



DEPARTMENTAL
STUDENT ASSOCIATION
CONSTITUTION

Published on February 25, 2022

Draft approved by Creso Sá, Associate Chair LHAE - Winter 2022

Table of Contents

Article 1: The Association..... 3

 Section 1: Definitions3

 Section 2: Statement of Philosophy3

 Section 3: Objectives.....4

Article 2: The Constitution 4

 Section 1: Amendments to the Constitution.....4

 Section 2: Publication of the Constitution4

Article 3: Membership 4

Article 4: The Executive..... 5

 (1) President5

 (2) Vice-President Academic.....5

 (3) Vice-President Finance6

 (4) Vice-President Internal.....6

 (5) Vice-President Communications6

 (6) The Executive Committee.....7

Article 5: Students’ Representatives..... 7

Article 6: Meetings 8

 Executive Committee Meetings8

 General Member Meetings – GMMs.....8

Article 7: UTSGU Head Grant Funding 8

Article 8: Elections 9

 Section 1: Responsibilities of the LHAE DSA9

 Section 2: Responsibilities of the Election Officers9

 Section 3: Nominations10

 Section 4: Candidacy10

 Section 5: Election Process11

 Section 6: Ballot Counting11

 Section 7: Announcement of Results.....12

 Section 8: Appeals.....12

Section 9: Vacancies.....12
ARTICLE 10: REVIEW AND RECALL OF ELECTED OFFICERS13
Appendix A: Equity Statement 14

Article I: The Association

Section 1: Definitions

1. The association is known as “The Leadership, Higher, and Adult Education Department Students’ Association”, hereinafter referred to as “LHAE DSA”.
2. Students of LHAE (part-time, flex-time, or full-time), hereinafter referred to collectively as “members”.
3. The President, VP Academic, VP Finance, VP Internal, and VP Communications, hereinafter referred to collectively as the “Executive Committee” or “the Executive”.
4. The Students’ Representative of Adult Education and Community Development, Students’ Representative of Education Leadership and Policy, and Students’ Representative of Higher Education, hereinafter referred to collectively as “Students’ Representatives”.
5. General Member Meetings (GMM) is a meeting of the entire student membership at LHAE.
6. “Conflict of Interest” implies promotion of activities that directly benefit or indirectly benefit the individual and their interests. For example, any kind of direct involvement, interest, or support that promotes a business to the benefit of the individual can be considered a violation and a “conflict of interest”.
7. The “University of Toronto Graduate Students’ Union”, hereinafter referred to the “UTGSU”.
8. A “term” is defined as May 1 to the following April 30.

Section 2: Statement of Philosophy

1. The LHAE DSA is committed to innating, sponsoring, and promoting academic and cultural life of members, while upholding values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.
2. Support members through utilizing available resources to create programming that reflects personal and professional development.
3. The primary purpose of the association is to ensure and promote active participation for all members in the decision-making processes on all issues that affect members on an individual, foci, and departmental level.

Section 3: Objectives

1. The objectives of the LHAE DSA shall be:
 - (a) To promote and maintain communication between members and LHAE administration.
 - (b) To represent members on all matters which representation may be of interest to members.
 - (c) To initiate, sponsor, coordinate, and promote academic, professional, and personal/social events in the interests of members.
 - (d) To advocate for equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in respect to departmental life.

Article 2: The Constitution

Section 1: Amendments to the Constitution

1. Amendments to the LHAE DSA Constitution require a two-thirds majority of all members present at a GMM of LHAE.
2. Written notices of any proposed amendments must be prepared, and copies distributed to members before the GMM.

Section 2: Publication of the Constitution

1. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that members are made aware of the contents of the constitution. The Executive will be responsible to ensure the publication of the most recent Constitution to the LHAE DSA website.

