

# Syrian Students Association CONSTITUTION

## 1. Article One — Name and Purpose

- 1.1. The official name of the recognized student group is “Syrian Students Association”.
- 1.2. The official acronym or abbreviation of the group is “SSA”.
- 1.3. The purpose, objectives, mission and/or mandate of the group is to create a community-oriented association that aims to bring together students from all walks of life to celebrate and highlight Syrian culture on campus, and to come together and share their passion for Syrian culture, its traditions, music, art, cuisine, history, and other cultural intangibles, with the manifest goal of allowing Syrian students to live their shared experience with and within the greater University of Toronto community.
  - 1.3.1. The organization is committed to remaining secular, apolitical and non-partisan. The organization does neither associate with nor subscribe to any political ideology.
  - 1.3.2. The group will advocate for the rights of Syrian students on campus, to ensure the prevention of discriminatory actions against Syrian students.
  - 1.3.3. The group further aims to be part of the greater cultural ecosystem of Toronto, Canada, and the rest of the world by fostering the purpose, objectives, mission, and mandate of the group beyond the University of Toronto campus, through fundraising, advocacy, education, and engagement with the wider community.

## 2. Article Two — Membership and Membership Fee

- 2.1. The group shall maintain a list of group members.
- 2.2. Membership in the Syrian Students Association (“SSA”) is open to all registered students of the University of Toronto.
  - 2.2.1. Membership in the Syrian Students Association is obtained by signing up on the official SSA Registration Form, which shall be made available on the Syrian Students Association’s website and various social media profiles.
- 2.3. The membership fee will be \$0 per year.

## 3. Article Three — Rights of Members

- 3.1. All members shall have the right to attend all annual general meetings of the Executive Committee, the composition and duties of which shall be described in Article Four.

- 3.1.1. All members have a right to speak and raise concerns and grievances at annual general meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 3.2. All members have a right to cast votes in all group referendums.
- 3.3. All members have a right to apply for positions on the Executive Committee unless otherwise stated in this document. In light of the group's purpose being, among other things, to bring together students from all walks of life to celebrate and highlight Syrian culture on campus, students who consider themselves to be of Syrian descent and/or hold Syrian citizenship are recommended to apply for positions. Students of Lebanese, Jordanian, and/or Palestinian citizenship and/or descent are automatically considered to be of Syrian descent.
- 3.4. All members have a right to propose and vote on amendments to the Constitution.

#### 4. Article Four – Executive Committee

- 4.1. The group shall have an Executive Committee.
- 4.2. The Executive Committee shall be composed of five (5) voting members.
  - 4.2.1. The term for all positions on the Executive Committee shall be from May 1st to April 30th.
- 4.3. All members of the Executive Committee must be currently registered students of the University of Toronto.
- 4.4. No person may serve as a financial authority or signing authority for the group if they are currently serving as a financial authority or signing authority for another recognized student group at the University of Toronto.
- 4.5. The Executive Committee may appoint Directors and/or Coordinators to sit on various committees. These Directors and Coordinators must be group members, and shall not hold executive decision-making authority and are not eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 4.6. The Executive Committee shall be composed of a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, an Event Coordinator, and a Marketing Director.
- 4.7. The President shall:
  - 4.7.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
  - 4.7.2. Oversee the operations, management, and success of the group,

- 4.7.3. Serve as spokesperson for the group,
- 4.7.4. Uphold the organizational commitments of the group,
- 4.7.5. Hold signing and financial authority along with the Treasurer,
- 4.7.6. Preside over meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 4.7.7. Ensure a transition of office from one year to the next.

4.8. The Vice-President shall:

- 4.8.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 4.8.2. Assume and split duties of the President in their absence,
- 4.8.3. Ensure activities of the club comply with policies of the University of Toronto,
- 4.8.4. Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts,
- 4.8.5. Remain as an equal voice to the President within the organization to ensure a balance of power within the group.
- 4.8.6. Record minutes, protocols, and notes for meetings.

4.9. The Treasurer shall:

- 4.9.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 4.9.2. Record all financial transactions of the group,
- 4.9.3. Hold signing and financial authority along with the President,
- 4.9.4. Maintain a budget of income and expenses,
- 4.9.5. Advise members on financial position of the group,
- 4.9.6. Prepare an annual budget for the group.

