

Polish Students' Association at the University of Toronto



The Constitution:

Article I: Name of Organization

- 1.1 The official name of the organization is the Polish Students' Association at the University of Toronto.
- 1.2 The Polish Students' Association may be referred to by the acronym PSA.

Article II: Language

- 2.1 The official languages of the organization shall be both Polish and English.

Article III: Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the organization will be to:
 - 3.1.1 Serve as the official organization of the Polish student body at the University of Toronto;
 - 3.1.2 Provide means for interaction among various generations of Polish Canadians and individuals of non-Polish descent in the University of Toronto community interested in Polish culture;
 - 3.1.3 Promote Polish culture and heritage among Polish-Canadians on campus for students through social, cultural and academic events;
 - 3.1.5 Provide an opportunity for its members to learn the Polish language;
 - 3.1.6 Assist Polish students who have newly arrived at the University;
 - 3.1.7 Initiate and promote relations between other organized Polish students in other universities and institutions of higher learning in Canada and internationally;

3.1.8 Promote the benefits of higher education within the Polish community.

3.2 The official statement on social medias and other platforms will be:

3.2.1 The Polish Students' Association at the University of Toronto is a student-run club designed to promote Polish culture; to carry on social and cultural activities; to provide an opportunity for its members to learn the Polish language, and to provide a means for interaction among various generations of individuals interested in Polish culture in the UofT community

3.3 The organization fundamentally serves a non-profit function within the University of Toronto, and will not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.

3.4 The organization operates as an independent entity working within the University of Toronto community subject to the values and policies of the University.

Article IV: Membership

4.1 Membership in the organization is open to all students, staff, faculty, alumni, and other members of the University of Toronto community.

4.2 The term of membership for the organization will be from September 1 - August 31 each year.

4.3 Each member shall be afforded the following rights through membership in the organization:

4.3.1 The right to participate and vote in group elections and meetings;

4.3.2 The right to communicate and to discuss and explore all ideas pertaining to the PSA;

4.3.3 The right to organize/engage in activities/events that are reasonable and lawful;

4.3.4 The right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion or sexual orientation;

4.3.5 The right to be free from censorship, control, or interference by the University on the basis of the organization's philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal or which infringe on the rights and freedoms already mentioned above;

4.3.6 The right to distribute on campus, in a responsible way, published material provided that it is not unlawful;

4.4 Each member shall possess the following responsibilities relative to participation in the organization:

4.4.1 Support the purpose of the organization;

4.4.2 Uphold the values of the organization;

4.4.3 Contribute constructively to the programs and activities offered by the organization

4.4.4 Attend general meetings;

4.4.5 Abide by the constitution and subsequent official organizational documents;

4.4.6 Respect the rights of peers and fellow members

4.4.7 Abide by the Laws of the Land, including but not limited to the Criminal Code of Canada

4.5 The organization may collect a mandatory membership fee from each member each year. This fee will be proposed as part of the operating budget presenting to general members for approval at a valid meeting.

4.6 The organization values and respects the personal information of its members. PSA secures its member's information at all times and will not supply names or other confidential information to third-parties.

4.7 The organization will protect the privacy of member information and must use it only for the delivery of service and not for commercial gain.

Article V: Executive Council

5.1 The executives of the organization shall be comprised of five members. Any registered member of the organization has the right to be nominated for the Executive Council. All members of the Executive Council shall be eligible for re-election.

5.2 The executives of the organization shall include President(s), Vice President(s), Vice President Communications, Treasurer and Secretary General.

5.3 The responsibilities of each executive position are as follows:

5.3.1 The President is the official spokesperson of the organization and provides direction for all components of the organization in a manner consistent with the organization's constitution and policies.

5.3.2 The Vice-President shall co-chair all executive meetings, planned events and projects, and oversee the management of the organization alongside the President. The Vice President shall work alongside the President, ensuring that the organization was run in an efficient manner.

5.3.3 The Vice - President Communications oversees all of the organization's communication channels. This includes the club's social media accounts and mailing platforms. The Vice-President Communication is responsible for creating and executing marketing plans in which the holder is also responsible for content creation.

5.3.4 Treasurer oversees the organization's finances and is in charge of developing and enhancing a sustainable fiscal budget. Shall keep receipts and complete financial records for all financial transactions of the organization.

