following an incident for which an infringement of this policy occurred, the event organizer(s) or Executive Councilor(s) who witnessed the incident must fill in and submit an incident report using the template in Appendix A. They must also inform affected parties of the creation of an incident report.

The incident report must be submitted to the president and Governance Coordinator for their review to either undergo the investigation & resolution process in section 4.5, or to determine other future steps. The incident report may be submitted to the LFS Student Engagement Officer by discretion of both the President and Governance Coordinator if they are unable to identify a proper investigation or resolution procedure.

Contents of the report pertaining to confidential information may be redacted at the request of the parties involved. An incident report will still be written to be kept as internal records for the duration of 2 academic years, after which the report will be deleted.

Section 4.5 Investigation & Resolution Process

Following the review of an incident report, the Governance Coordinator may investigate the incident in a fair and impartial manner under the President and Student Engagement Officer. The investigation shall take place as follows:

- I. Informing affected parties of an investigation.
- II. Collection of testimonies from all first parties involved through indirect communication such as email or text.
- III. Collection of witness testimony through indirect communication such as email or text.
- IV. Any relevant evidence will be placed under consideration.

Any party has the right to decline to provide evidence or testimony. The affected party of the infringement has the right to call off the investigation and resolution process. The Governance Coordinator must notify them of the option of bypassing LFS|US bureaucracy to contact the LFS Student Engagement Officer directly.

Following investigation, the Governance Coordinator, President, and Student Engagement Officer will determine an appropriate resolution. They may also decide to enact a penalty following section 4.6.

Section 4.6 Penalties

The Governance Coordinator, alongside approval from the President and LFS Student Engagement Officer may choose to penalize parties that infringe upon this Policy. The severity of infringement determines the penalties concurred. Some penalties that may be administered by the LFS|US are as follows:

Penalties	Infringement (Examples, but not limited to)
Verbal or written warning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unprofessional and disrespectful verbal disputes. • Repeated intentional spreading of negativity. • Behavior targeted towards exclusion of an individual without valid reason. • Intentional failure in following the LFS US core values. • Confidentiality breaches.
Suspension from council duties and privileges for an unknown duration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated violations of the above. • Physical altercations. • Any actions that may harm the wellbeing of others. • Corruption during the elections process.
Loss of council position via processes from the LFS US code of procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated violations of the above. • Harassment. • Discriminatory behavior.

Term-based blacklist from LFS US events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any infringement as stated would result in suspension from council duties.
Permanent blacklist from LFS US events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any infringement stated would result in the loss of council position. <p>Note: A file pertaining to blacklists are to be kept by the Governance Coordinator and passed down yearly.</p>

Section 4.7 Appeal Process

Appeals may be made by penalized parties on grounds of procedural errors, new evidence, or unfair treatment within one winter term of the penalization.

To appeal a decision, the appellant must email the Governance Coordinator with the following items:

- I. Name, and contact information.
- II. The decision being appealed.
- III. The grounds for appeal.
- IV. Any relevant evidence or documentation.

Following the receipt of an appeal, the Governance Coordinator must assemble an appeal committee consisting of all elected councilors that did not take part in the original decision-making process.

The appeal committee must make a decision and present it to the Governance Coordinator within one week of receiving the appeal. The appeal committee must adopt a horizontal organizational structure and act independently from the Governance Coordinator to maintain impartiality.

The Governance Coordinator has the duty of notifying the appellant upon receipt of their appeal, as long as any updates or decisions made by the appeal committee regarding the appeal.

ARTICLE 5: RESPONSIBILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITY

Section 5.1 The President

The President has the following responsibilities for this Policy:

- I. Review of incident reports in tandem with the Governance Coordinator.
- II. Approval of penalties set by the Governance Coordinator.
- III. Forwarding relevant incident reports to the LFS Student Engagement Officer.
- IV. Completion of SVPRO training along with others as recommended by the LFS Student Engagement Officer.

Section 5.2 Elected Councilors

Elected councilors such as executive councilors (excluding the president) and program representatives have the following responsibilities for this Policy:

- I. Completion of SVPRO training along with others as recommended by the LFS Student Engagement Officer.
- II. On-scene conflict resolution as described in section 4.3.
- III. Creating incident reports as described in section 4.4.
- IV. Formation of an appeals committee as described in section 4.7.
- V. Connecting event coordinators with the Governance Coordinator.

Section 5.3 Event Organizers

The event organizers of each LFS|US event have the following responsibilities:

- I. Completion of SVPRO training along with others as recommended by the LFS Student Engagement Officer.
- II. On-scene conflict resolution as described in section 4.3.
- III. Recording the contact information of parties involved in an infringement.
- IV. Creating incident reports as described in section 4.4.
- V. Submission of incident reports to the Governance Coordinator.
- VI. Providing witness testimony during the investigation and resolution procedure.

Section 5.4 Student Engagement Officer

The LFS Student Engagement Officer acts as an advisor to the investigation & resolution process, and the penalization process, but is not obligated to do so.

The LFS|US may choose to elevate incidents depending on their severity (ideally infringements upon university policy or law) to the LFS Student Engagement Officer, who may then, but is not obligated to undertake proper University procedures to investigate and resolve the infringement.

Victims that wish to bypass LFS|US bureaucracy to find a resolution involving processes outside the LFS|US is encouraged to contact the LFS Student Engagement Officer directly.

APPENDIX

Appendix A Incident Report Form

The incident report form template may be found at this [link](#).