

Constitution of the Astronomy Union

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Contents

1	Membership	2
2	Executive Positions	2
2.1	President	2
2.2	Vice President of Operations	2
2.3	Vice President of Communications	3
2.4	Vice President of External Affairs	3
2.5	Vice President of Events and Social Media	3
2.6	Vice President Second-Year Representative	3
2.7	Vice President Non-Program Representative	4
3	Impeachment	4
4	Elections	4
4.1	End of Year Election	5
4.2	Beginning of Year Election	5
4.3	By-Elections	6
5	Meetings	6
6	Events	6
7	Amendment Procedures	6

1 Membership

- a) The Astronomy Union, henceforth referred to as the AU, is the course union representing undergraduate astronomy students at the University of Toronto. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Arts and Science Student Union (ASSU).
- b) Membership is automatically granted to full time undergraduate students in the Faculty of Arts & Science enrolled in an astronomy course or subject POST for the current academic year. The term academic year excludes the two summer semesters, when the AU does not officially operate. Members may vote in elections and referenda, as well as run for executive positions provided that they will to the best of their knowledge remain a member of the AU for the duration of their supposed term in office.
- c) Non-members, such as those enrolled in an astronomy course but are part time students or students associated with another faculty, or prospective astronomy students, are welcomed to participate in events, but do not have voting privileges and cannot be considered for executive positions.

2 Executive Positions

The descriptions of the roles are listed below. Additionally, the following restrictions apply:

- a) Executives of the AU may not simultaneously serve as the president or treasurer of the Physics Student Union (PhySU).
- b) At least one (1) of Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of External Affairs, and Vice President of Events and Social Media cannot be graduating during their term in office.
- c) Incumbent executives may not seek re-election for the same position, except in the case where there are no other candidates.

2.1 President

It is the duty of the president to:

- a) Protect the integrity of this constitution and ensure the AU's overall well being.
- b) Organize executive meetings, orchestrate the AU's strategic vision and provide leadership in its implementation.
- c) Represent the AU on formal occasions, including attending the ASSU council meetings.
- d) Carry out the procedures of impeachment (in the case that the president is the one whose impeachment is being requested, it shall be handled by the VP of operations) and constitutional amendments.
- e) Assist the other executives in their duties, and perform any outstanding tasks which do not fall under the jurisdiction of the other executives.
- f) Act as the first signing officer on the AU's bank account.
- g) Write the agenda for executive meetings and share it with the other executive members in due time, as described in Section 5.

2.2 Vice President of Operations

It is the duty of the vice president of operations to:

- a) Act as treasurer, preside over the budgeting process and apply for funding from the ASSU. In addition, act as the second signing officer on the AU's bank account.

- b) Act as secretary, keep the minutes of executive meetings and other proceedings of the AU, as appropriate.
- c) Run elections and by-elections according to section 4, including but not limited to gathering the list of candidates, producing the ballots, adjudicating over speeches and questions, screening voters, and being the lead ballot counter. If the Vice President of Operations intends to run for a position in an election, they must delegate these responsibilities to an AU member who is not running or to a non-member for this election.

2.3 Vice President of Communications

It is the duty of the vice president of communications to:

- a) Oversee the planning of events between all executives.
- b) Manage the AU's relations to outside entities. Examples of specific entities with which the AU is expected to interact frequently are included in following paragraphs, but they are by no means comprehensive.
- c) Book rooms when required with the Office of Space Management (OSM).
- d) Be in contact with the Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics (DAA) to obtain up to date information on courses, events, and opportunities offered by the department. Provide the feedback and suggestions of AU members to the department. Lobby for improving the undergraduate astronomy program.
- e) Coordinate the AU's collaboration with other astronomy groups on campus, such as the Astronomy and Space Exploration Society (ASX).

2.4 Vice President of External Affairs

It is the duty of the vice president External Affairs to:

- a) Attend the approximately bi-monthly Graduate Astronomy Student's Association (GASA) meetings.
- b) Be the first contact point between graduate and undergraduate students and continue to foster relations between the two camps.
- c) Sit on the Climate Committee as the undergraduate representative. They will incur more responsibilities therein.
- d) Communicate the going-ons of the graduate students to the undergraduates, especially in the context of volunteering opportunities and finding undergraduates to sit in on any departmental committees where they may be needed.