5.3.5 The Secretary General is responsible for informing and assisting the President in the current business of the organization, keeping all official documents of the organization, and recording the minutes at all general assemblies of the organization and meetings of the executive. Will also maintain the office.

Article VI: Directors

6.1 Any registered member of the organization has the right to be nominated for a Director position. The Directors are responsible for assisting the Executive Council in the running of day to day activities of the organization. They act as either directors or representatives. All elected Directors shall be eligible for re-election.

6.2 The Directors of the organization shall include: Events Coordinator, Membership Engagement Officer, Cultural Affairs Officer, and Webmaster.

6.3 The responsibilities of each position are as follows:

6.3.1 Events Coordinator is responsible for assisting with planning and executing events. This includes booking potential event venues and organizing event activities.

6.3.2 Membership Engagement Officer is responsible for engaging with members of the club and non-members to entice them to part take in the club's events. This Officer shall work closely with the Vice-President of Communications.

6.3.3 Cultural Affairs Officer is responsible for promoting Polish culture to the organization's members through events and is responsible for promoting Polish culture to the University of Toronto on behalf of the organization.

6.3.4 Webmaster is responsible for managing the club's website.

6.4 Additional Representative positions shall be filled on an ad-hoc basis. These positions may include: Alumni Representative, First-Year Representative, Ryerson University Representative, University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) Representative, University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) Representative and York University Representative.

6.5 The responsibilities of any representative position are as follows:

6.5.1 A representative is responsible for involving their respective community members to the organization and promoting events to respective community members.

6.6. The Board of Directors may create any Representative position they deem necessary for that academic year.

6.6.1 Creating a new Representative position requires full approval (100%) of the Executive Council present at a valid executive meeting.

6.7 If need be, the removal process for Directors or Representatives shall be followed in the outlined process of Article VII.

6.8 The Board of Director elections shall occur at the beginning of the fall semester. Any registered members may be nominated for a position. The nominees must give a short speech at the meeting and participate in a question/answer period that follows. Voting will take place right after the question and answer period. Two (2) Returning Officers will process the ballots and the successful candidates will be announced at the meeting.

6.8.1 Upon approval of the Executive Council, nominees may be appointed to the relevant Director positions.

6.9 Directors are considered members of the executive council at executive meetings and general meetings.

Article VII: Removal of Members and Executives

7.1 The process for removing a member or executive may be initiated when a committee of no less than three (3) non-executive general members and two (2) executive appointed by the general membership to investigate a complaint determines that:

7.1.1 A member or executive has engaged in unlawful actions or activities;

7.1.2 A member or executive has violated the constitution;

7.1.3 A member or executive has violated University of Toronto policies, procedures, or guidelines;

7.1.4 A member or executive has violated the rights of a fellow member;

7.1.5 A member or executive has not fulfilled their organizational responsibilities;

7.1.6 Other criteria deemed to be appropriate by the Executive Committee in consultation with and approved by a majority of the general membership.

7.2 The process for removing a member or executive may also be initiated when:

7.2.1 A motion for a removal vote is put forward by any member of the executive and passed by a two-thirds majority vote of the executives. The individual facing potential removal vote is entitled to vote on the motion if they are an executive or be given an opportunity to explain themselves if they are a non-executive general member.

7.3 The removal of members and executives will be facilitated by a three tier procedure which operates as follows:

7.3.1 First Tier: The executive or member will be warned both verbally and in writing that their behavior constitutes grounds for removal from the organization and that it should cease effective immediately.

7.3.2 Second Tier: Initiated because the member or executive has violated section 5.1 after receiving a first tier warning relative to a particular action or behavior. The Vice President Communications will be responsible for contacting the executive or member and facilitating training or suggesting best practices on how to correct the issues of concern.

The Vice President Communications must address all complaints in writing by formulating an action plan and timeline to correct any issues involving executives or members within fourteen (14) calendar days. The executive or member accused of violating section 7.1 will be given fourteen (14) calendar days from receiving the Vice President Human Resources' written response to demonstrate progress or correction of behavior.

7.3.3 Third tier: Initiated because the member or executive has violated section 7.1 after receiving second tier warning relative to a particular action or behavior. The removal vote must take place at a valid general meeting of the membership. A representative supporting the motion for removal and the executive or member facing removal (or an individual they designate), may speak for up to five minutes each. The removal of an executive or member requires a 2/3 majority vote of all of the members of the executive present at a valid executive meeting. The executive or member facing removal is entitled to vote on the motion.

Article VIII: Finances

8.1 The funds of the organization shall be expended pursuant to the operating budget approved by the Executive Council at a valid general meeting.

8.2 Budgets shall be prepared by the Treasurer in accordance with the organization's priorities as determined by the Executive Council in consultation at a valid general meeting.

8.3 The Treasurer shall present a proposed operating budget for the next fiscal year to the Executive Council for its consideration at the final executive meeting.

8.4 The Treasurer may not approve any unbudgeted expenditure of the organization's funds above \$250.00 without the approval of the Executive Council at a valid executive meeting.

8.5 The operating budget shall be the major budget for the fiscal year and provide for all expenditures of the organization for the subsequent year.

8.6 The operating budget shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Council present and voting at a valid executive meeting.

8.7 The banking business of the organization, or any part thereof, shall be transacted with such bank, trust company or other firm or body corporate as the Executive Council may designate, appoint or authorize from time to time and all such banking business, or any part thereof, shall be transacted on the organization's behalf by one or more Officers or other persons as the Executive may designate, direct or authorize from time to time and to the extent thereby provided.

8.8 The President and the Treasurer shall be the sole signing authorities of banking instruments for the organization.

8.9 The organization will ensure that proper and accurate financial records are maintained and passed on to incoming executives following each year's elections.

8.10 The organization will accept full financial and production responsibility for all activities it sponsors, plans, or executes.

Article IX: General Meetings

9.1 The purpose of General Meetings is to provide a forum for executives to overview the activities of the organization and solicit feedback from members, to engage in policy-making, to propose amendments to the constitution, and to report on the financial status of the organization.

9.2 General meetings are open to registered members of the organization only. Quorum will first be established by the presence of a simple and clear majority of the executives.

9.3 Minutes of all general meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes.

9.4 Any questions at a valid general meeting shall be decided by a show of hands.

9.5 There shall be at least (2) general meeting of the organization per academic year.

9.6 The conduct rules of the general meetings will be set at the beginning of each general meeting.

9.7 All members of the organization shall be given a minimum forty-eight (48) hours' notice prior to a general meeting.

Article X: Executive Meetings

10.1 The purpose of executive meetings is to provide a forum for the organization's executives to discuss and make decisions on day-to-day matters affecting the organization.

10.2 Executive meetings will be facilitated by the President of the organization. The President shall be responsible for:

- 10.2.1 Formulating and distributing an agenda for each meeting;
- 10.2.2 Ensuring appropriate conduct and leading the meeting in an efficient, reasonable manner;
- 10.2.3 Moderating the discussion at meetings according to the agenda;

10.3 There shall be a minimum of one (1) executive meeting held every month during the period September 1 to April 30. The date of each subsequent executive meeting will be confirmed at the preceding meeting and will be reiterated to executives in writing a minimum of two (2) calendar days prior to the meeting.

10.3.1 More frequent meetings are recommended as needed

10.4 The frequency of executive meetings occurring between May 1 and August 31 will be left to the discretion of the Executive Council.

10.5 Executive meetings may be called to order by the President or through a petition signed by three (3) executive members.

10.6 Executive meetings are restricted to executive members only. Quorum will be established by the presence of a simple and clear majority of the total executives for the organization.

10.7 Minutes of all executive meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes.

10.8 Each executive member of the organization shall be entitled to one (1) vote at a valid executive meeting.

10.9 Any question at an executive meeting shall be decided by a show of hands.

10.10 Whenever a vote by show of hands occurs, a declaration by the President that the vote has been carried, carried by a particular majority, or failed shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

10.11 In case of an equality of votes at an Executive Meeting, the motion will be recorded as having failed.

10.12 The President may, with the consent of the majority of executives, decide to adjourn these meetings from time to time.

10.13 Any member of the Executive Council may call an emergency meeting of the Executive Council if the need arises.

10.14.1 Conduct of emergency meetings shall be similar to regular executive meetings

Article XI: Elections

11.1 Executive elections will be held prior to March 31 each year.

11.2 Only student members who meet the minimum qualifications to hold an executive position shall be permitted to participate in an election and hold executive positions.

11.3 The Presidency of the organization shall only be held by a candidate who has previously held a position in good standing.

11.4 Members that register on or after the first academic day after the University of Toronto's scheduled reading week will not be granted voting rights for the executive election.

11.5 Notification of the acceptance of applications for executive positions will be sent via email or message to all general members a minimum of twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the election date.

11.6 The application period must end a minimum of seven (7) days prior to election date.

11.7 Candidates will be permitted to give a short speech at the general meeting where the election is being held. Each speech will be followed by a short question and answer period. The length of each speech and the question/answer period will be left to the discretion of the Executive Council.

11.8 Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot, and overseen by the current President.

11.9 Successful candidates will be determined by accrual of the most number of votes tallied from amongst the general membership.

11.9.1 Should a tie take place then the Executive Council can take two courses of action, which must be agreed upon by the current Executive Council

11.9.1.1 The two candidates can both obtain the role, receiving the title of Co -

11.9.1.2 One the the candidates can run for a different position

11.10 Final results of the election must be presented to the membership for ratification of the process only. The results themselves should not be brought into question; only the process through which these results were tabulated.

11.11 If an error in the process is found, the election should be re-held at the final general meeting with a new election oversight committee.

11.12 Candidates who run for a position unopposed must receive a simple and clear majority of the total eligible votes at a valid general meeting in which an election is held to be declared the winner of that election.

11.13 All executive positions may be left vacant if there is no candidate for the position, except President.

11.14 If a by-election is required, it shall be held as soon as possible and conducted in a manner similar to that of the annual general election.

Article XII: Amendments

12.1 The organization may make, amend or repeal the constitution or certain sections therein.

12.2 Notice of a meeting called to consider such a resolution shall be given as follows:

12.2.1 Notice of the full text of the proposed constitutional amendment shall be given to each member at least five (5) days prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the change;

12.2.2 A list of proposed amendments shall be given to each member at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the date of the meeting being called to consider the change.

12.3 Amendments to the constitution require the approval of three-fifths of the members present at a valid executive or general meeting (a meeting that has achieved quorum).

12.4 Amendments to the constitution require full approval (100%) of the Executive Council and the Directors present at a valid executive meeting.

12.5 The general membership will be presented with the proposed amendments.

Article XIII: Transition

13.1 All outgoing executives are required to transfer all organizational resources used relative to a particular role over the course of the preceding year to new executives upon leaving the position.

13.2 All outgoing executives are responsible for providing a detailed report to incoming executives that stipulates the status of ongoing projects in their portfolio and evaluations of previous projects and programs that they lead.

13.3 All outgoing and incoming executives will participate in a joint training session occurring no later than the end of May each year to assist with the transition between new executive teams.

Article XIV: Emergency Powers

14.1 In the case of extenuating circumstances, the Executive Council shall be afforded the ability to act without direction from the organization's members.

14.2 An extenuating circumstance is defined as any instance that may jeopardize the immediate functioning of the organization including but not limited to: executive vacancies, unexpected cancellations, removal from position, or lack of response from members.

14.3 Emergency powers may only be used for such a period of time as is needed to address an extenuating circumstance.

14.4 General members have the ability to remove emergency powers where appropriate through submission of a signed petition from at least 20% of the entire general membership.

Article XV: Food Handling on Campus

15.1 The organization will conform to Provincial and Municipal Health Regulations when events which include the sale and/or service of food products are held on campus

Article XVI: Precedence of University Policies

16.1 The organization will abide by all pertinent University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines. Where the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines conflict with those of the organization, the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines will take precedent.

Article XVII: Legal Liability

17.1 The University of Toronto does not endorse the organization's beliefs or philosophy nor does it assume legal liability for the group's activities on or off campus.

Article XVIII: Banking

18.1 The organization agrees to provide the name of the bank, the branch number and address, transit number, bank account number, and a list of all signing officers for all bank accounts opened in the organization's name to the Department of Student Life, University of Toronto.

This edition of the Constitution for the Polish Students' Association at the University of Toronto was re-ratified by its Executive Council on October 10th, 2020 at 11:30 EST.