Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS)

CFMS Elections Policy

Approved by the CFMS Board of Directors on OctoberMay 2019

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Definitions

1. In this document, unless the context otherwise requires:
   1.1. "Board" refers to the whole CFMS Board of Directors as defined by the CFMS By-laws
   1.2. "CFMS General Assembly" refers to the collective group of voting members at any given CFMS general meeting
   1.3. "Chief Returning Officer (CRO)" refers to the CFMS Executive Director, who oversees and administers the elections processes.
   1.4. "Policy" refers to the CFMS Elections Policy
   1.5. "Candidate" refers to any medical student CFMS member running for a Board position

Purpose

2. This policy is established by the CFMS to:
   2.1. Outline CFMS Board election processes and procedures.
   2.2. Outline the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in CFMS Board elections.
   2.3. Detail candidate rights and responsibilities as they pertain to CFMS Board elections.

Policy Statement

3. **Statutory Statement**
   3.1. This Policy applies to all CFMS Board elections and by-elections.
   3.2. This Policy does not apply to the selection of CFMS positions outside of the Board as these are handled through the CFMS Nominations Committee process.

4. **General Principles**
   4.1. All CFMS Elections will be conducted in accordance with the CFMS By-laws, in a manner that maintains the highest levels of process integrity.
   4.2. CFMS Elections will be conducted in a manner that is free, fair and transparent.
   4.3. The elections process shall not be conducted in such a way that is perceived to discriminate in any manner, including against race, creed, ethnicity, national origin, colour, medical school, geographic location, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability or marital status.
   4.4. A candidate's failure to comply with the principles outlined in this document may have their candidacy revoked by the CRO.

5. **Responsibilities**

5.1. Oversight

5.1.1. The CFMS Executive Director shall serve as Chief Returning Officer and shall have oversight over the entire CFMS Elections process.

5.1.2. As per CFMS By-laws clause 47, a Nominating Committee comprising the CFMS Executive Director and other members deemed necessary, shall receive nominations. As much as is possible, the Executive Director should strive to be the sole member of the Nominating Committee.

5.1.3. The CFMS staff members shall assist the Executive Director in administering and counting ballots.

5.2. Candidates

5.2.1. Any medical student member of the CFMS, as defined by the CFMS By-laws, is eligible to run for any position on the Board of Directors.

5.2.2. Candidates for CFMS Board of Directors positions are responsible for complying with elections policies outlined in this document, the CFMS By-laws and the official Call for Nominations.

5.2.3. All successful candidates will be required to follow the CFMS Code of Conduct

5.3. General Assembly

5.3.1. The General Assembly shall treat candidates respectfully and exercise due diligence in electing those members to the Board of Directors who will uphold CFMS values during their term.

6. **Nominations Process**

6.1. A call for nominations shall be put out to the CFMS general membership no later than 6 weeks prior to the start of the corresponding General Meeting.

6.1.1. The call shall detail eligibility criteria, election process and descriptive summaries of each position.

6.1.2. The process to self-nominate shall be done via online submission form or via e-mail to the CRO.

6.2. The CRO may require that candidates provide the following information in support of their nomination: (a) Name, (b) contact information, (c) photograph, and (d) letter of intent.

6.2.1. Candidates should also be provided an option to submit a condensed CV.

7. **Campaigning**

7.1. There shall be no formal campaign period for CFMS elections.

7.1.1. Candidates are, however, free to engage in conversation with CFMS members on matters related to their candidacy at their discretion.

7.1.2. Campaign materials including but not limited to posters, banners, social media content and stationery, are strictly forbidden.

8. **Election Spending**

8.1. No expenses directly related to a Candidate's campaign are permitted.

8.1.1. The decision to attend a CFMS General Meeting at their own expense in order to be present for a Board election is at the Candidate's discretion.

9. **Elections Process**
   9.1. The CFMS shall recognize three distinct elections each year, namely the election of the CFMS President-elect, the election of CFMS Vice President-elects and Portfolio Director-elects, and the election of the Regional Director-elects.
      9.1.1. Election of CFMS President-elect, CFMS Vice-President-elects, Portfolio Director-elects, and Regional Director-elects shall occur at the CFMS Virtual Election Meeting in the Spring.
         9.1.1.1. The election of the CFMS President-elect shall conclude prior to the election of the CFMS Vice President-elects and Portfolio Director-elects.
   9.2. Candidates may not contest more than one position in a single election.
      9.2.1. Unsuccessful candidates in one election may contest a position in a subsequent election.
   9.3. Candidates will be given an opportunity to address the General Assembly at the CFMS Virtual Election Meeting.
      9.3.1. Presidential candidates will have 5 minutes to address the General Assembly immediately followed by a 10 minute question and answer period.
      9.3.2. All other candidates will have 3 minutes to address the General Assembly immediately followed by a 3 minute question and answer period.
   9.4. Candidates unable to provide speeches in-person will have speeches read by the CRO to the General Assembly to be immediately followed by a question and answer period via teleconference.
      9.4.1. Candidates who are not present for elections may not give addresses via pre-recorded video or other proxy.

10. **Voting**
   10.1. The CFMS shall use a ranked ballot system for all elections.
   10.2. As outlined in Clause 4 of the CFMS By-laws, CFMS institutional members shall hold 3 votes at each election. Current CFMS Board members shall each hold 1 vote, except for the non-voting past-president who serves as CRO.
   10.3. As outlined in Clause 8 of the CFMS By-laws, CFMS campus members shall hold 1 vote at each election.
   10.4. The CRO shall inform the General Assembly following the conclusion of all election speeches that the voting period is open and shall inform the General Assembly when the voting period is closed.

11. **Tabulating Election Ballots:**
   11.1. Election ballots will be tabulated by the CRO with the assistance of CFMS staff as necessary.
   11.2. Ballots are destroyed at the end of the General Meeting after a motion directing the CRO to do so is passed by the General Assembly.

12. **Announcing Election Results:**

12.1. Election results will be announced by the CRO on the same day that the election is conducted.

13. **By-elections**
    13.1. A by-election will be held at the next General Meeting to fill any vacant Board positions from elections held at the CFMS Virtual Elections Meeting.
    13.2. Vacant Board positions after a General Meeting, will be filled via special Nominations Committee process as outlined in the CFMS By-laws.
    13.3. By-elections processes will be conducted with the same procedures as the general elections.

14. **Complaints**
    14.1. All complaints about the electoral process will be resolved by the CRO.
    14.2. Complaints about the CRO's conduct during the electoral process will be resolved by the CFMS Governance Committee.

15. **Effective Date**
    15.1. The CFMS Elections Policy shall be effective as of the date the Policy is approved by the Board following a review by the Governance Committee, unless another date is specified by the resolution of such approval.

16. **Related Information**
    16.1. CFMS By-laws

17. **History**
    17.1. Originally drafted August 2019
    17.2. Approved and Effective: 9 September 2019
    17.3. Governance Committee Review: September 2019
    17.4. Next scheduled review: September 2020

18. **Appendices**
    18.1. None