



# CONSTITUTION AND ARTICLES

Constitution of the University of Toronto St. George Campus Tamil Students' Association

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## **NAME AND MISSION STATEMENT**

### **1. Name**

- a. The official name of the recognized student group is the University of Toronto St. George Campus Tamil Students' Association.
- b. The official acronym/abbreviation of the group is UTSG TSA.

### **2. Mission Statement**

- a. To promote awareness of the Tamil culture, language, and heritage throughout the UTSG campus.
- b. To serve as a forum where Tamil students, and students affiliated with Tamil language, culture or people can come together to organize and participate in various different types of events and projects.
- c. To bring awareness to a range of social issues affecting the Tamil community on a local and global scale.
- d. To serve as an open forum where events that are cultural and non-cultural meant to bring Tamils and non-Tamils together are organized freely by its members.
- e. To support fellow Tamil students to pursue their future endeavours.

# **ARTICLE I – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

## **1. Members**

- a. General membership to the Tamil Students Association (TSA) shall be open to all registered students (part-time or full-time) at the University of Toronto St. George, University of Toronto Mississauga, and University of Toronto Scarborough, regardless of language, race, colour, creed, ethnicity, or sex.
- b. General members will be registered on the team through an application process.

## **2. Membership Rights**

Members may:

- a. Attend General Meetings
- b. Vote in the Elections, General Meetings, and By-Elections.
- c. Nominate members for executive positions.

## ARTICLE II - MEETINGS

### 1. General Meetings

#### 1.1 Principles

- a. The TSA must hold General Meetings at least once every session\*\* at a location and date set out by majority of the executive council.
- b. General Meetings shall serve primarily as a forum for interaction between the Executive Council, Coordinator Council and General Members.
- c. At all General Meetings, the General Members shall be allowed the opportunity to offer input and feedback with regards to current TSA activities.
- d. All Executive Members shall be present at the General Meetings. If circumstances arise in which a particular Executive Member is unable to attend a General Meeting, they will be responsible for notifying the President at the earliest. The absent executive shall make necessary arrangements for the progress of their current activities within the organization to be presented.
- e. The General Meetings shall additionally provide an opportunity for the Executive Council to propose new projects and activities to the General Members.
- f. The Secretary shall take minutes of all General Meetings. These minutes shall be made available online as soon as possible after the Meetings.
- g. If the Secretary cannot attend the meeting, the President must appoint another executive to take minutes.

#### 1.2 General Meetings may be called at any time by:

- a. A majority vote of a Board meeting; or
- b. Executive Council; or
- c. A written request, stating the purpose of the meeting, signed by no less than 20 members of the Association.

#### 1.3 Notice

Notice shall be provided to members fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

#### 1.4 Quorum

- a. The quorum required for a General Meeting shall be no less than 10 members (excluding Executive Members).
- b. If 10 members are not present throughout the meeting, the meeting cannot proceed, and the President shall present an alternative meeting date.

\*\* Session: The academic division of the calendar year in accordance to the University of Toronto's 3 semesters (Fall, Winter, Summer)

## 2. Executive Meetings

There shall be two (2) types of Board of Directors Meetings:

- a. Scheduled Meetings
- b. Emergency Meetings

### 2.1 Scheduled Meetings

- a. The TSA Executive Council shall hold meetings at least once every month at a location decided upon by the Executive Council.
- b. Executive Council meetings shall serve as a forum for discussion over topics of immediate interest or concern to the organization.
- c. At least two thirds of the Executive Council must be present to maintain quorum.
- d. If two thirds of the council are not present throughout the meeting, the meeting cannot proceed and the President shall present an alternative meeting date.
- e. Each Executive Council member shall update the Executive Council with the status of their current activities and projects with a monthly progress report. This will present the Executive Council the opportunity to offer feedback with regards to these activities.
- f. The Secretary shall take minutes of all Executive Council Meetings. Meeting minutes shall be sent to all Executive Council members. If the Secretary cannot attend the meeting, the President must appoint another executive to take minutes.

### 2.2 Emergency Meetings

- a. Emergency meetings shall be called with twenty-four (24) hours notice by 2 Executive Council members.
- b. Quorum for meetings is 5 Executive Council members.

## **ARTICLE III – EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

1. The composition of the Board of Directors shall be comprised of the following Executive positions:
  - i. President
  - ii. Vice President, Internal
  - iii. Vice President, External
  - iv. Admin Director
  - v. Finance Director
  - vi. Marketing and Media Director
  - vii. Awareness Director (2)
  - viii. Cultural Director (2)
  - ix. Social Director, Internal (2)
  - x. Social Director, External (2)

## **ARTICLE IV - ELECTIONS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### **1. Schedule of Elections**

- a. Association must hold:
  - i. An annual election open to all registered University of Toronto students in the Winter Session for all voting positions on the Executive Council.
- b. The schedule of elections shall include:
  - i. The date, time and location of the General Elections can be selected by TSA Executive Council by a simple majority.
  - ii. Notice of the date of the elections shall be given to members by website and listservs at least fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the nomination period.

### **2. Elections Commissioner**

- a. The Elections commissioner shall be the standing President from the ending term.
- b. The Elections Commissioner should follow the rules and guidelines set in the Constitution for the nomination process, the election and any by-elections that may occur.
- c. In order to make amendments to the election rules and guidelines, it would first have to be ratified by the general members and then would have to be approved by Ulife.
- d. If any General Member of the TSA feels Elections Commissioner will not be able to perform their duties or has not performed their duties, they shall with the signatures of at least ten (10) other General Members propose the removal of the Elections Commissioner. The General Members can by a simple majority remove the Elections Commissioner. However, prior to removal, the Elections Commissioner must be given a chance to defend his/her actions. The same General Assembly can nominate another commissioner with support from five (5) General Members and the nominated candidate with the highest support from the General Assembly will be declared the Elections Commissioner.

### **3. Candidates, Nominations and Voting**

- a. The nominations for all Executive positions require the candidates to address the Elections Commissioner, via email (which will be provided), expressing their interest in a particular position and their qualifications. The Elections Commissioner must allow all nominees to move forward in the elections, provided they are students at the University of Toronto. The majority vote of the general membership must have the final say in accepting nominations. However, nominations which are received past the deadline set by the elections commissioner will not be accepted. The elections commissioner will have the authority to prepare ballot papers, as he or she feels fit.
- b. Candidates are preferred to be full-time or part-time students attending the University of Toronto St. George.
- c. Voting is only permitted to registered full-time or part-time students at the University of Toronto across all-three campuses.



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- d. For the position of President, it is preferred that the candidate has been on the Executive Council for at least one term\*\*.
- e. For the position of Vice-President, it is preferred that the candidate has been on the Executive Council for at least half a term.
- f. Each nominee may give a speech on the day of the election. The contents of the speech, as well as any time constraints, will be set by the Elections Commissioner.
- g. In the event that there is only one nominee for a given position, there will be a Yes/No ballot where the general membership may accept or reject the candidate. In the event of a No outcome, a by-election will be held for that position.
- h. Where multiple candidates exist for a given position, balloting rules will be set by the Elections Commissioner. The candidate(s) with the highest number of votes will be declared the winner(s).
- i. Two scrutinizers, to monitor the ballot counting, can be appointed by ten (10) General Members before the ballot counting period.

### 4. By-Elections

- a. A by-election will be held in all instances where an executive position remains vacant after the election, either due to the position failing to draw nominees or to No outcome in a Yes/No ballot. A by-election will also be held in all instances where an executive resigns or is removed from the Executive Council.
- b. The proceedings of the by-election, including notification of the by-election date and appointment of the Elections Commissioner, must comply with other sections of this constitution.

### 5. Emergency Appointment/Elections

- a. An emergency appointment or election will be sought after in the case of vacant administrative roles that the executive team finds necessary to be filled to continue operations. The emergency elections can occur if the following positions remain unfilled proceeding the April elections and several qualifying candidates are available. These roles include:
  - i. Vice President, External
  - ii. Vice President, Internal
  - iii. Secretary
  - iv. Treasurer
  - v. Communications Director
- b. In the case that no qualifying candidates come forward, the team will consider an emergency appointment to those who have served as the following:
  - i. Vice President, External & Internal
    - A general member for a minimum of 2 years
    - A current non-administrative executive with a minimum of 2-years of experience on the team.
  - ii. Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Director
    - A general member for 1 year
    - Current non-administrative executive

- c. Current executives who succeed in the emergency elections or are appointed must resign from their current role before accepting the new role.

*Any other role that remains vacant other than the ones listed above, can only be filled through a formal by-election. If the executive team does not find an administrative role necessary to be filled prior to by-elections, the team may proceed with the role vacant.*

\*\* Term: A duration in which a position on the Executive Council is held for approximately 1 full calendar year.

## **ARTICLE V- COORDINATOR COUNCIL**

1. The Coordinator Council shall only consist of registered students at the University of Toronto as per Article I.
2. There shall be at least one Coordinator in each respective department. These departments include the following:
  - i) Finance
  - ii) Marketing and Media
  - iii) Awareness
  - iv) Cultural
  - v) Social
3. Members shall be inducted into the Executive Council for assisting the TSA in organizing events, undertaking major tasks and for working as an advisory/assistance body to the Executive Council.
4. Interested members shall be self-nominated by applying for the respective coordinator position and be inducted by a simple majority approval from the Executive Council.
5. If the Coordinator is seen unfit by the Executive Council, the Executive Council can remove him/her by a simple majority. However, the Coordinator must be given an opportunity to defend his/her position. They also have the right to appeal before the general membership in which the majority vote of the general membership will have the final say on the matter.

## ARTICLE VI - DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### 1. Responsibility of the Executive Council

- a. The Board consists of Executives elected through the annual election or by-election and must be registered students (part-time or full-time) at the University of Toronto. They must be voted in by all **eligible voters** who are only registered students at the University of Toronto. The Board shall be the body governing and examining the affairs of the Association. Important decision will be made and finalized by the Executive Council.

### 2. Responsibility of Executive Members

#### 2.1 General responsibilities of executives:

- a. Perform all duties detailed in the respective executive member outlines.
- b. Bring the concerns of peers to Executive Council meetings.
- c. Work with other executives to accomplish common objectives of the organization.
- d. If there is a vacant non-administrative position on the Executive Council, the Executive Council shall assume the duties of the vacant position. *All vacant administrative roles must first be considered for an **emergency appointment/election** as defined in Article IV-section 5.*
- e. Must maintain social media responsibility as representatives of UTSG TSA through promotion of posts, events and initiatives while also maintaining professional online etiquette.

#### 2.2 President:

- a. Preferred to have served as a member on UTSG TSA for a minimum of 2 years. At least 1 year as a general member and 1 year on the Executive Council.
- b. The position of Executive President shall be given to the leading candidate contesting the position for the Presidency and securing a minimum of 50% of the total votes that were cast during the general election. If any of the candidates fails to garner the required 50% of the total votes cast, then the two leading candidates shall face another round of election on the same day of the General Election and the candidate with the higher percentage of votes shall be declared as the President of the TSA.
- c. The President shall represent the Tamil community at the University of Toronto St. George.
- d. Responsible for the functioning of the Executive Council.
- e. Preside over all Executive Meetings and appoint others to preside over Executive Meetings at his/her discretion.
- f. Maintain relationship/communication with campus and non-campus committees, other student groups or student unions and media.
- g. Responsible for managing the organization's requested messages and responding to any inquiries.

2.3 Vice-Presidents:

- a. Preferred to have served on the Executive Council for a minimum of 1 year.
- b. There shall be two (2) seats in the council for Vice-Presidents: the Vice-President Internal and the Vice-President External. These seats shall be given to the candidates with the highest number of votes for their respective positions.
- c. If the position of President is vacant, the Vice-Presidents shall assume the duties of President until a By-Election can be held.

2.3.1 Vice-President Internal:

- a. Preside over Executive Meetings in the absence of the President.
- b. Work with the President and the Directors to assist in managing any projects initiated or coordinate by the organization.
- c. Work with other executives in identifying and managing any projects that could emphasize the organization's role within University of Toronto St. George.
- d. Oversees all team members in fulfilling their responsibilities

2.3.2 Vice-President External:

- a. Preside over Executive Meetings in the absence of the President.
- b. Work with other executives to identify opportunities and strategies to accomplish the goals of the organization within the Tamil community and the mainstream community.
- c. Maintain relationship/communication with non-campus committees, other student groups or student unions and media.
- d. Inform the organization of upcoming events/activities organized by non-campus committees, other student groups or student unions.

