

Constitution of “University of Toronto Chinese Students and Scholars Association”

May, 2024

1. Name

- a) This recognized student group's official name is the “**Chinese Students and Scholars Association at the University of Toronto.**”
- b) The acronym or abbreviation of this group is **UTCSSA**

2. Purpose and Objectives

The **University of Toronto Chinese Students and Scholars Association** (UTCSSA) was established in 1982. UTCSSA emblem visualizes a combination of the Chinese characters “Hua” and a maple leaf, composed of the four letters “C,” “S,” “S,” and “A.” It is the oldest and largest Chinese student association in Toronto. As a student association at the University of Toronto, UTCSSA is dedicated to helping Chinese students develop a comfortable environment for learning, researching, working, socializing, and entertaining overseas. UTCSSA provides resources and opportunities for Chinese students and scholars to help them achieve personal development in their studies, careers, and lives. At the same time, it also allows Chinese students and scholars to integrate into the University of Toronto family, the city of Toronto, and Canadian society, assisting them in contributing to the University of Toronto and the Toronto community. With the mission of serving Chinese students and scholars at the University of Toronto, UTCSSA has been and will continue to strengthen the connection of Chinese culture and history to students and outside. UTCSSA will continue to care for Chinese students and scholars at the University of Toronto, sharing experiences to adapt to newcomers, holding events to union Chinese, and fusing multi-culture.

3. Membership

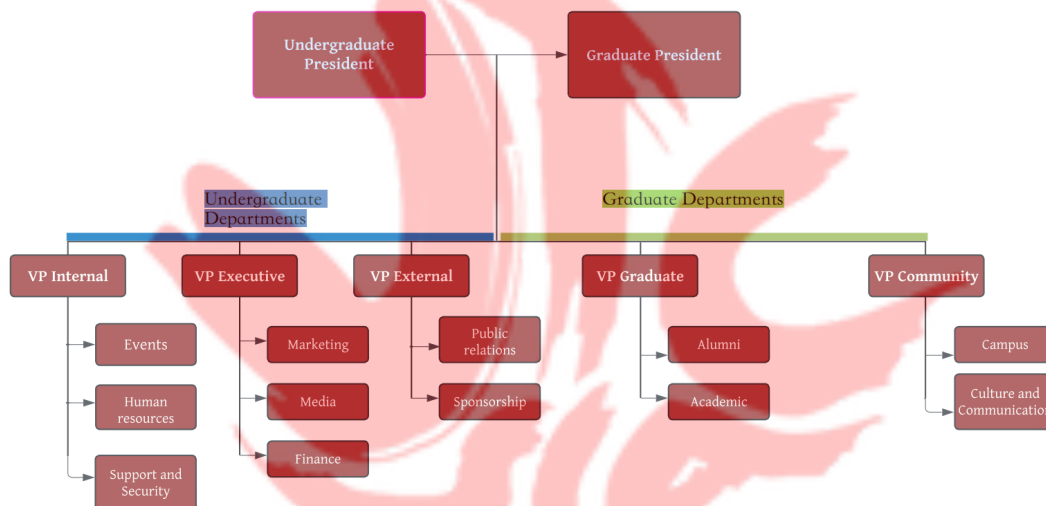
Our group members include current students, researchers, professors, and alums from various fields such as politics, economics, science, etc. In the previous academic year (2023—2024), UTCSSA has approximately 180 members accumulated.

Executive members with voting privileges shall be registered students at the University of Toronto.

Staff, faculty, or alumni members may hold non-voting executive positions. These positions shall be limited to a maximum of one (1) or ten percent (10%) of the full executive body, whichever is greater. Persons holding these nonvoting executive positions cannot serve as officers (including financial signing officers) or contact persons of the Student Group.

Non-voting membership may be extended to interested staff, faculty, alumni, or persons from outside the University without restriction on those grounds outlined by the Ontario Human Rights Code’s Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination.

4. Executive List and Duties



In this year, UTCSSA has:

- Two Co-President: Undergraduate President, Graduate President
- There are five Vice Presidents, including the vice President Internal, the vice President External, the vice president executive, the vice President Graduate, and the vice President Community.
- Twelve Departments, including the Departments of Events, Human Resources, Support and Security, Sponsorship, Public Relations, Finance, Media, Marketing, Alumni, Academic, Campus, and Culture and Communication.

