

Polish Students' Association at the University of Toronto



The Constitution: 2022-2023 Academic Year

Amended on Sep. 5, 2022

Article I: Name and Purpose

- 1.1 The official name of the organization is “The Polish Students’ Association at the University of Toronto.”
- 1.2 The official acronym or abbreviation of the group is “PSA.”
- 1.3 The purpose, objectives, mission and/or mandate of the organization is to:
 - a) Serve as the official organization of the Polish student body at the University of Toronto.
 - b) 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.
 - c) Promote Polish culture and heritage among Polish-Canadians on campus for students through social, cultural and academic events.
 - d) Provide an opportunity for its members to learn the Polish language.
 - e) Assist Polish students who have newly arrived at the University.
 - f) Initiate and promote relations between other organized Polish students’ associations in other universities both domestically and internationally
 - g) Promote the benefits of higher education within the Polish community.
- 1.4 The organization operates as a non-political, independent entity working with the University of Toronto.

Article II: Language

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

Article III: Membership and Membership Fee

3.1 The group shall maintain a list of group members.

3.2 Voting membership is open to all registered students at the University of Toronto.

3.3 Voting membership is open only to registered students at the University of Toronto.

3.4 Non-voting membership is open to University of Toronto staff, faculty, alumni, and to persons from outside the University. Unless otherwise stated, non-voting members do not hold any rights awarded to voting members.

3.5 The membership fee will be \$5 per year.

Article IV: Rights of Members

4.1 All members may apply for a full refund of their membership fee within one (1) month of becoming a member.

4.2 All voting members have a right to attend all general meetings of members.

4.3 All voting members have a right to cast votes at all general meetings of members.

4.4 All voting members have a right to stand for election unless otherwise stated in this document.

4.5 All voting members have a right to cast votes in all group elections and referenda.

4.6 All voting members have a right to propose and vote on amendments to this constitution.

4.7 The aforementioned rights prescribed in Article IV are not awarded to non-voting members as described in Article III.

4.8 All members, regardless of their eligibility to vote—

a) have a right to communication, discuss and explore all ideas pertaining to the PSA.

b) have a right to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion or sexual orientation.

c) 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 such activities contradict the statutes of Ontario and/or Canada.

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

a) Support the purpose of the organization.

b) Uphold the values of the organization.

c) Contribute constructively to the programs and activities offered by the organization

d) Attend general meetings.

e) Abide by the constitution and subsequent official organizational documents.

f) Respect the rights of peers and fellow members.

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

4.10 The organization values and respects the personal information of its members. PSA always secures its member's information and will not supply names or other confidential information to third parties.

4.11 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 Committee Composition and Duties

5.1 The President shall:

- a) Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- b) Oversee the operations, management, and success of the group,
- c) Serve as spokesperson for the group,
- d) Hold signing and financial authority along with the Treasurer,
- e) Preside over meetings of the Executive Committee and/or members,
- f) Ensure a transition of office from one year to the next.

5.2 The Vice President shall:

- a) Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- b) Assume duties of the President in their absence,
- c) Ensure activities of the club comply with policies of the University of Toronto,
- d) Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts.

5.3. The Secretary shall:

- a) Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- b) Maintain a list of group members,
- c) Maintain the group website and member contact list,
- d) Record notes and motions for meetings,
- e) Notify all members of general meetings.

5.4. The Treasurer shall:

- a) Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- b) Record all financial transactions of the group,
- c) Hold signing and financial authority along with the President,
- d) Maintain a budget of income and expenses,
- e) Advise members on financial position of the group,
- f) Prepare an annual budget for the group.

Article VI: Directors

6.1 Any registered voting 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:

- a) Events Coordinator is responsible for assisting with planning and executing events. This includes booking potential event venues and organizing event activities.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) 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—

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. The Board of Director elections shall occur at the beginning of the 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. Upon approval of the Executive Council, nominees may be appointed to the relevant Director positions.

Article VII: Elections

7.1 All voting positions on the Executive Committee shall be filled through an annual election.

7.2 All voting group members shall be eligible to seek nomination to and cast a ballot for each voting position.

7.3 All non-voting group members shall be eligible to seek nomination only for non-voting positions on the Executive Committee.

