



# INFORMATION FOR REFERENDUM CAMPAIGNING

Ryerson Graduate Students' Union Fee Referendum  
("Graduate Students' Union Referendum 2020")

## THE BASICS

### What is a referendum?

A referendum is a direct vote on an issue of importance for a particular group of individuals. Typically, a referendum is conducted by asking a question to which voters can answer YES or NO. The purpose of a referendum is to determine the will of the group through the aggregate of the individual members' views.

In this referendum the University is asking graduate students whether or not they agree to the creation of an annual membership fee of \$123.84 to fund the operation of the Ryerson Graduate Students' Union (RGSU), with an optional healthcare plan of up to \$650 per-year, to be paid by all full-time students enrolled in Ryerson graduate programs (pro-rated for part-time graduate students), starting in September 2021, and indexed annually to the Toronto Consumer Price Index.

### What is a campaign?

In general, campaigning involves activities intended to influence others to support a certain position to achieve a particular outcome on an issue. Common methods of campaigning include canvassing, distributing flyers, giving speeches, and organizing rallies and other events and coordinated posting on social media or electronic platforms. Another important aspect of campaigning is encouraging voters to actually participate in the vote by relaying the official information about voting days and voting methods.

All individuals coordinating campaigns should ensure that their activities are conducted in accordance with all relevant rules, regulations, policies, procedures, including but not limited to the Board of Governors Referendum Procedures and any direction or instruction of the referendum officials.

## What are the important dates of the referendum?

Tuesday, October 6, 2020	Referendum Proclamation; Campaign group registration opened
Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at noon	Campaign group registration closes
Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 12:01 p.m.	Campaigning opens
November 2-5, 2020	Referendum voting period

## How can I obtain updates and information about the referendum?

Official information about the referendum will be communicated to the relevant members of the Ryerson community by electronic communication. Information is also available on the Board of Governors Referenda website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/governors/elections/Referenda/>.

Information relating to campaigns and their activities will be communicated to the campaign groups through their representative(s). Only the registered campaign groups will receive this information, which may or may not be otherwise readily available at the relevant time.

## How do I register to campaign for the referendum?

Individuals interested in campaigning for the referendum may register a campaign group with the Returning Officer. A campaign group must include at least three individuals eligible to vote in the specific referendum who agree to act as the representatives of the campaign group. Each campaign group must also indicate whether the group will campaign for the YES side or the NO side. Registration forms are available for download at the Board of Governors Referenda website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/governors/elections/Referenda/>.

## Can I campaign without registering a campaign group?

While anyone may support or oppose a position on a referendum without registering a campaign group, campaign information and/or assistance provided by referendum officials will not be available to unregistered groups or individuals. However, all relevant rules and procedures, including any penalties and sanctions will apply to all campaigns, regardless of registration status.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CAMPAIGNING

### Do referendum officials provide any assistance to campaigns?

Each registered campaign group will be provided with a campaign space on the Board of Governors Referendum website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/governors/elections/Referenda/>. Space and content

may be subject to certain limitations. Please inquire with the Returning Officer via email at [returningofficer@ryerson.ca](mailto:returningofficer@ryerson.ca) for details.

### **Can I use the Ryerson logo and or the Ryerson Crest on my campaign materials?**

Campaigns may not use the Ryerson University logo or crest. The logo and the crest are the property of the University, and cannot be used by any person without express prior consent from the University. The University generally does not permit the use of the logo or the crest for referendum campaigns.

### **Do campaign posters need official approval prior to posting around the campus?**

Campaigns are not required to obtain official approval of their campaign materials. However, campaigns must ensure that their materials are created abiding by all relevant rules and procedures. Referendum officials appreciate receiving electronic copies of the materials before they are distributed. Registered campaign groups may send their materials to the Returning Officer via email at [returningofficer@ryerson.ca](mailto:returningofficer@ryerson.ca).

Please note that referendum officials do not provide funds to produce campaign posters.

### **Where can I display campaign posters?**

Registered campaigns groups may display referendum materials with greater flexibility than usually afforded for posting other materials around the campus. However, materials are absolutely prohibited from being posted on any door, on any glass surface, or inside any washroom. Further, campaigns may not move, alter, obstruct, or remove other existing displays or post their materials in a manner that may alter, damage, or deface any University property.

### **Can I campaign through email or phone?**

Email and phone campaigning is permissible; however, campaigns may not use any official Ryerson University listservs or phone lines for these activities. Also, campaigns should take care to contact only those individuals that the campaign group knows or has consent to contact. Referendum officials have received complaints in the past about unexpected contacts. Contacting people who may consider your communication an intrusion is generally not helpful to your campaign.

### **Can I campaign in classrooms?**

Due to pandemic restrictions on campus, individuals will not be permitted to campaign in person in onsite in-person classes. Individuals will be permitted to campaign in virtual classes only if the responsible instructor gives their prior permission.

Please consider arranging to have all campaign groups make their presentations at one time, to provide a well-rounded coverage of the issues without multiple interruptions for the class. Unbalanced

information or repeated interruptions may give negative impressions of all campaign groups and/or the referendum. Referendum officials encourage campaign groups to take the initiative to coordinate with the responsible instructor and/or other campaign groups to organize any sessions in the classroom.

### **Can I campaign at Ryerson University events?**

No, campaigning is prohibited at official University events. These include Convocation and any other event that the University or one of its departments acts as the host or the organizer.

### **When does the campaign period end?**

Campaigning may continue throughout the voting days. Campaigns should pay particular attention to the rules regarding prohibited activities around voters and voting areas.

### **What activities are prohibited around voters and voting areas?**

Campaign groups may not solicit votes, assist and or observe voting or provide access to a device for the purposes of voting.

Inquire with the Returning Officer via email at [returningofficer@ryerson.ca](mailto:returningofficer@ryerson.ca) to engaging in any activity that you are unsure about. Activities will not be excused for having been conducted without knowing that they may be sanctionable. These include activities that are expressly prohibited and also those not expressly prohibited but may be against the general standard of fairness.

### **What do I do if someone else is engaging in prohibited activities?**

Please contact the Returning Officer via email at [returningofficer@ryerson.ca](mailto:returningofficer@ryerson.ca) with the details of the contravention. Report of any contravention must be supported with sufficient detail and independent evidence. Making unfounded or frivolous complaints is also prohibited and may be penalized.

Only referendum officials may enforce the rules and procedures related to the referendum. No other individual or campaign group is permitted to attempt to enforce these rules or procedures under any circumstances.

### **I still have other questions, who can I contact for answers?**

#### **If you are a registered campaign group representative:**

Send your question by email to the Returning Officer via email at [returningofficer@ryerson.ca](mailto:returningofficer@ryerson.ca)). Any answer, along with the question, will be provided to all registered YES and No campaign groups.

#### **If you are NOT a registered campaign group representative:**

Contact your campaign group representative for direction.

**If you are not part of a registered campaign group:**

Visit the Board of Governors Referenda website

(<http://www.ryerson.ca/governors/elections/Referenda/>) for information from registered campaign groups to get connected to one aligned with your views.