Article 3: Membership

1. The membership of the LHAE DSA are all individuals who have registered as graduate full-time, part-time, or flex-time students.
2. All members are invited to attend events, services, and GMMs of the LHAE DSA.
3. Only members may:
 - (a) Vote in elections and GMMs of the LHAE DSA
 - (b) Sign petitions of the LHAE DSA
 - (c) Nominate a candidate for elections or to positions for any committees
 - (d) Seek election to hold an Executive or an elected Student Representative

Article 4: The Executive

1. The Executive Committee of the LHAE DSA consists of a: President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President Finance, Vice-President Internal, and Vice-President Communications.
2. An Executive retains their position between May 1 to the following April 30.
3. The qualifications and duties of the Executive Committee are as follows:

(1) President

1. Facilitate and chair meetings of the Executive Committee.
2. Facilitate and chair GMMs.
3. As chair, the President shall adjourn a meeting when it is impossible to maintain or restore order.
4. Coordinate all Executive and GMM meetings.
5. Act as an ex-officio member of every committee and may only exercise the right to vote to resolve a tie.
6. Serve as the signing officer of the LHAE DSA.
7. Serve as the spokesperson and representative of the LHAE DSA.
8. Represent the LHAE DSA at UTGSU Board of Director Meetings.
9. Responsible for monitoring the day-to-day operations of the LHAE DSA.
10. Liaise with the Vice-President Finance on issues related to finance.
11. Along with the Vice-President Finance co-sign all cheques.
12. Work and support executive members as needed.
13. Train and advise the incoming President.

(2) Vice-President Academic

1. Advocate for the academic interests of members.
2. Support members in academic development in areas including but not limited to:
 - a. Research conference preparation
 - b. Communicating research conference opportunities
 - c. Communicating academic publication opportunities
 - d. Academic skill development
3. Chair Students' Representatives Meetings.
4. Shall take over the duties of interim-President if the President can no longer fulfill their duties.
 - a. In the event that no member runs for the position of President during the by-election, the Vice President Academic will take on the duties of the President until the end of term.

5. Shall be a voting member of the LHAE DSA and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
6. Work with and support executive members as needed.
7. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Academic.

(3) Vice-President Finance

1. Serve as the Financial Officer of the LHAE DSA.
2. Along with the President co-sign all cheques.
3. Is responsible for monitoring the financial status of the LHAE DSA.
4. Is responsible for managing yearly head grants received from the UTSGU according to their by-laws, policies, and regulations.
5. Seek and secure funding opportunities for the LHAE DSA.
6. Review, process, and approve any invoices or grant applications along with the President.
7. Prepare and manage the operating budget under the purview of the President.
8. Prepare and present the finance status of the LHAE DSA at Executive Committee Meetings and GMMs.
9. Shall be a voting member of the LHAE DSA and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
10. Work with and support executive members as needed.
11. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Finance.

(4) Vice-President Internal

1. Maintain all records of LHAE DSA policies, procedures, and other documents necessary for transition.
2. Responsible for observing that activities of the LHAE DSA are not exclusionary or discriminatory in nature.
3. Represent the LHAE DSA regarding equity matters and remain dedicated to the awareness and elimination of discrimination.
4. Support the activities and services of the LHAE DSA.
5. If the President is unable to chair the responsibility will fall to the Vice-President Internal.
6. Shall be a voting member of the LHAE DSA and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
7. Work with and support executive members as needed.
8. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Internal.

(5) Vice-President Communications

1. Oversee the development and execution of a marketing and communications plan.
2. Maintain and develop the LHAE DSA website and other social media platforms.

3. Create marketing and communications materials.
4. Shall be a voting member of the LHAE DSA and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
5. Work with and support executive members as needed.
6. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Communications.

(6) The Executive Committee

1. May redistribute the above areas of responsibilities among themselves if they so desire or as they see necessary.
2. Are responsible for obtaining anti-oppression and equity training.
3. Executives shall attend Executive Meetings, GMMs, and other relevant meetings
4. Executives may hold office and seek election for the following year.
5. During the election period, an Executive can seek for election for the following year. However, they cannot be present at meetings pertaining to elections or any other topics where a conflict of interest would arise.
6. Shall hold a minimum of 2 office hours per week, details of office hours will be made available on the DSA website.
7. If an Executive graduates before the end of their term (April 30), the Executive is not removed from office, and is able to continue their duties as outlined.
8. If an Executive cannot complete the term, the Executive Committee will call for a by-election, and the newly appointed member shall hold office for the remainder of the term.
9. It is the responsibility of the Executive to ensure that all materials necessary for successful transition is achieved (transfer of banking information, documents, key, etc.).