4.1 UTCSSA Executives

UTCSSA Executives comprise all the people in our administrative body, so a UTCSSA executive must be enrolled in one of our departments

. The main difference between members and executives is the executive authority. Executives hold, manage, and design events and activities while members attend and participate in them.

4.2 UTCSSA Executive Committee

UTCSSA Executive Committee concludes the two Co-President; four Vice-President, Including Vice-President Internal, Vice-President External, Vice-President Executive Vice-President Graduate; directors of the ten Departments, including Departments of Events, Departments of Human Resource, Departments of Support and Security, Departments of Sponsorship, Departments of Public Relationship, Departments of Finance, Departments of Media, Departments of Marketing, Departments of Alumni, Departments of Academic; the Vice- President Campus and the General Secretary

(1) Duties of executive committee:

Duties of Co-President:

As the top management and the organization's core, a President shall maintain a grand vision of the whole organization with ethics. The most basic duties are ensuring every part of the organization functions appropriately and accepting, managing, and effectively utilizing social resources. The duty also includes guiding the organization on the right path, monitoring financial

flows, supervising vice presidents, and ruling General Secretary and VP Campus. The President shall organize the meeting of Executive Commits organize the meeting of executives, modify the Constitution when necessary, and organize the election and other essential personnel matters. The President is the significant hub connecting UTCSSA to others.

Duties of Vice-President:

Every Vice President supervises two to three departments. A Vice President assists the President in managing general matters and connecting the President and departments. Every Vice President provides clear and correct information for department directors.

The **VP Internal** administers the Department of Events, the Department of Human Resources, and the Department of Support and Security. The primary duty includes supervising the Department of Events to plan events, supervising the Department of Human Resources to count statistics and allocate human resources, and supervising the Department of Support and Security to manage inventory and materials.

The **VP of External** administers the Department of Public Relations and the Department of Sponsor. The primary duty includes maintaining a good connection with sponsors, introducing potential sponsorships, and supervising the two departments for their work.

The **VP Executive** administers the Department of Marketing, the Department of IT and Design, and the Department of Finance. The primary duty includes supervising the Department of Marketing to accomplish effective marketing, supervising the Department of IT and Design to accomplish media support, and supervising the Department of Finance to accomplish restricted monitoring of money flows.

The **VP Graduate** administers the Department of Alumni and the Department of Academics. The primary duty includes supervising the Department of Alumni to maintain a close connection with the UTCSSA Council, Consultant Council, and Honorary Executives and supervising the Department of Academics to organize any academic events.

The **VP Community** administers the Department of Campus and Departments of Culture and Communication. The primary duty of a VP Campus includes dealing with any campus-related matters, maintaining the connection to UTSU and the University of Toronto, supervising UTCSSA athletics teams (the basketball team, the football team, etc.), filing and reviewing documents,

culture spreading, establish a good relationship with the non-Chinese organization and recording meeting minutes.

(2) Duties of Directors of Departments:

There is one Director and two to three Vice Directors in every department. The primary duties of a director include managing and distributing work to executives, training new executives, monitoring work, and fairly appraising executives in the department. The primary duty of a vice director is all about cooperating with the director.

4.3 UTCSSA Council

The UTCSSA Council is voluntarily composed of outstanding and cherished previous presidents of UTCSSA. All members of the UTCSSA Council have equal rights. It will provide advice to UTCSSA executive committees when necessary. A member of the UTCSSA Council's primary responsibilities include introducing potential social resources to UTCSSA, providing perspective on conflicts that cannot be solved among UTCSSA executive committees, and providing suggestions to UTCSSA executive committees. The UTCSSA Council shall not interpose any decision made by UTCSSA executive committees.

4.4 Consultant Council

The Consultant Council is composed of outstanding and cherished former members of UTCSSA Executive committees. Members of the Consultant Council can attend any UTCSSA events for free. The Consultant Council shall not interfere with any decision made by UTCSSA Executive committees and shall not represent UTCSSA on any occasion.

4.5 Honorary executives

The Honorary executives are outstanding and cherished executives from the last year. Honorary executives shall not intervene in any decision made by UTCSSA executive committees and shall not represent UTCSSA on any occasion.

5. Meetings

UTCSSA has two annual general meetings that require all executives' attendance; one is after the fall enlists, and the other is after the winter enlists. The UTCSSA committee holds a monthly

general meeting to discuss recent plans. The executive committee meets every month, and the executive will set the dates and times.

6. Election

6.1 Election Committee and CRO

Annual Elections are held in March of each year. To conduct the election, the executive committee shall strike the Election Committee and appoint a Chief Returning Officer (CRO) in March, at least two weeks before the election date – no later than March 30th.

