

Physics Student Union (PhySU) Constitution

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1 General

1.1 Name

The name of this organization shall be *Physics Student Union*, abbreviated PhySU.

1.2 Constitution

As a substructure of the Arts and Science Students' Union (ASSU), PhySU adopts the ASSU constitution in addition to the articles listed in this document.

1.3 Membership

Members of PhySU include all full-time undergraduate students on the University of Toronto St. George campus registered in a physics (PHY) course and any full time student with a Subject POST in physics.

1.4 Rights

All members of PhySU have the right to

- Participate in any event held by PhySU
- Vote in any election or referendum held by PhySU
- Voice their ideas to the executive team
- Volunteer to help organize and run events

Only executive officers hold voting privileges during PhySU executive meetings.

1.5 Lounge and Office

The PhySU lounge is located at MP217 and the PhySU office is MP217C.

2 Selection of Executive Officers

2.1 Modes of Selection

All executive officers shall be selected through election. All executive officers, with the exception of the First Year Representative, shall be elected at the end of year elections in April. The First Year Representative shall be elected at the First Year Representative elections in September. Supplementary elections may be called at the discretion of the President, in the case of vacant executive officer seats.

2.2 Electorate

All members of PhySU are eligible to vote in elections.

2.3 Eligibility

Any PhySU member may be a candidate for an officer position under the following conditions:

1. No member may hold more than one officer position concurrently
2. Members may run and apply for as many officer positions as they choose upon completion of the required nomination form
3. Only members in their first year of study, or members enrolled in a first year physics course, may run for the VP First Year Representative

2.4 Nomination Period

The end of year election must be preceded by a nomination period no less than two weeks, and the First Year Representative election must be preceded by a nomination period of no less than one week. The nomination period for supplementary elections may be decided at the discretion of the President. Candidates must complete a self-nomination form which outlines a written agreement to adhere to the duties of a PhySU Executive member, if elected. The self-nomination form is to be signed by three (3) members of the PhySU constituency and submitted in the PhySU lounge, with the exception of the VP First Year Representative.

2.5 Campaigning

Candidates may begin campaigning following commencement of the nomination period. Candidates may only campaign for themselves, and may not endorse any other candidate, or otherwise form a joint campaign. Executive and outreach officers are similarly not allowed to endorse any candidate. Candidates who are incumbent executive or outreach officers are not allowed to use privileges granted by their positions in their campaigning.

2.6 Election Procedure

2.6.1 End of term election

The end of term election is an annual election, held at the end of each academic year, to elect the President, Treasurer, and Vice Presidents (with the exception of the First Year Representative).

The positions will be elected in the following order: President, Treasurer, Vice President. The seven vacant Vice President positions are elected simultaneously, without specification to their Vice President position. The Vice President positions shall be decided internally following the end of term elections.

Unsuccessful candidates to the President and Treasurer positions may run for other executive officer positions in the same election cycle.

2.6.2 First Year Representative election

The First Year Representative election is held at the beginning of the Fall term of each academic year to elect the First Year Representative.

2.6.3 Supplementary election

Supplementary elections are called at the discretion of the President to fill any vacant executive officer spots that may arise during the academic year.

2.6.4 General Procedure

All elections must be conducted in person by secret ballot. Each member may submit up to one ballot, and every ballot counts equally. Electorates must demonstrate proof of PhySU membership before submitting their ballot, by presenting their subject POST, or timetable, from ACORN, for the current academic year.

The default voting system is single-choice voting. Members may vote for exactly one candidate, and the candidate who receives the greatest number of votes is elected.

In the election of Vice Presidents at the end of year elections, members may vote for up to six candidates, the number of available Vice President seats.

In the case of a tie, the vote is repeated, with only the tied candidates on the ballot.

Proxies are allowed. Members must appear in person to vote.

If the executive team wishes, they may adopt an alternate voting system, such as ranked ballots, for their elections.

2.7 Vacant seats

Should seats for executive officers become vacant in the course of the academic year, the President may hold a supplementary election to elect a new executive officer. Specifically, in the case that the First Year Representative is not enrolled in PHY151/152 or PHY131/132, a supplementary election will be held to elect a new First Year Representative.