Article 5: Students' Representatives

1. Students' Representatives are members of the LHAE DSA who are responsible to liaise with the Vice-President Academic and other Executive members on matters that affect the academic development of the wider student body, as well as matters on the department level.
2. Students' Representatives are expected to serve on various LHAE DSA committees and attend Students' Representative Meetings, which are held at least twice a year.
3. Students' Representatives are required to attend monthly UTSGU Board of Director Meetings.
4. Are required to attend anti-oppressive and equity training alongside the Executive Committee.
5. Students' Representatives are elected positions who represent each program area with the LHAE Department: Adult Education and Community Development, Education Leadership and Policy, and Higher Education.
6. Students' Representatives will hold office starting May 1 and ending April 30.

7. Students' Representatives who hold office can also seek election for the following year. However, they cannot be present at meetings pertaining to elections or any other topics where a conflict of interest would arise.
8. Students' Representatives may have the opportunity to sit on various LHAE committees.

Article 6: Meetings

Executive Committee Meetings

1. The Executive Committee will meet a minimum of 12 times within a term.

General Member Meetings – GMMs

1. GMMs can be called by the LHAE DSA.
2. An emergency GMM can be called upon the receipt of a petition signed by at least five members.
3. GMMs are open to all members.
4. There is no minimum quorum needed. Quorum is defined as the number of students in attendance.
5. Motions are passed with a majority vote (50% + 1 voting member).
6. If no members at large attend the GMM, preliminary decisions will be voted on by the attending LHAE DSA Executive Members and Students' Representatives.
 - a. Communications will be sent to members at large shortly after that, providing a summary of the meeting and any preliminary decisions made.
 - b. Students will be then asked to share any comments or objections within a 7-day period. In the event no objections are received, the LHAE DSA will move forward with the preliminary decisions made.
7. Members will be provided with an agenda ahead of the meeting.
8. Non-members of the LHAE DSA may not attend GMMs unless invited as an external speaker by the Executive or through a unanimous vote by the LHAE DSA and members in attendance.
 - a. Non-members who attend an LHAE DSA GMM do not have voting rights.

Article 7: UTSGU Head Grant Funding

1. The LHAE DSA is responsible for the distribution of Head Grant Funding received from the UTSGU. Head Grant Funding is a result of student ancillary fees that all members of the LHAE DSA pay.

2. The LHAE DSA is responsible for ensuring that the association meets all requirements of Head Grant Funding as outlined by the UTGSU.
3. The LHAE DSA is responsible for using funds from the UTSGU in accordance to their by-laws and policies to support students' academic, professional, social, and personal development.
4. The LHAE DSA is responsible for providing conference funding to members
 - a. Conference funding applications will be available for three periods per year.
 - b. Students may receive one subsidy per period.
 - c. Students may apply to a maximum of three periods per year.

Article 8: Elections

Section 1: Responsibilities of the LHAE DSA

1. The LHAE DSA shall be responsible to search for a Chief Returning Officer, and if necessary, a Deputy Returning Officer, by early February.
2. The LHAE DSA shall be responsible for appointing a Chief Returning Officer, to supervise the mechanics of voting, no later than March
3. The position of Chief Returning Officer must be advertised to the LHAE Community by the Executive.
4. If no applications for the position are received by the deadline advertised, or no applicant meets the criteria for the position, the LHAE DSA may appoint a member as Chief Returning Officer if she/he meets all other criteria for the position.
5. The criteria for the position of Chief Returning Officer shall include:
 - a. The Chief Returning Officer may not run for an executive position during the year in which she/he is organizing the elections
 - b. The Chief Returning Officer must be a registered LHAE student, full-time, flex-time, or part-time
 - c. The Chief Returning Officer must have good organizational, interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills
 - d. Experience with student government elections in a post-secondary environment is considered an asset
 - e. The Chief Returning Officer must maintain objectivity to ensure fair elections

Section 2: Responsibilities of the Election Officers

1. The Chief Returning Officer will:
 - a. Be responsible to the LHAE DSA in the administration of the policies and procedures for the elections.