The election committee shall be non-biased and must disclose any conflicts of interest that might impact the election. The election committee is only responsible for the organization and execution of the election procedures, which include educating members about the election, posting positions, collecting documents, counting ballots, etc. The election committee does not influence any decision concerning election results. Committee members should refrain from running in any active elections while also holding a position on the committee. The outgoing President(s) and executive members who are not running in the election will organize the election committee. The CRO does not have to be a current member of the club. To appoint a qualified CRO, the executive committee could advise the position to other U of T faculties and accept nominations from group members. The executive must democratically agree upon the appointment of the CRO. The CRO shall understand the constitution and election by-laws of the organization. The CRO cannot be a candidate in the election, nor can they participate in voting to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

The election committee and CRO are responsible for the election process. The CRO will report the election results to the executive and general membership.

6.2 Candidates

For a candidate to be eligible to run and hold office, a member shall meet all the following conditions:

- (1) Be a currently registered student at the University of Toronto – St. George Campus
- (2) Be an active member of the Association with good standing for at least one month before the nomination period

- (3) Candidates should respect the constitution, recognize the values, and accept the mission of the Association
- (4) For the candidates for Vice-Presidents, a membership in the Association for at least one year (by the date of election) is recommended
- (5) It is recommended that the presidents candidate be a member of the Association for at least one and a half years (by the date of election).
- (6) No person shall be elected President for over a year.
- (7) For the two presidents' elections, candidates are highly recommended to come from their respective departments. Students from the undergraduate department (which includes Events, Human Resources, Support and Security, Marketing, Media, Finance, Public Relations, and Sponsorship departments) can run for undergraduate department president, and students from the Graduate department (which includes Alumni, Academic, Campus, and Culture and Communication departments) can run for graduate department president (co-president).

6.3 Election process

The election process shall be democratic and fair in principle, with its process public and transparent, by the following procedures:

(1) Election committee and CRO shall be appointed by the executive committee at least two weeks before the election date.

(2) The election committee and CRO shall establish the election agenda, including the number of executive positions, application deadline, election date, and voting procedures (3) Members who want to be candidates should hand in a self-statement, including but not limited to the past work summary, contributions to the club and future work plan, through email before the deadline. The list of candidates and the self-statements shall be published to members, preferably seven days but at least three days before the election date.

(4) Voting shall be one vote per person. Any form of proxy or delegated votes is invalid. Only registered U of T students who are UTCSSA registered members in good standing for 30 days before election dates are eligible for voting

(5) Election shall be set depending on accessible circumstances and held online or in person on the election date.

(a) In-person voting shall be the first choice in suitable circumstances. The CRO shall host the election speeches provided by the candidates, give each voting U of T registered student a paper ballot on the voting date, and ask the student to place their ballot in an enclosed box. Upon completing all ballots collected, the CRO shall publicly count and announce the votes. Voting members cannot vote by proxy.

(b) In events where in-person voting is not applicable, online channels shall be utilized to conduct the voting process. The choice of the online platform will be based on several factors, including the degree of confidentiality, transparency of submissions and results, ability to provide oversights, accessibility, and ease of use. The online platform is expected to generate and distribute a unique identifier to ensure fairness, given that each voting member will be allowed one vote.

(6) Candidates shall be elected by simple majority vote of voting members attending and voting. In the case of a tie, a further election shall be held, and votes will be re-cast on the same date. In preparation for a tie, the CRO shall select a U of T registered student executive from amongst the executive committee to cast their ballot and seal it in an envelope. In the event of a tie for an executive position, one of the two Scrutinizers shall break the seal and count the ballot to break the tie.

(7) In case only one candidate is applying for a position, the candidate

(a) Gains more than 50% "YES" out of all valid receiving ballots (Including "YES," "NO," and "Abstention") will be marked as a successful election and become a formal executive of the position elected.

(b) Gains less than 50% "YES" out of all valid receiving ballots (Including "YES," "NO," and "Abstention") will become a proxy executive of the position elected.

(8) Vacancies can be addressed through a by-election later. In the interim, existing executive members may temporarily shoulder any unoccupied responsibilities until a by-election can be conducted. All voting executive roles ultimately must be filled democratically.