Alternatively, the President has the prerogative to create an ad hoc committee of at least three executive officers to fill the vacant seat via application, none of whom have conflicts of interest in the decision making process. The President need not sit on the ad hoc committee.

If the seat of President becomes vacant, the remaining executive officers shall hold a supplementary election for the election of the President.

3 Executive Officers

3.1 Term

The term of all executive officers, with the exception of the VP First Year Representative, begins at the start of the summer term following the elections. The term of VP First Year Representative begins immediately after the First Year Representative elections. The term of outreach officers begins immediately after their appointment. The term for all officers conclude at the end of the academic year.

3.2 Eligibility

All officers must satisfy the membership criteria of PhySU for the length of their term in office.

3.3 Positions and duties

The executive officers of this student union shall consist of the following:

- President
- Treasurer
- Seven (7) Vice Presidents
 - VP Secretary
 - VP Communications
 - VP Academic Affairs
 - VP Internal and External Affairs
 - VP Social Events
 - VP Asset Management
 - VP First Year Representative

3.3.1 President

It shall be the duty of the President to:

- Foster a welcoming community to all members of the constituency
- Guarantee the ability for all members of the constituency to voice their thoughts and concerns
- Act as a liaison between the undergraduate student body and the physics department
- Preside at executive and general meetings
- Coordinate PhySU event programming with the executive officers
- Be familiar with PhySU and ASSU constitution and protocol, and ensure that all requirements are fulfilled in a timely manner
- Attend ASSU budget meetings with the Treasurer

- Ensure continued maintenance and upkeep of the PhySU lounge
- Ensure a smooth transfer of knowledge to future executive teams.

3.3.2 Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to:

- Oversee financial transactions of PhySU, which include the following tasks:
 - Complete ASSU term budget with the President in a timely manner
 - Submit special funding grants to ASSU, if necessary
 - Ensure that funds are properly spent and the budget is not exceeded
 - Keep an itemized account of all receipts and expenditures of the semester
 - Issue reimbursement of purchases within 14 days of their submission
 - Complete paperwork for banking
- Attend ASSU budget meetings with the President
- Deposit cash monthly
- Track revenues, such as those made from selling drinks and snacks, to ensure money is not lost
- Keep an organized and complete record of the financial position of PhySU, and that the money and any sensitive information is securely stored
- Provide an updated record of financial position at monthly executive meetings to be forwarded to President and VP Secretary prior to meeting
- Publicize an official record of transactions on PhySU Facebook Page to increase transparency to constituency, if necessary
- Advise the executive committee on financial decisions and expenditure

3.3.3 VP Secretary

It shall be the duty of the VP Secretary to:

- Take minutes at executive and general meetings
- Send meeting minutes to all executive officers upon conclusion of meetings
- Schedule meetings and ensure that event programming happens in a timely manner
- Schedule weekly office hours in the PhySU lounge for each executive officer

- Maintain the organization of information used by the executive committee, including the PhySU Slack workspace and Google drive
- Maintain the calendar and newsboard in the PhySU lounge with up-to-date information
- Ensure the smooth transfer of information to the following executive team

3.3.4 VP Communications

It shall be the duty of VP communications to:

- Manage day-to-day communication between the executive committee, the physics department, and the constituency through email
- Manage the PhySU email, checking it on a regular basis
- Manage PhySU's online presence on UofT sites, including the listing on ULife and physics department page
- Coordinate social media presence (including Facebook and Instagram) with VP Social Events
- Oversee marketing for events programming, and engaging constituency with other relevant information and resources
- Ensure that communications at large are done in a timely manner

3.3.5 VP Academic Affairs

It shall be the duty of the VP academic affairs to:

- Organize academic seminars
- Organize study sessions for courses, such as before midterms and exams, as needed
- Organize other event programming relevant to academic pursuits, such as a research information session, or \LaTeX and Python tutorials
- Be aware of relevant academic events and opportunities, such as the weekly physics colloquia, the physics mentorship program, CUPC (Canadian Undergraduate Physics Conference), Canadian Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CCUWiP) and ensuring that information is shared with the constituency
- Maintain the bookshelf in PhySU, ensuring that the selection of books remains relevant to the constituency. Moreover, addition and removal of books must be implemented as a decision with the executive team

