

Notes on the International Constitution of the Office
& Professional Employees Union

1. Article IV Membership: could limit membership on political, religious etc. grounds - question is - who decides which organizations and movements are contrary to the policies of the International Union.
2. Article V Conventions: Since representation at the Int'l Convention is by population and Canadian Locals are outnumbered by American ones, it is obvious where balance of power lies. "The International Convention shall be the legitimate source of all authority and final court of appeal." Conventions held only every three years.
3. Article VI Representation at Conventions; Section 7: "All officers of the International Union...shall be eligible for election to any office in the International Union..." Compare with AUCE Provincial Constitution Section 8, Subsection B - limiting full time paid officers to two consecutive years to prevent ossification of the same people in paid positions.
4. Article VI, Section 8: All committees at the International Convention appointed by the Int'l President. Compare to AUCE Provincial Constitution Sections 13 & 14d - committee members are elected by Locals or representatives at the Convention.
5. Article VII Convention Fund, Section 2: The Int'l President alone is the one who decides how much a convention city host local union receives for hosting the convention.
6. Article VIII: Officers of the International Union: The members at large on the International Executive Board are the 13 Vice-Presidents who are elected by region. Thus there is no direct representation of each of the locals on the Executive Board as is stipulated by the AUCE Provincial Constitution.
7. Article IX Election of Officers, Section 1: Table Officers are elected at the International Convention. Compare to AUCE Provincial Constitution Section 8 - nominations occur at the Provincial Convention but the elections are by referendum ballot of all Association members.
8. Article X Duties of the International President, Section 1: "to interpret the laws". Section 2: residual power - President has all powers not specifically designated to others. Section 5: President's approval required for all extraordinary expenses of the International Union, and (Section 7) for all constitutions and bylaws of local unions - compare with AUCE Provincial Constitution Section 20 - bylaws of local associations are presented to the entire Provincial Executive for approval.
9. Section 11: President has power to put a local union under trusteeship and seize books, funds etc, with only the approval of a local's executive board. Such action could thus occur against the wishes of the local's membership.
10. Article XIII: Vice-Presidents perform such duties as determined and assigned to them by the International President and Executive Board. Thus they are responsible to those above them, not the membership of the locals in the region they represent.
11. Article XIII Duties of Executive Board, Section 11: The International Executive Board controls the granting of strike benefits.

12. Article XIII, Section 13: Vacancies in the office of any Vice-President are filled by an appointment made by the Executive Board. Compare to AUCE Provincial Constitution, Section 7, Subsection A - the Members at Large on the Provincial Executive and alternates are elected at the same time by locals. Thus the representatives of locals are always ones elected by the locals' memberships.
13. Article XIV Discipline, Section 1: International Executive Board has broad disciplinary powers including right to discipline members "for engaging in any activity or course of conduct" they deem to be contrary to the welfare of the Int'l Union. Section 2a: The International Executive Board specifies time and place of hearing. Section 2b: The Executive Board appoints the hearing officer or committee. Section 2d: The President has the power to suspend any officer or member of any local union.
14. Article XIV, Section 2f: In the event that the President suspends a Local and places it under trusteeship, he selects time and place for the hearing and he appoints the hearing officer or committee.
15. Article XVIII Local Unions, Section 9: Special Assessments agreed upon by secret ballot vote of a local's membership must also have the approval of the International President.
16. Article XIX Strikes, Section 1: After a local's membership has decided through secret ballot vote to strike, they must then have their proposed strike approved by the International President before it can take place.

Absent from OPEIU Constitution:

1. Any procedures for allowing union membership to recall International Officers.
2. Any procedures for allowing local unions to break away from OPEIU to form an independent organization or to join another union and to take with them their books, records, funds etc.