(9) To preserve the orderly conduct of the election, individuals who disrupt the electoral process, instigate disputes that cannot be calmly mediated, engage in personal attacks, or escalate

contentious emotions will be removed from the premises for 30 minutes, ensuring the integrity and smooth operation of the electoral process

(10) The whole election process will be recorded. Candidates participating in the election agree to be recorded by default. This video will only be open to non-members in exceptional circumstances. It is archived in the shared folder and can be traced back if necessary.

(11) When conflicts or questioning occur, the CRO will make the decision about how to solve the problem based on the situation. The decision has to be in line with most people's ideas and supported by most people.

(12) Presidents have the right to announce the patronage for vacant positions.

6.4 Appealing Process

In events where any component of the election process is questioned based on its fairness or integrity, all communications are to be centralized to the CRO, and the email of the CRO shall be available on all election materials. Members of the association would hold the right to appeal and can commence the appeal process when deemed necessary. The CRO shall review and assess all questions and appeals based on this constitution and the evidence provided. If it is determined that the appeal is on reasonable grounds, it will warrant an investigation into the matter with a plan of action. The appeal process shall be fair in principle, and any defamatory behavior will not be accepted. The candidates shall be given opportunities to address the questions raised. The decision made by the CRO shall be communicated to members.

7. Promotion

a) From Junior Executive to Senior Executive

The Executive Assessment is three times a year: May to September, September to December, and December to March. After every assessment, those executives mentioned by the Vice-Director will be reassessed by the Director, and finally, the Executive Committee will make the decision. The Executive Assessment has an unlimited quota.

b) From Senior Executive to Vice-Director

A senior executive will be promoted to vice-director via nomination by the director and assessment by the VP in charge, deciding by the Executive Commits.

8. Termination of Executives and General Members

Any club member who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the club and its members, including non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest, may be given notice of removal, as voted on by the club. The member up for removal shall be notified of the club's intentions and have the right to defend their actions. A vote will be held at an executive meeting, and a two-thirds majority vote of the current executives in favor of removal is required. The member must have the right to an appeal before the general membership, before the vote, and the majority vote will have the final say on the matter.

The member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with membership.

Executive members are subject to the same termination or impeachment process and may lose their executive position and membership in the group as determined by the vote.

9. Finance

The Treasurer shall keep records of all income and expenses and present the group's financial health at the annual general meetings. The Executive Committee will vote on expenditures over \$100.00 by majority vote at an executive meeting.

The group's executive or members may not engage in essentially commercial activities. This is not intended to preclude the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the group, or charges for specific activities, programs, or events, or to prohibit groups from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, the group will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization, will not

provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization and will not pay salaries to some or all of its officers.

10. Constitutional Amendment Procedure

Any registered U of T students may propose and vote on amendments to this constitution. Any amendment or revision to this Constitution shall be made under the concordant agreement of the members of Executive Commits. Any amendment shall be written by the two presidents or the

General Secretary with the identification of the two Co-Presidents. Otherwise, it shall not be accepted.

The Executive Committee will administer the process of having amendments discussed at general meetings. Constitutional amendments shall require a 2/3 majority to be passed at Annual General Meetings by registered U of T members in attendance.

The Executive Committee shall formally adopt the new constitution and submit the revised constitution to the respective University offices (i.e., The Office of Student Life, The University of Toronto Students' Union, etc.) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.

11. Conflict Management Procedure

Any conflicts should be resolved by direct communication between the parties involved. As appropriate, complainants will have the opportunity to be heard by the executive, and the executive may suggest possible resolutions to the conflict. If the president and co-president are all involved in the conflict and the conflict cannot be resolved in the group, a "third-party" mediator who is not of the UTCSSA will be invited to assist with resolving the conflict. The "third-party mediator" could be a staff member at the University of Toronto, such as the

student life coordinator or the student life officer. If any conflict results in the motion to remove either an exec or general member, the process as outlined in Section 8 will be followed.

12. Bylaws, Policies

The Association shall create and maintain bylaws that govern all the operations of the Association, which are not specified in the Constitution. 11.2 The Association's bylaws shall not contradict the Constitution. If any inconsistencies arise between the Association Constitution and the Bylaws, the Constitution takes precedence and governs.

Every executive in UTCSSA shall obey this Constitution or risk being removed from UTCSSA.

13. UTSU Constitution

If any inconsistencies arise between the Association Constitution and the SSMU Constitution and Bylaws, the SSMU Constitution and Bylaws shall take precedence and govern. If any areas are not incorporated in this Constitution, the SSMU Constitution and Bylaws shall take precedence and govern.