3.3.6 VP Internal and External Affairs

It shall be the duty of the VP internal and external affairs to:

- Maintain the overall cleanliness and general upkeep of the PhySU lounge
- Contact the physics department and UofT facilities as needed, such as with electrical issues or other repairs within PhySU
- Take a leading role in PhySU involvement directed outside of the constituency, such as clubs fair during Frosh, and liquid nitrogen ice cream events
- Assist in event programming with other executive officers.
- Act as a liaison between PhySU and the Astronomy Student Union (AU). Note: VP Internal and External Affairs does not need to attend AU executive meetings.
- Engage the astronomy undergraduate body in PhySU events, including by marketing in a timely manner, online, in the physics and astronomy buildings, and in classes.
- Pursue potential collaborations with other student unions and organizations

3.3.7 VP Social Events

It shall be the duty of the VP social events to:

- Organize general social events, such as movie nights and games nights
- Organize larger scale social events, such as a Halloween/Christmas party, secret Santa, depending on interest
- Coordinate social media presence (including Facebook and Instagram) with VP Communications
- Market social events in a timely manner

3.3.8 VP Asset Management

It shall be the duty of the VP asset management to:

- Keeping continuous track of drinks and snacks that are sold in PhySU in an inventory system
- Ensure a continuous, consistent supply of drinks, snacks, and office supplies (eg. chalk and markers), both for sale and general use
- Maintain printer, speakers, gaming system, and other electronic devices.

- Maintain and ensure the general upkeep of games and entertainment within PhySU, including the video game console, foosball table, and board games
- Organize fundraising events, by surveying students for potential interest in merchandise, like hoodies
- Ensure the office is secured
- Keep an inventory of items in PhySU

3.3.9 VP First Year Representative

It shall be the duty of the VP First Year Representative to:

- Be enrolled in PHY151/152 or PHY131/132
- Act as a liaison for first year undergraduate students to ease the transition from high school to first year
- Engage the first year members in the physics community, informing them of PhySU events and other relevant events/opportunities
- Organize first year study sessions at least once per semester
- Facilitate event programming that are relevant for first years, such as lab tours and research information sessions in conjunction with VP Academic Affairs.

3.3.10 General Duties

In addition to the specific duties assigned for each position, it shall be the duty of all executives to:

- Ensure continued maintenance and upkeep of the PhySU lounge.
- Know and be familiar with the PhySU and ASSU constitution
- Ensure a welcoming environment in the PhySU lounge
- Attend PhySU executive and general meetings
- Attend PhySU academic and social events
- Hold separate one-hour office hours per executive officer in the PhySU lounge on a weekly basis
- Make decisions in the best interests of the constituency at large
- Assist in marketing of PhySU event programming
- Be active in communications between executive members, and respond to internal communications within 48 hours

- Read the constitution at the first executive meeting to ensure awareness of duties as an executive member
- Protect the property of PhysU. In particular, executives must:
 - Not lend the PhysU key to non-PhysU executives
 - Not allow a non-executive officer in the office unattended
 - Return the PhysU key at the end of their term

Each executive officer is responsible for the completion of the tasks listed for their seat, and under general duties. If unable to fulfill the duties assigned, each executive officer shall be responsible for finding another officer that can fulfill the duties.

Failure to meet obligations is grounds for removal from office as described in section 7.

3.3.11 Office Hours

Each executive officer must hold an office hour on a weekly basis in the PhysU lounge. During this office hour, members of the constituency are encouraged to bring questions or concerns regarding PhysU to the attention of the executive officer.

It is the duty of VP Secretary to organize an office hour schedule for all executive officers and to advertise this schedule on the Facebook page and in the PhysU Lounge. The schedule must be finalized by the end of the first month of each semester.

3.3.12 Equity Training

Each executive officer must complete one ULead workshop under Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion by the end of October of their presiding year. It is the duty of the President to ensure that all executive officers have fulfilled their equity training. Failure to complete training will result in a temporary probation period for the executive officer until training is completed. During this probation period, the executive officer's duties will be redistributed among the other executive officers in accordance with section 2.7.