2.5 Vice President of Events and Social Media

It is the duty of the vice president events and social media director to:

- a) Assist with event planning.
- b) Direct and execute the logistical efforts for events.
- c) Update and moderate the AU's social media accounts. Expand the AU's social media presence.
- d) Take charge in promoting the AU's events, particularly on the aforementioned social media platforms.

2.6 Vice President Second-Year Representative

The vice president second year representative has special requirements and duties of:

- a) They must be enrolled in AST221 and AST222 for the current academic year.
- b) Working together with senior astronomy students, they will assist the AST221/222 class with transitioning into the astronomy program academically.
- c) They are responsible for publicizing the AU's existence and events amongst the AST221/222 students, and more generally conveying the AU's invitation to participate to the new astronomy program students.

2.7 Vice President Non-Program Representative

The vice president non-program representative has special requirements and duties of:

- a) They must be enrolled in at least one course with an AST- course code that is not associated with the Minor, Major, or Specialist Programs
- b) They must not be enrolled in any astronomy subject POSTs for the current academic year.
- c) They are responsible for publicizing the AU's existence and events amongst the students enrolled in the courses listed above, and more generally encouraging non program students to be more engaged with the DAA.

3 Impeachment

- a) All incumbent executives are liable to impeachment if they have not adequately performed their duties, have conducted themselves in a manner which could be extremely damaging to the AU's reputation, or have ceased to meet the membership requirements of the AU during their term.
- b) Any executive may suggest to the president the impeachment of another executive on the grounds above (or to the VP of operations if the accused is the president). Then at the next meeting of executives, the matter will be deliberated, including a chance for the accused executive to defend themselves.
- c) Executive meetings with an impeachment request in the agenda must be planned at least one week in advance. If the accused executive fails to show up for this meeting, they will be impeached automatically.
- d) After deliberations, a vote will be taken. All executives excluding the one in question must agree for the impeachment to be realized. This decision cannot be appealed or rescinded.

4 Elections

Below are regulations governing all elections of the AU:

- a) The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) is responsible for overseeing all election procedures and for receiving any election-related complaints from members.
- b) The Vice President of Operations takes the role of CRO. However, if the Vice President of Operations wishes to run in an election, they must delegate the responsibilities to an AU member who is not running or to a non-member for this election. In this case, the CRO is nominated by the executive members by a majority vote.
- c) The CRO is allowed to vote if they are a member of the AU.
- d) Elections may be held in-person or on the University of Toronto's secure online voting platform. The choice of the medium for elections is to the discretion of current executive members.
- e) Notice of an election must be given at least two weeks in advance.

f) The procedure for in-person elections is as follows:

- i All candidates and voters are expected to provide proof of their membership in the AU.
- ii All candidates are expected to deliver a short speech and be prepared to answer questions, including those from other candidates. Candidates who are not able to be physically present at the election may nominate a representative to give a speech in their stead.
- iii Members may only run for one position initially.
- iv Voting is done by secret ballot. After speeches for each position in numerical order as listed in this Constitution (2.1 to 2.7), ballots will be distributed to voters and then collected and counted for tally to determine the specific position. The candidate who receive the most votes wins. This result will be announced and any candidates who were not elected may run for any subsequent executive positions not yet voted on.
- v In the case of a tie, there will be a revote between only the tied candidates. If the revote is also a tie, a vote by standing executives should be cast. Any newly elected executives will vote instead of the respective outgoing executive. If the executive vote is also tied, then the President of the AU will decide
- vi If there is only one candidate to run for a position, they still must receive the votes of at least half of the members present in order to be elected.

g) The procedure for online elections is as follows:

- i Online voting duration is to the discretion of the current executive members but must be for at least 48 hours.
- ii The CRO must be able to verify the AU membership of all candidates and voters.
- iii Written statements of a pre-determined maximum length, should a candidate choose to write one, must be accessible by AU members before or during voting.
- iv Members may run for multiple positions.
- v Once voting closes, votes are counted for each position in numerical order as listed in this Constitution (2.1 to 2.7). The candidate who receives the most votes wins. If a candidate running for multiple positions wins a position, they are no longer considered for subsequent positions in the vote count.
- vi In the case of a tie, there will be a revote between only the tied candidates. Revotes should take place on the following day of the announcement of the initial results. If the revote is also a tie, a vote by standing executives should be cast. Any newly elected executives will vote instead of the respective outgoing executive. If the executive vote is also tied, then the President of the AU will decide.
- vii If there is only one candidate to run for a position, they still must receive more votes than spoiled ballots in order to be elected.

4.1 End of Year Election

a) The end of year election takes place once a year with the purpose of electing all executives except the Vice President Second-Year Representative and the Vice President Non-Program Representative. The election should be the last general member activity excluding socials of the year and must be held before the end of winter semester classes.

b) The elected executives will take office on May 1st of the year of their election.

c) Any vacancies will be left for a future by-election. Other executives should try to perform the duties of those positions while the vacancies exist.

4.2 Beginning of Year Election

a) The beginning of year election takes place once a year as a standalone meeting with the purpose of electing the second year and non program representatives. It should be the AU's first activity of the academic year, in September or early October.

- b) The procedures are the same as outlined above, where applicable.

4.3 By-Elections

- a) By-elections to fill vacancies (due to resignation, impeachment, creation of a new position, or failure to elect someone in the previous election) take place at the earliest convenient time after the AU leadership has reasonable confidence that a qualified member will run. They may be held in conjunction with another AU meeting or event.
- b) The procedures are the same as outlined above, where applicable.

5 Meetings

- a) The beginning and end of year elections are the only required meetings.
- b) The executives should hold meetings as necessary at mutually available times. There is no minimum frequency of executive meetings required, but they should strive for at least once a month.
- c) During an executive meeting, key decisions should be held to an executive vote, recorded in the minutes. This is to ensure all executive members manifest their opinion on important matters.
- d) In the case of a tie in an executive vote, the President's vote breaks the tie.
- e) The decision can be subject to a re-vote if the President agrees that enough new information is presented that may alter executive members' opinions.
- f) An agenda is shared to all executive members at least 24 hours before the meeting. All executive members can request to add items to the agenda prior to the 24 hours before the meeting.
- g) Items requested by executive members within the 24 hours of the meeting may be included under 'Other' and addressed during the meeting if time allows.

6 Events

There are no events mandated by this constitution. The types and number of events held by the AU may vary from year to year, and consequently so does the funding it applies for. However, in concocting events the executives should bear in mind the founding principles of the AU:

- a) To foster a tightly-knit undergraduate astronomy community.
- b) To connect students with research opportunities in astronomy and help them advance their scientific careers.
- c) To help students with the highly niche academic difficulties arising in astronomy courses.
- d) To promote the recognition and representation which astronomy students deserve.

7 Amendment Procedures

- a) All parts of this constitution excluding section 7 paragraph a) (this provision) and section 7 paragraph e) may be amended with due process. The title page may be edited freely with updated information.
- b) Any member of the AU may suggest an amendment to this constitution by contacting the president.

- c) The president will bring the matter to attention at the next meeting of executives. The executives will deliberate the specific text of the amendment, after which a vote will be taken. $6/7$ (or always one less than the total number of executives if there are vacancies) of the executives' approval is required for the amendment to be pushed to a general membership referendum.
- d) General membership referendum for the proposed amendment will take place at the earliest convenient time with at least two weeks advance notice, and can be a part of another AU meeting or event. A $2/3$ majority (inclusive) at the referendum is required for the amendment to pass. The specific text of the amendment may not be changed at the referendum.
- e) After an amendment is passed, its text shall replace the the repealed provision within the hitherto most recent constitution. The repealed provision must be completely removed from the constitution as to avoid confusion or discrepancies with the new amendment.