4.10. The Event Coordinator shall:

- 4.10.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 4.10.2. Coordinate and plan events throughout the year,
- 4.10.3. Remain within budget for all events,
- 4.10.4. Maintain a calendar of events,

- 4.10.5. Ensure all events remain focused on promoting Syrian culture,
- 4.10.6. Maintain a list of event attendees,
- 4.10.7. Ensure that all fees and gate receipts obtained at events are transferred to the Treasurer,

4.11. The Marketing Director shall:

- 4.11.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 4.11.2. Maintain a list of group members,
- 4.11.3. Maintain the group website and member contact list,
- 4.11.4. Run and maintain all social media accounts,
- 4.11.5. Publicize all events through social media accounts,
- 4.11.6. Ensure planned events are shared with the greater community at the university,
- 4.11.7. Be responsible for all outreach efforts towards Syrian students at the university not already registered with the group,
- 4.11.8. Notify all members of annual general meetings.

## 5. Article Five— Applications to the Executive Committee

5.1. Members serving on the Executive Committee (“Executives”) shall hold one (1) position for a period of one (1) year, and may serve for one (1) subsequent year should they choose to, after which their term ends.

5.1.1. Any Executive who has held a position for two (2) years consecutively may not reapply for the same position.

5.1.2. Any Executive who has held a position for two (2) years consecutively may apply for an alternate position within the Executive Committee.

5.2. All positions on the Executive Committee shall be filled through an annual application process.

5.3. All members of Syrian citizenship and/or descent shall be eligible to apply for positions on the Executive Committee.

5.4. Members wishing to apply for positions on the Executive Committee (“Applicants”) shall do so through the SSA Executive Nomination Form (“Nomination Form”), which shall be made available on the Syrian Students Association’s website and various social media

profiles from March 1st to March 15th yearly.

5.5. All Nomination Form submissions shall be read by Executives.

5.6. Applicants who are deemed to be qualified by the Executives shall be interviewed in person by at least two (2) Executives. The goal of the interview shall be to help the Executives ascertain the Applicant's aptitude and qualifications.

5.6.1. The interview process shall take place from March 16th to March 31st.

5.7. The elections must be held in a fair and transparent manner. All new Executives shall have their name and photograph be made public on the group's various social media accounts, in a manner accessible to all members.

5.8. For all unfilled positions, the remaining Executives will share the duties and responsibilities until persons can be found to fulfill the positions.

## 6. Article Six — Finances

6.1. The Treasurer shall keep an active record of income and expenses.

6.2. The Treasurer shall present the group's updates on the group's financial position at meetings of the Executive Committee.

6.3. The Executive Committee must approve all expenditures over \$250.00 through a majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee.

6.4. The group will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus chapter of a commercial organization or corporation.

6.5. The group will not pay salaries to any of its Executives.

## 7. Article Seven— Meetings

7.1. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly.

7.1.1. These monthly meetings shall be exclusively open to Executives.

7.2. The Executive Committee shall hold annual general meetings at least twice per year in order to provide the general membership an opportunity to review the group's annual activity plan, financial health, and propose or vote on constitutional amendments.

7.2.1. These annual general meetings shall be open to all members.

7.3. The Executive Committee must announce the date of an annual general meeting to the general membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

## 8. Article Eight— Termination of Membership

- 8.1. The Executive Committee may revoke the membership of any member who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the club and its members, including but not limited to, non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest. This includes but is not limited to attempting to politicize the group, racist and/or sectarian and/or bigoted and/or derogatory and/or discriminatory behaviour, demeaning and degrading the reputation of the group.
- 8.2. A vote to revoke membership must be held at a meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 8.3. A three-fifths (60%) majority of the Executive Committee is required to approve any motion to revoke membership.
- 8.4. Any member facing removal shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Committee to the general membership.
- 8.5. In the case of an appeal, a simple majority vote at a meeting of the general membership shall be required to sustain the revocation of membership.
- 8.6. The revocation of membership is permanent.
- 8.7. Following a revocation of membership, the now-former member will be removed from the club's list of members and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club, including but not limited to applying for a position on the Executive Committee.
- 8.8. Executives are subject to the same revocation of membership process as general members.
  - 8.8.1. Executives may vote on the revocation of their own membership.

## 9. Article Nine— Amendments to the Constitution

- 9.1. All members may propose amendments to the Constitution.
- 9.2. All proposed amendments to the Constitution shall require a two-thirds majority vote to be passed at a general meeting.
- 9.3. The Executive Committee shall submit the revised Constitution to staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto within two (2) weeks.
- 9.4. Amendments to the Constitution shall take effect only once the revised Constitution has been approved by staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto.