

# **Organization of Latin American Students (OLAS) Constitution**

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## **Article I – Definitions**

**Executive Officers:** Members who are elected to executive positions, including: President, Vice President, Director of Finance, Director of Operations, Academic Director, Director of External Affairs, Communications and Media Director, Graphic Designer.

**Appointed Members:** Members who are appointed, including: LAS Liaison, Dance Coordinator, General Council Member, First year Representative.

**Good Standing:** Members are in good standing when they do not have any pending conflicts with OLAS at St. George. Members in good standing are eligible to vote and run for elections, as well in the organization of any event.

**Membership:** Consists of registered University of Toronto Students and any other member of the university community who have completed the membership form. Only registered UofT students can be voting members, non-students have non-voting membership.

**Organization of Latin American Students – St. George:** A student-run cultural organization operating from the University of Toronto, St. George Campus hereinafter referred to as OLAS at St. George.

**University Community:** Includes, but is not limited to, students, staff, faculty and alumni.

## **Article II – Purpose and Objectives**

**2.1** To protect, maintain and advance the interests of its members.

**2.2** To promote Latin American cultural and social exchange to its members with the purpose of embracing the richness of Latin American roots and welcoming individuals of diverse backgrounds.

**2.3** OLAS as an organization will not endorse any political party or candidate running for any government organization.

**2.4** This constitution adheres to the principles and values enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Constitution Act, 1982 and to the policies that affect student groups at the University of Toronto.

**2.5** Conversation Classes (Charlas) – These classes are offered with the purpose of furthering the knowledge of the Spanish, Portuguese, or Native Latin American Languages and culture on campus. Classes are open to all OLAS members free of charge. Classes can either be of a single language, or involve a language exchange, in which speakers of two different languages learn about each other’s respective language and culture.

**2.6** Social nights – Minimum twice per semester, OLAS should host a social night whether in a pub, pool hall, OLAS office, dance club, etc.

**2.7** Athletics – Organize a soccer team to participate in intramurals and athletic tournaments such as the clubs cup and organize occasional pickup soccer.

**2.8** Alternative Funding - Host an event at least once a semester with the objective of getting funds outside of UTSU club funding. Examples of such events are bake sales and social events with ticket sales. In accordance with 2.3 Olas cannot endorse any political organizations, but it can seek sponsorship from private and public organizations.

**2.9** Celebración Navideña - Annual party celebrating Christmas traditions and cuisine from all parts of Latin America

**2.10** Educational Activism - OLAS should participate in educational activism with groups such as Latin American Education Network, Student Connections, and any similar organizations operating locally, nationally, and/or internationally. This may also involve mentorship either within the university or community.

**2.11** Latin American Studies Undergraduate Research Day - In partnership with the LAS program, OLAS should participate in an event in which undergraduate students from all disciplines present original research pertaining to Latin America in an academic forum.

**2.12** Love Down South / Tequila Mucho - Valentine’s Day-themed party including speed dating, auction, raffle, usually collaborative.

**2.13** Latin American Cinema - As often as time permits, OLAS should organize the screening of Latin American film. This is usually done through collaboration with other university or community organizations.

**2.14** Overnight Trip – OLAS can organize one overnight trip per year if time permits. An example is a ski trip to Blue Mountain.

**2.15** Dance Lessons - Minimum once a month, dance lessons in Salsa, Bachata, or another Latin-American dance are to be held for the student community. Background information and context in Latin American culture are to be provided as well.

**2.16** Latin American events - OLAS should be informed and inform members of events in the community that respectfully promote Latin American culture (art exhibits, performances, etc.)

**2.19** Journal - Annual publication of Kawsaxkuna, an academic undergraduate journal within UofT that seeks to explore a range of social, political, economic, and cultural topics from an intersectional and interdisciplinary perspective. OLAS is to support Kawsaxkuna, primarily with promotion and call for submissions. OLAS is required by the constitution of Kawsaxkuna to appoint a representative to their Advisory Board with voting rights, ensuring clear communication between the two parties. This member is usually chosen to be the Academic Director, but may be any Executive Member.

### **Article III – Executive Members**

**4.1** The following positions shall be available by election:

#### **Elections Positions:**

- (a) President
- (b) Vice President
- (c) Director of Finance
- (d) Academic Director
- (e) Director of Operations (3)
- (f) External Affairs Coordinator
- (g) Communications and Media Director
- (h) Graphic Designer

#### **Appointed positions**

- (i) LAS liasson
- (j) Mentorship Program Coordinator
- (k) Dance Coordinator
- (l) First Year Representative
- (m) General Council Members

**4.2** If no member is willing to take any of the positions(s), the remaining officers will share

the duties and responsibilities of the vacant positions until someone can be found to fulfill the positions(s) through a by-election and a majority of 50% + 1

#### **Article IV – Duties of Executive Members**

**5.1** It shall be understood that the priority of all executive officers and members is the interest of the OLAS at St. George and its members as outlined in Article II. Officers may be expected to perform beyond the call of duty and to share duties with other officers for the success of OLAS at St. George.

**5.2** The responsibilities of the President shall encompass but not limited to: (a) Guide and oversee the OLAS at St. George and the other executive members in the best interest of OLAS at St. George and its members.

(b) Call and preside at all OLAS at St. George meetings.

(c) Be the liaison between University authorities, OLAS at St. George and the OLAS Council.

(d) Is held responsible to attend all OLAS at St. George meetings and events, OLAS Council meetings and events and all community outreach events, or to make the appropriate arrangements for a representative to take their place.

(e) Create an annual report, which must be available to the membership and public at the end of the August of each electoral year. The Vice-President and Director of Finance must collaborate in this document.

(f) Must be the primary signing officer for the organization at the University of Toronto level, and secondary signing officer for the organization's finance accounts.

(g) Must inform the Director of Finance as earliest as possible of any monetary transaction made involving the clubs monetary funds.

**5.2** The responsibilities of the Vice President shall encompass but not limited to:

(a) Responsible for membership records

(b) Upon resignation or removal of the President, the Vice-President becomes the interim President. It is the immediate responsibility of the interim President to call a General Meeting and hold elections.

(c) Must aid the President in drawing up an annual report due at the end of August of each active year.

(d) Must be the secondary signing officer for the organization at the University of Toronto administrative level, and has absolutely no access to the organization's financial accounts.

(e) Can call and preside at all OLAS St. George meetings.

(f) Assist the president in maintaining the Constitution.

**5.3** The responsibilities of the Director of Finance shall encompass but are not limited to:

(a) Responsible for recording and maintaining the financial transactions of the

organization, including applying for UTSU funding at the start of each year.

- (b) Drafting a budget, ensuring income covers expenses and that the budget balances at the end of the term.
- (c) Preparing an overview of the budget and financial transactions for every meeting of the executive officers and general meetings.
- (d) Must draw-up an annual financial report due at the end of August or whenever requested for administrative purposes.
- (e) Must inform the President at the earliest convenience of any monetary transactions involving the organization's funds.
- (f) Is the primary signing officer of the organization's finance account.
- (g) Seek out sponsorship from public and private organizations.

**5.4** The responsibilities of the Academic Director shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Organize and promote academic and cultural events within the OLAS at St. George.
- (b) Organize charlas.
- (c) Propose, organize and carry out at least one, preferably more, academic events per semester not including Charlas.
- (d) Be the liaison between academic and cultural aspects within clubs and organizations at the University of Toronto and OLAS at St. George.
- (e) Communicate closely with Kawsaxkuna and LAS department in academic endeavours.

**5.5** The responsibilities of the Director External Affairs shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Liaison between OLAS at St. George and any organization inside or outside of U of T. This includes facebook messages, emails, instagram messages and messages to the website.
  - (b) Informs all relevant executive members of pertaining information.
  - (c) Coordinate advertisements of various events held or endorsed by OLAS. This involves working closely with Events Coordinators to promote events.
  - (d) Is in charge of promoting OLAS at St. George to recruit new OLAS members. This may involve doing class announcements in promoting the club and its events.
- 5.6** The responsibilities of the three Director of Operations, each working closely together, shall encompass but are not limited to:
- (a) Help organize and coordinate events within the OLAS at St. George. This involves booking event spaces, food orders, promotion, and planning.
  - (b) Help coordinate the advertisement of the various events held or endorsed by OLAS at St. George. This involves working closely with the Director of External Affairs Officer.

**5.7** The responsibilities of the Media and Communications Director shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Manage all our social media platforms and websites.
- (b) Regularly check and update our social media platforms. This involves working closely with the Graphic Designer to post posters on time.

- (c) Respond to direct messages promptly. Inform all relevant executive members of pertaining information.
- (d) Draft and send monthly newsletters to members of OLAS at St. George.

**5.8** The responsibilities of the Graphic Designer shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Design event posters and templates for social media by following the same style to create consistency among all posters and designs.
- (b) Provide any artistic recommendation to the events organized by OLAS at St. George.

**5.9** The Latin American Studies Liaison will be appointed by current executive members.

**5.9.1.** Said appointment should be approved by simple majority (50% + 1) by the general council. **5.9.2.** The responsibilities of the Latin American Studies Liaison shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Act as a link to the LAS Department, expressing concerns, issues, and information that the LAS Department might have for the Board of Directors.
- (b) Express the concerns of OLAS to the LAS Department and promote events to the program.
- (c) Express the concerns and aspirations of students in the Latin American Studies Program.
- (d) Have no voting powers.

**5.10** The Mentorship Program Coordinator will be appointed by current executive members. **5.10.1** The responsibilities of the Mentorship Program Coordinator shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Organize, plan, and carry out activities intended to fulfill the goals of the OLAS Mentorship Program:
  - i) The OLAS Mentorship Program is meant to help first-year and second-year U of T students receive support during the transition into university and provide the opportunity to make connections with members of our community, including mentors, who are upper year students.
- (b) Have no voting powers.

**5.11** The Dance Coordinator will be appointed by current executive members. **5.11.1** The responsibilities Dance Team Coordinator shall encompass but are not limited to:

- a) Responsible for managing any and all affairs to do with OLAS dance. This includes lessons before Pub Nights, as well as weekly / monthly lessons held throughout the semester.
- (b) Have no voting powers.

**5.12** The First Year Representative(s) will be appointed by the OLAS executive officers through an application. **5.12.1** The responsibilities of the First Year Representative(s) shall encompass but are not limited to:

- a) Act as a link between OLAS and first year students at U of T.
- b) Work closely with the Director of External Affairs to promote OLAS events and recruit new members, in particular within the first year community.
- (b) Have no voting powers.

**5.13** The General Council Members will be appointed by the OLAS executive officers through an application **5.13.1** The responsibilities of the General Council Members shall encompass but are not limited to:

- (a) Work closely with the executive officers, and assist as required. There are no defined roles for General Council Members. Rather, they are encouraged to assist with any particular aspect they feel strongest about. Examples include organizing the soccer team, or helping with a particular event.
- (b) Have no voting powers.

## **Article V – Selection of Executive Members**

**6.1** A general election will be held every year in April and a second election will be held in September to fill any remaining positions.

**6.2** This election shall be made by an anonymous vote by OLAS at St. George members during a general meeting. The candidate who receives the plurality of the votes cast will be declared the winner. **6.2.1** In the case that there is only one candidate for a position at the time of an election, they must still be approved by a majority of 51%.

**6.3** The exception includes a position other than the President opening at a random time due to resignation or removal. In this case, a by-election will be held if there is more than one willing candidate to fill the position. In the case that there is one willing candidate, the executive council will appoint the candidate President and the members of OLAS at St. George will ratify the appointment by vote. **6.3.1** On the occasion that there is more than one willing candidate general elections will be held at the earliest convenience.

**6.4** To be eligible for an executive position the following rule must apply. Under the University of Toronto student organization policy, nominee must be a registered University of Toronto student.

**6.5** Preferred credentials for the position of President rest on the following criteria of experience: (a) Having held a previous executive position, either as an executive officer or executive member, in a responsible manner, without the threat of impeachment or any other form of removal.

**6.6** Preferred credentials for the position of Vice-President rest on the following criteria of experience: (a) Having held a previous executive position, either as an executive officer or executive member, in a responsible manner, without the threat of impeachment or any other form of removal.

**6.7** Preferred credentials for the position of Director of Finance rest on the following criteria of experience:

(a) Handling money and accounts, or any form of bookkeeping experience.

**6.8** Appointed positions will be chosen through an application process approved by the current executive team. The application process varies according to each position. The selection must be on a 51% majority of the executive members.

**6.90** An Executive member that has been impeached, removed or has resigned can run for any given position only after their eligibility has been evaluated, by the general membership, using as criteria their reasons for leaving and subsequent conduct.

## **Article VII– Term of Office**

**7.1** All Executive Officers shall serve one-year terms commencing in April, after General Elections are held under normal circumstances. In case of by-elections the term commences immediately after elections are held and lasts until the end of the regular term.

**7.2** Once executive officers are elected, they are to share duties with the outgoing executive team in order to learn their positions, until that time when their term commences.

## **Article VIII – Finances**

**8.1** The President and the Director of Finance shall have signing authority over all finances of the OLAS at St. George.

**8.2** All funds remaining in the OLAS at St. George account at the end of term will be carried over to the next term office.



**8.3** Any event which has 30% of its cost covered by participants, and the participants themselves input more than a total of 100\$ should: **8.3.1.** Split the total payment into separate deposits, each at a different point in time before the event. **8.3.2.** Have as a stipulation that once a deposit due date has already passed, all deposits made are non-refundable. **8.3.3.** An exception to the previous article should be a death in the family, unforeseen medical occurrence, etc.**8.3.4.** Any case that does not fall into the above mentioned categories shall be reviewed by the executive. **8.3.5.** Before making a deposit, participants of the event must be told that the deposit is non-refundable.

## **Article IX – Arbitration and Settlement of Disputes**

**9.1** In case of disputes affecting the functionality of the group, behavioural misconduct, misrepresentation or negatively affecting the reputation of OLAS occur, there shall be a vote within the executive officers as to the formation of a special committee. **9.1.1** There should be a 75% majority. **9.1.2** Issues can be submitted as a formal written complaint to any OLAS Executive member and allow for 30 days for complaint to process

**9.2** This committee shall consist of an odd number of members, with a mix of general and executive members decided by there being one more general member than executive member.

**9.3** In the event that the concern shall be related to an issue of misconduct with the President, the Vice-President and the Director of Finance have final authority.

## **Article X – Constitutional Amendments**

**10.1** Suggested amendments shall be directed toward any OLAS Executive Officer.

**10.2** These suggestions shall be voted upon by the OLAS executive officers after being broadly discussed in a general meeting. Executive members that are not also executive officers may express opinions in such a meeting, but ultimately have no voting rights in Constitutional matters.

**10.3** Amendments shall be agreed upon by the OLAS general membership with a majority of the votes cast (50% + 1) before being instituted.

## **Article XI – Meetings**

**11.1** General meetings must be held at least two times per year, at least one per term.

**11.2** The President or Vice President of OLAS at St. George must call all meetings.

**11.3** Notification should be made at least two weeks prior to the meeting. **11.4**

Executive Members meeting must be held at least once per month.

**11.5** General members are welcome to attend Executive Officers' meeting **11.5.1** General members do not hold voting right in these meeting

## **Article XII – Method of Officer Resignation**

**12.1** Written document must be submitted for the records which will be released to the executives and members.

**12.2** Must give 2 weeks notice to allow the Board of Directors to adjust to the change and outcome of resignation.

**End of Constitution**