- b. Supervise the LHAE DSA election in accordance with the policies and procedures established in this document.
 - c. Review candidate campaign material to ensure:
 - i. accessibility
 - ii. No materials including defamation or harmful narratives that perpetuate negative/harmful stereotypes towards any individual or community are included in the campaign material.
 - d. Hold an All Candidates Meeting no later than two days after the close of nominations to inform the candidates of election procedures and policies.
 - e. Ensure that all candidates comply with the policies and procedures established in this document and nomination package.
 - f. Maintain the confidentiality of the nominations until the close of nominations.
 - g. Cannot publicly support any candidate.
2. If required, a Deputy Returning Officer will be selected. The Deputy Returning Officer will:
- (a) Be responsible to the LHAE DSA in the administration of policies and procedures.
 - (b) Assist the Returning Officer in the supervision of election policies and procedures.

Section 3: Nominations

1. The Chief Returning Officer will be responsible for writing a call for nomination for the new Executive team.
2. The Chief Returning Officer will be responsible for communicating the call for nominations through LHAE DSA communication streams (Listservs, social media, etc.).
3. The Chief Returning Officer will be responsible for ensuring that candidates receive nomination packages.
4. Nominations will normally be opened for a period of two weeks. All nominators must be LHAE members.
5. Nominations will not be accepted for an individual who held an Executive position for three years.

Section 4: Candidacy

1. All Candidates must be members of the LHAE DSA (registered students in the LHAE Department) during the election period and year that they intend to serve as an elected member of the LHAE DSA.
2. An individual cannot run for more than one executive position at a time.
3. Candidates are not allowed to distribute material that in the discretion of the Returning Officer violates the rights of any individual or group of individuals as per the Human Rights Code of Canada. Candidates who violate this clause will be disqualified from the election.

4. Candidates must attend an All-Candidates Meeting, held no later than two days after the nomination period.
5. Each candidate is responsible for complying with all OISE and U of T policies regarding the posting of banners, signs, posters, and distribution of other campaign material.

Section 5: Election Process

1. The call for nominations of LHAE Executive and Students' Representatives will occur at the beginning of March.
2. Once the two-week nomination period ends, candidates have eight days to campaign for elections.
 - a. Campaign material may be distributed on campus and through social media.
 - b. Campaign material must be pre-approved by the Chief Returning Officer to ensure:
 - i. accessibility
 - ii. that no materials including defamation or harmful narratives that perpetuate negative/harmful stereotypes towards any individual or community are included in the campaign material.
3. Polls will open on the fourth day of the campaign period.
4. Permitting ballots will be conducted both electronically and physically (via ballot boxes) in accordance with AODA standards.
 - a. Electronic ballots can be created with the assistance of the LHAE Department. Online survey platforms such as Microsoft Forms, Survey Monkey, and Google Forms can be used.

Section 6: Ballot Counting

1. The Chief Returning Officer is responsible to count all election ballots immediately following at the election.
2. Candidates may assign a proxy to observe the counting process, for both physical and online ballots.
 - a. Proxys are not permitted to actively participate in the counting of ballots; this involves touching ballots, moving ballots, opening ballot boxes (etc.).
3. A ballot is considered spoiled if:
 - a. Multiple candidates are selected for the same position.
 - b. There are no marks on the ballot.
4. In the event of a tie, another election must be held no more than 30 days after the original election.
5. Once all ballots are counted to the satisfaction of the Chief Returning Officer, the Returning Office shall issue a statement to this effect:

- a. The candidate who receives the most votes for their position shall be declared elected.

