CFS Prospective Membership Update

The DSU became prospective members of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) in 2019, after DSU Council voted to enter into a prospective membership. The goal of prospective membership was to hold a referendum vote in which all Dalhousie students could vote yes or no, as to whether they wanted the Union to become members of the CFS.

Since then, the DSU Executive has been in discussion with the CFS on how to hold a referendum vote on campus. However, due to contradiction between the governing documents of the two organizations, we have concluded that a referendum vote cannot take place in a way that does not contradict with both organizations. Hosting a CFS referendum would necessitate the DSU to amend its Bylaws in relation to external organizations, as well as its Elections and Referenda Policy in relation to voting mechanisms. To amend its Bylaws, the DSU would need to do so at an Annual General Meeting (AGM); however, the DSU has not been able to reach quorum at an AGM since 2016.

At this stage, we believe it is in the best interest of the DSU and its members to no longer pursue membership until members show interest in making the necessary bylaw and policy changes required to join this and any other external organization.

For these reasons, the DSU Executive voted on October 06, 2021, to inquire with the CFS about ending the prospective membership. On October 22, 2021, the DSU President emailed the Chairperson of the CFS to ask that instead of moving a motion to extend the DSU’s prospective membership, the CFS National Executive move a motion to cancel our prospective membership at their upcoming National General Meeting.

The CFS responded to this request on October 27, 2021, confirming that the DSU is no longer a prospective member of the Federation. They have indicated on November 23, 2021, that they are following up shortly to provide the DSU with formal meeting minutes from their National General Meeting, to further confirm this decision.