7.4 Non-voting group members shall not be eligible to cast a ballot for any elected position.

7.5 The nominee winning the plurality of votes cast in the election for each position shall be deemed the winner.

7.6 On the condition that multiple candidates are to be elected for a single position, the nominees winning the largest share of the votes cast shall be deemed the winners until all positions are filled.

7.7 The elections must be held in a nonbiased manner. No individual who is seeking election may participate in planning or administering the election.

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

7.9 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.

7.10 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.

7.11 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.

- 7.12 Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot and overseen by the current President. The current President is not able vote unless there is a tie.
- 7.13 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
 - a) The candidates can both obtain the role, receiving the title of Co-
 - b) One of the candidates can run for a different position
- 7.14 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.
- 7.15 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.
- 7.16 All executive positions may be left vacant if there is no candidate for the position, except President.
- 7.17 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 VIII: Finances and Budgets

- 8.1 The Treasurer shall keep an active record of income and expenses.
- 8.2 The Treasurer shall present the group's updates on the group's financial position at annual general meetings.
- 8.3 The Executive Committee must approve all expenditures over \$100.00 through a majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 8.4 PSA may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.
- 8.5 PSA will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus chapter of a commercial organization.
- 8.6 PSA will not provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the group.
- 8.7 PSA will not pay salaries to any of its officers.
- 8.8 The funds of the organization shall be expended pursuant to the operating budget approved by the Executive Council at a valid general meeting.
- 8.9 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.
- 8.10 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.
- 8.11 The operating budget shall be the major budget for the fiscal year and provide for all expenditures of the organization for the subsequent year.
- 8.12 The operating budget shall be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Council present and voting at a valid executive meeting.
- 8.13 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.

8.14 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 policymaking, to propose amendments to the constitution, and to report on the financial status of the organization.

9.2 General meetings are open to registered voting members of PSA only. The quorum for General meetings shall be 50%+1 of the voting members of the Executive Committee.

9.3 For quorum to remain valid, the number of non-executive general members present at a general meeting must exceed the number of executives present at all times.

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

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

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

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

9.8 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 PSA's executives to discuss and make decisions on day-to-day matters affecting PSA.

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

- a) Formulating and distributing an agenda for each meeting.
- b) Ensuring appropriate conduct and leading the meeting in an efficient, reasonable manner;
- c) Moderating the discussion at meetings according to the agenda.

10.3 The Executive Committee shall meet monthly. The quorum for Executive Committee meetings shall be 50%+1 of the voting members of the Executive Committee.

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

10.5 Executive meetings are restricted to executive members only.

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

10.7 The Executive Committee must announce the date of a general meeting to the general membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

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.

Article XI: Termination of Membership

- 11.1 The Executive Committee may revoke the membership of any member of the club who engages in one of the following conducts—
- a) A member or executive that fails to disclose of a significant or continuing conflict of interest.
 - b) A member or executive has engaged in unlawful actions or activities.
 - c) A member or executive that willfully violates the Constitution and/or University of Toronto's policies, procedures, and guidelines
 - d) A member or executive has not fulfilled their organizational responsibilities.
 - e) Other criteria deemed to be appropriate by the Executive Committee in consultation with and approved by a majority of the general membership.
- 11.2 A vote to revoke membership must be held at a meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 11.3 A two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee is required to approve any motion to revoke membership.
- 11.4 Any member facing removal shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Committee to the general membership.
- 11.5 In the case of an appeal, a simple majority vote at a meeting of the general membership shall be required to sustain the revocation of membership.
- 11.6 Following a termination of membership, the member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club.
- 11.7 Executive Committee members are subject to the same termination of membership process as general members.

Article XII: Transition

- 12.1 All outgoing executives are required to transfer all organizational resources used pertinent to a particular role over the course of the preceding year to new executives upon leaving the position.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 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 discretion 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. When there is an inconsistency between the Constitution and the University's bylaws and regulations, the University's written regulations have primacy and will prevail.

Article XVII: Legal Liability

17.1 The University of Toronto does not endorse the organization's beliefs and/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.

Article XXIV: Amendments

19.1 All constitutional amendments shall require a 2/3 majority vote to be passed at a general meeting.

19.2 All voting members may propose and vote on amendments to the constitution.

19.3 The Executive Committee shall submit the revised constitution to staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto within two (2) weeks.

19.4 Amendments to the constitution shall take effect only once the revised constitution has been approved by staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto.

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

a) 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;

b) 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.