Section 7: Announcement of Results

1. The Executive shall inform all candidates of the results of the election via LHAE DSA lines of communication.
2. The results of the election must be prominently posted within 48 hours after ballots have been counted.

Section 8: Appeals

1. A candidate may appeal the results of an election if they believe that they have either been wrongly disqualified or that the election process has been run unfairly or without regard to the procedures established in this document.
2. Any appeal must be made in writing and given to the Chief Returning Officer no later than 48 hours after the ballots have been counted. If an appeal has been made, the Chief Returning Officer must bring this to the Executive Committee within 24 hours.
3. In making a decision to appeal, the Executive Committee shall allow the appellant to present their case either in person or through writing at an Executive Committee Meeting.
4. The Chief Returning Officer will provide any necessary information regarding the appeal to the Executive and Students' Representatives present at the meeting.
5. Based on the evidence provided the Executive Committee will vote on whether to approve or deny the appeal.
6. If by a decision of the LHAE DSA, a new election is deemed necessary, then the following procedures must be taken:
 - a. Another election shall be called.
 - b. The election must take place before the first LHAE DSA meeting in May.

Section 9: Vacancies

1. Should any member of the LHAE Executive resign, or be removed, or fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee without an acceptable reason for their absence, the LHAE DSA will declare their position to be vacant.
2. Where an elected position becomes vacant during the term of office a by-election shall be held.
3. The Executive will allow for a two-week period during which time applications or nominations for the position may be received, current elected members are not eligible to run for office.
4. Within two weeks of the closure of nominations a vote will be held. Such a vote will be closed ballot, conducted online, and will be determined by a majority vote. This process

will be the responsibility of the Vice-President Internal. If the Vice-President Internal role is vacant, these procedures will be under the responsibility of the President.

5. A candidate elected to fill a position on the Executive due to vacancy will hold that position for the remainder of the regular term of office.

ARTICLE 10: REVIEW AND RECALL OF ELECTED OFFICERS

In case of any incident, report or complaint, an executive member can be removed from the DSA executive team by forming a committee comprising of at least 3 members to investigate if the member was found involved in:

1. Unlawful and unethical, actions or activities.
2. Disrespectful, humiliating, or biased verbal or written behaviour towards one or the rest of the LHAE DSA.
3. Violating OISE and U of T policies, procedures, or guidelines, the rights of a fellow member; breached the Constitution.
4. Have not fulfilled their due responsibilities as the DSA executive member.
5. Other criteria are deemed to be appropriate by the Executive Committee in consultation with and approved by a majority of the general membership present at a GMM.

Under special circumstances, the process to remove an executive member can be initiated if:

1. An executive member, despite of written warnings by the President and the committee (having at least three executive members) continues to be involved in activities detrimental to the interests of the DSA.
2. An executive member, despite of three “calls for explanation” or reminders fails to respond and satisfy to the President and the committee.

Appendix A: Equity Statement

Creating an environment that is built from an anti-oppressive framework that is equitable and inclusive is a priority of the LHAE DSA. The LHAE DSA will ensure that all programming hosted by the association is free of harassment and discrimination.

Inherent power and privilege exist within our society and within the communities, we belong to. Acknowledging these dynamics that exist within the various intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability will help ensure that this is a collective responsibility and make it clear that any form of discrimination will not be tolerated in any LHAE DSA spaces.

The following statement will be read aloud during the opening address of meetings and events:

As members of the LHAE DSA, mutual respect, cooperation, and understanding are our goals. We will not condone or tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

The LHAE DSA does not tolerate hate speech/sentiments/remarks rooted in but not limited to anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, sexist, racist, classist, ableist, homophobic, or transphobic sentiments. Our collective duty and obligation are to ensure that we are creating open, safe, and inclusive spaces where all are welcome to meaningfully participate. Any behaviour that does not demonstrate an understanding of these principles will not be tolerated.