4 Meetings

4.1 General meetings

General meetings are open to any member of the constituency, and may be called at the discretion of the President. These may serve to inform the constituency of event programming and other agenda decided by the executive team, and gain feedback from the constituency.

They may also be called in order to vote on certain items, such as a new constitution.

4.2 Executive meetings

Meetings are to be held monthly through the year. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the President.

4.2.1 Decisions

Decisions are made by vote. All executives receive one vote, with each vote counting equally. Decisions may be simple majority, or require a supermajority to pass, at the discretion of the President. The President holds the tie-breaking vote.

The President may veto decisions made if they deem it to be contrary to the interests of the constituency of PhysU. This is *not to be used frivolously*, and should only be invoked in significant decisions, such as large expenditures. The Treasurer may also veto significant decisions of a financial nature.

If no consensus can be reached, a general meeting shall be held, and the decision voted on by the constituency.

5 Referenda

For significant decisions affecting a large percentage of the constituency, a referendum may be called at the discretion of the executive committee. The decision in question must be announced to the constituency at least one week in advance, and have a voting period of at least 48 hours. Each member receives one vote, and each vote counts equally.

6 Outreach Committee

6.1 Overview and scope

The Outreach Committee has three primary goals:

1. to promote physics and the programs offered at U of T to high school students
2. to assist the physics department in their outreach programming
3. to encourage girls in entering STEM fields

6.2 Selection process

The Outreach Committee shall be appointed through an application process, by an ad hoc committee of three individuals. They shall consist of the President, the incumbent outreach chair, and another executive or outreach officer mutually agreed upon by the President and outreach chair.

In the case of a conflict of interest (eg. the outreach chair is running for outreach chair a second time), they may recuse themselves from the selection procedure (either fully or partially), or another individual may be added to the ad hoc committee to facilitate the selection process.

The selection is held at the end of each academic year, and seats are held from the start of the summer following the appointment until the end of the next academic year. The Outreach Committee for the following year must be decided prior to the end of year elections. This is to prevent the Outreach Committee from being used as a “fallback” position.

6.3 Duties

Execute programming conducive to the three stated goals of the Outreach Committee. The committee shall meet at least monthly, at the discretion of the outreach chair.

The outreach chair is responsible for liaising with the executive committee on outreach programming. Objectives include ensuring that the constituency is aware of relevant outreach programming, that calls for volunteers are well publicized, and that the executive and Outreach Committee may assist with each others’ programming at their discretion.

6.4 Finances

Since the programming and scope of outreach does not necessarily affect the constituency directly, the executive committee is not obligated to provide funding to the Outreach Committee.

6.5 Removal

In the case that an outreach officer is deemed to have acted in violation to the PhysSU or ASSU constitution, or acted contrary to the best interests of the goals of outreach, any member of outreach may motion for impeachment.

The accuser shall need to motivate, and the accused given an opportunity to defend themselves. The President and Outreach Committee, excluding the accused, shall then come to an arbitration.

7 Removal from Office

7.1 Impeachment

In the case that an executive officer is deemed to have acted in violation of the PhysSU or ASSU constitution, or to have acted contrary to the best interests of the constituency in a significant manner, any executive officer

may motion for impeachment. The motion may be put forward anonymously to the President. Impeachment of the President is discussed in paragraph 3 of section 7.2.

7.2 Procedure

In the case of a motion for impeachment, the President must call for an executive meeting within 10 days of the motion. The accuser shall justify their motion, and the accused will be given the opportunity to defend themselves. In the case of an anonymous motion, the President shall speak on behalf of the officer which motioned.

A blind vote shall be held for arbitration. The impeachment motion is successful if at least five executives vote in favour of impeachment. The vote may be carried out on a later date to allow for deliberation, but no longer than 7 days following the initial meeting. Every executive officer, excluding the accused, may vote. Each vote carries equal weight.

In the case of the impeachment of the President, the accuser may call for a meeting themselves. Anonymous motions in this case shall be put forward to the secretary, who will then schedule an executive meeting.

In the case of a successful impeachment, the impeached officer loses all privileges of the executive officer, effective immediately. Their previous position is then vacant, and may be filled at the discretion of the President, or the remaining executive committee.