



Nigerian Students' Association Constitution (2024-2025)

1. Name

The official name of this recognized student group is “Nigerian Students’ Association”.
The acronym or abbreviation of this group is: NSA

2. Purpose and Objectives

The Nigerian voice has always been proud, hospitable, jubilant, and loud. It is the voice of various peoples united under a common banner of green, white, green; peace, unity, and progress. It is the mission of the NSA to embolden that voice by promoting an awareness of Nigerian culture, politics, and people as they exist in the global and UofT communities, while at the same time supporting the exceptional achievements of Nigerian—and other—students at UofT. In keeping with our tradition of hospitality, the NSA welcomes all who wish to join. We are committed to creating a network for students on campus in which they feel seen.

3. Membership

Membership shall be open to all UofT Community Members (Students, Staff, Alumni, Faculty, etc.), without restriction on those grounds outlined by the Ontario Human Rights Code’s Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination. While membership does not extend to non-UofT persons, they are of course welcome to attend events and open meetings. However, as stipulated by the governing council, only U of T Members may “run for election, nominate executives, and vote on constitutional amendments”. Voting membership is open to currently registered UofT students only. Members must register with a designated executive by submitting their full name and a valid email address. There will be no membership fee to join.

4. Executive List and Duties

The executive committee shall be composed of fifteen (15) elected officers. Additional positions can be added/removed from year to year as the President sees fit. These include:

- President
- Vice-President External
- Vice-President Internal
- Director of Finance
- Event Lead (1-2)
- Events Coordinator (1-3)
- Public Relations Manager (1-2)

- Secretary
- First-Year Representative
- Second-Year Representative
- Third-Year Representative

The President (This position shall only be open to members who have previously been a part of the executive team). **The President shall:**

- Oversee the operations, management and success of the group.
- Coordinate all members of the executive committee throughout the year.
- Be the official spokesperson/point of contact for the group.
- Hold signing officer authority along with the Director of Finance for financial purposes.
- Preside over board meetings as well as general meetings.
- Approve budget and assist with budget planning.
- Handle elections and ensure transition of office to future executives.

Additional responsibilities may include:

- Assume duties of any executive team member in their absence.
- Resolve any conflict within the executive committee.

The Vice-President External shall:

- Assume duties of the President in his/her absence.
- Maintain contact with external student bodies/groups including UTSU/ASSU/ULIFE.
- Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts
- Ensure that all the activities of the club meet UofT regulations and policies.
- Oversee projects assigned to the Public Relations Manager(s) and First Year Representative

Additional responsibilities may include:

- Assume duties of the Secretary in his/her absence.

The Vice-President Internal shall:

- Assume duties of the President in his/her absence.
- Maintain contact with all other executive committee members.
- Make an outline of prospective events for the school year.
- Oversee projects assigned to Event Coordinator(s)

Additional responsibilities may include:

- Assume duties of the Director of Finance in his/her absence.

The Secretary shall:

- Handle official correspondence of the organization.
- Maintain a membership database.
- Handle club membership.

- Respond to all emails received by the group.
- Record notes and minutes for all executive meetings.
- Keep all members informed of the group's events/activities throughout the year.
- Create and distribute a monthly newsletter on the 1st of every month.

The Director of Finance shall:

- Record all financial transactions of the group.
- Hold signing officer authority along with the President for financial purposes.
- Maintain a budget of income and expenses along with receipts.
- Advise members on the financial position of the group.
- Prepare an annual budget for the group as well as budgets for specific events.
- Write and submit grant/funding applications with the President and Vice-Presidents
- *Note: the Director of Finance cannot hold signing privileges on any other recognized student group

Additional responsibilities may include:

- Create invoices for group transactions (in conjunction with the President).
- Create and handle contracts for the group (in conjunction with the President).
- Handle sponsorship inquiries (in conjunction with the Vice-President External)

The Event Lead (s) shall:

- Oversee the planning and execution of all group events throughout the year.
- Coordinate event planning with Event Coordinators to ensure efficient division of tasks.
- Communicate directly with the executive team (President, Vice Presidents, etc.) to align event plans with the group's goals and vision.
- Take charge of key aspects of event logistics, ensuring that the events run smoothly and according to plan.

The Event Coordinators shall:

- Plan and organize all activities and events hosted by the group throughout the year, in conjunction with the Event Lead.
- Handle event logistics including (but not limited to): venue booking, equipment rental, catering, and coordination with external vendors, in conjunction with the Vice President External and President.
- Work with the Director of Finance to create budgets for events and ensure cost-effective solutions.
- Assist with day-of-event coordination and troubleshooting to ensure smooth event execution

The Public Relations Manager (s) shall:

- Promote and publicize all events and activities hosted by the group.
- Support the creation and distribution of promotional materials (e.g., posters, digital content) across various platforms.

- Engage with the public and members via social media, ensuring that information is accurate and timely.
- Respond to any correspondence received through the group's official social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.).

The Third Year Representative shall:

- Act as a liaison between third-year students and the executive team, advocating for their needs and concerns.
- Coordinate and plan third-year specific events and initiatives in collaboration with the Event Coordinator(s) and Event Lead.
- Assist in the planning and execution of all events, focusing on engaging third-year students.
- Advocate for third-year student needs and concerns to the executive body.
- Assist with executive duties when necessary, particularly in areas requiring increased labour or involvement.

The Second Year Representative shall:

- Act as a liaison between second-year students and the executive team, advocating for their needs and concerns.
- Coordinate and plan second-year specific events and initiatives in collaboration with the Event Coordinator(s) and Event Lead.
- Assist in the planning and execution of all events, focusing on engaging third-year students.
- Advocate for second-year student needs and concerns to the executive body.
- Assist with executive duties when necessary, particularly in areas requiring increased labour or involvement.

The First Year Representative shall:

- Shadow all executive roles and their duties in sequence throughout the academic year
- Act as a liaison between first-year students and the executive team, advocating for their needs and concerns.
- Coordinate and plan first-year specific events and initiatives in collaboration with the Event Coordinator(s) and Event Lead.
- Assist in the planning and execution of all events, focusing on engaging third-year students.
- Advocate for first-year student needs and concerns to the executive body.
- Assist with executive duties when necessary, particularly in areas requiring increased labour or involvement.

5. Rules and Regulations for Executive Committee:

Attendance and Participation

- **Mandatory Meeting Attendance:** All executive members must attend weekly or bi-weekly meetings. Absences must be communicated in advance, and missing more than two meetings without a valid reason may lead to a formal warning.
- **Active Participation:** All executives are expected to actively participate in discussions, decision-making processes, and events. Members should come prepared to meetings and contribute to the planning and execution of initiatives.
- **Follow-through on Assignments:** Executives are required to complete tasks and assignments within the agreed-upon deadlines. Failure to complete tasks without a valid reason may result in reassignment or a formal warning.

Role Transition and Handover

- **Documenting Processes:** Each executive must maintain clear and updated documentation of their role's processes and key activities, to be passed on to their successor at the end of their term.

Communication and Accountability

- **Timely Communication:** Executives are expected to respond to internal communications (emails, messages, Slack) within 24-48 hours unless otherwise specified. If a member will be unavailable for an extended period, they must inform the team in advance.
- **Monthly Progress Reports:** Executives must submit brief monthly progress reports detailing their activities, challenges, and achievements. This ensures transparency and allows the team to address any issues early.
- **Accountability Mechanism:** If an executive member consistently fails to meet their responsibilities (e.g., missing deadlines, not contributing to projects), they will be subject to a review by the President and Vice Presidents. If necessary, the executive member may be asked to step down or have their duties reassigned.

Task Delegation and Collaboration

- **Delegation of Duties:** If an executive is unable to complete a task, they must communicate this in a timely manner to the President or relevant team members so that the task can be delegated appropriately.
- **Cross-functional Collaboration:** Executive members should work together across roles to ensure the success of events and initiatives. Collaboration between PR, Events, and Finance, for example, is essential for the smooth execution of major events.

Code of Conduct

- **Professionalism:** All executives must conduct themselves with professionalism and respect, both during meetings and when representing the association publicly.

- Conflict Resolution: Any disputes or conflicts among executive members should be resolved internally and professionally, with mediation provided by the President or Vice Presidents if needed.
- Zero Tolerance for Discrimination: The association will uphold a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment, or any form of misconduct within the team. Any member found violating this policy may be subject to removal from their position.

Event and Initiative Planning

- Event Proposals: All events or initiatives must be proposed and approved during executive meetings. Proposals should include objectives, budget, and timeline, as well as anticipated outcomes.
- Evaluation of Events: After each major event or initiative, the executive team must hold a debriefing session to evaluate the success of the event, discuss lessons learned, and document improvements for future events.

Budget and Financial Oversight

- Budget Approval: All proposed event budgets must be submitted to and approved by the Director of Finance and the President before any expenses are incurred.
- Expense Reporting: Receipts and financial records must be submitted to the Director of Finance within one week of an event's completion to ensure accurate record-keeping.
- Sustainability: The executive committee will prioritize financial sustainability by ensuring that no event exceeds the group's financial capacity and by pursuing sponsorships or fundraising as needed.

6. Termination of Executives or General Members:

Any executive committee member or general member who commits an act that negatively affects the interests of the club and its members, including but not limited to, the non-disclosure of a significant or ongoing conflict of interest, may be subject to removal from their position.

In addition:

- An executive who fails to carry out their responsibilities or misses three (3) meetings without valid reason shall be issued a formal written warning by the President or Vice-President Internal.
- If the executive in question misses one (1) more meeting without valid reason, the executive may be subject to removal through a vote by the remaining executive members.

Process of Removal:

- Notice and Right to Defend: The executive or general member being considered for removal will be given formal notice and the opportunity to defend their actions before the executive committee.
- Vote for Removal: A two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the current executive committee members present is required to remove the executive or general member from their position.

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- Loss of Privileges: Upon successful removal, the individual will lose their position and any privileges associated with being a member of the executive committee or general membership of the club.

7. Elections

Intending candidates shall be required to nominate themselves for a maximum of two (2) positions. Members may also nominate other members for positions.

Candidates shall run for a maximum of two (2) positions. Candidates shall also be required to submit a candidate statement of no more than 250 words for each respective position. All members of the Elections Committee shall be unbiased in the results of the election and shall be required to disclose any and all conflicts of interest in the election. After the election is over, the Election Committee shall count the electronic ballots. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position.

- All voting group members shall be eligible to seek nomination to and cast a ballot for each voting position.
- All non-voting group members shall be eligible to seek nomination only for non-voting positions on the Executive Committee.
- Non-voting group members shall not be eligible to cast a ballot for any elected position.
- The nominee winning the plurality of votes cast in the election for each position shall be deemed the winner.
- 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.

Term of executive positions shall be from May 1st to April 30th.

8. Finances

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

The group's executive members may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the group, or of 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 any or all of its officers. Scholarships are the only form of funding that may go to the benefit of any single member or group of persons.

9. Meetings

A) Annual General Meetings (AGMs):

The group shall hold general meetings at least twice per year, i.e. once per academic term.

The Executive Committee will announce these dates two (2) weeks prior to holding the meetings. These meetings are intended to go over the group's upcoming activities/events and to propose or vote on constitutional amendments, if any. Motions will require 2/3 majority of members in attendance for a vote to be cast. The motion with the most votes will be passed.

B) Executive Meetings:

These will be held weekly or bi-weekly or/and as often as the executives see fit. These meetings are intended to go over the group's annual activity plan, plan upcoming events, and discuss financial health.

10. Amendments

If amendments are to be made to this constitution, all members must be able to compare and vote on the changes. Only those members belonging to the University of Toronto are eligible to vote. 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.