2.4 Admin Director:

- a. There shall be one (1) seat in the Executive Council for a Secretary and the leading candidate for this position shall obtain this post.
- b. Take minutes of all Executive, Board and General Meetings and provide General Meeting minutes typed for posting online.
- c. Be responsible for the overall booking of halls and rooms for TSA events.
- d. Communicate and maintain a good relationship with the University of Toronto St. George

2.5 Finance Director:

- a. There shall be one (1) seat in the Executive Council for a Treasurer and the leading candidate for this position shall obtain this post.
- b. Keep track and be co-responsible along with the President for the TSA bank account and financial situation.
- c. Responsible for collection of funds & collecting of any outstanding debt.
- d. Work with Admin Director and Presidents to apply for funding opportunities on campus.
- e. Provide an estimated cost report for a planned event beforehand to the Executive Council and report on the financial situation after every major event at the next available Executive Meeting.
- f. Lead and organize sponsorship outreach strategies with the support of the finance coordinators.

2.6 Marketing and Media Director

- a. There shall be one (1) seat in the Executive Council for a Communications Director and the leading candidate for this position shall obtain this post.
- b. Responsible for the creation of promotional material for publication in liaison with the marketing and media coordinator(s).
- c. Ideate strategic promotional strategies for events.
- d. Responsible for press releases at the appropriate time, and for maintaining the relevant social media platforms for the organization.
- e. Responsible for managing the organization's requested messages and responding to any inquiries.

## 2.8 Cultural Director

- a. There shall be two (2) seats in the Executive Council for a Cultural Director and the leading candidates for this position shall obtain these posts.
- b. Organize and lead events that promote the Tamil language on a cultural lens.
- c. Work to coordinate projects that promote Tamil language and literature, and knowledge and awareness of Tamil language and literature at the University of Toronto St. George and amongst Tamil students in general.
- d. Work with the university administration to increase educational facilities for the study of Tamil culture and society.

## 2.9 Awareness Director

- a. There shall be two (2) seats in the Executive Council for an Awareness Director and the leading candidates for this position shall obtain these posts.
- b. Organize and lead initiatives and events focused on bringing awareness to social injustice, mental health, and other pressing topics within the Tamil community.
- c. Be actively aware of ongoing awareness initiatives and movements within the Tamil community and ideate strategies for TSA to get involved.

## 2.10 Social Director, Internal

- a. There shall be two (2) seats in the Executive Council for a Social Internal Director and the leading candidates for this position shall obtain these posts.
- b. Organize and lead on-campus events that bring opportunities for TSA members and UTSG students to socialize, stay active or de-stress.
- c. Promote and encourage team bonding activities throughout team meetings and other TSA events.

## 2.11 Social Director, External

- a. There shall be two (2) seats in the Executive Council for a Social External Director and the leading candidates for this position shall obtain these posts.
- b. Organize and lead off-campus events of a social nature in liaison with the presidents, social coordinators, and other executives.
- c. Work with the Presidents and Finance Director to outline specific budgets and financial strategies for events.
- d. Work with the Marketing and Media Director to ideate and develop strategic plans for promotion and outreach.

## **ARTICLE VI - RESIGNATION, REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS**

### **1. Guidelines**

- a. If an executive member wishes to resign from the Executive Council, they must submit their resignation in writing to the Executive Council, providing the reason for their resignation.
- b. The resigning executive shall do their utmost to see that information relating to any projects that he/she is working on is passed on to the Executive Council at the earliest to ensure the smooth functioning of the TSA.

### **2. Removal of Executive Council Members**

- c. TSA Executives will be removed if they fail to do their tasks as outlined by the Constitution or fail to attend (3) consecutive Executive Meetings.
- d. An Executive Member can be immediately removed upon the suggestion of one Executive Council member and the support of at least two thirds of the Executive Council.
- e. A motion for the removal of any executive member can be brought forth in a General, Scheduled, or Emergency meeting by one Executive Member. Two thirds of the Executive Council must approve of this motion for the executive member to be removed.
- f. The removed executive shall do their utmost to see that information relating to any projects that he/she is working on is passed on to the executive council at the earliest to ensure the smooth functioning of the TSA.
- g. If an Executive member is removed, they must have the right to defend themselves and appeal before the general membership. The majority vote of the general membership must have the final say on the matter.

### **3. Replacement of Removed or Resigned Executive Council Members**

- a. Once an Executive Member is removed or has resigned from the council, by-elections for the vacant position must be held within one (1) month of the resignation or removal, in accordance with ARTICLE VI of this Constitution, if deemed necessary by the current executive council.
- b. During the period between removal and by-election the Executive Council shall assume the duties of the vacant position.



## **ARTICLE VII - CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

### **1. Guidelines**

- a. Constitutional amendments must be approved by a referendum held at a General Meeting in which the TSA Executive Council explains the significance of each amendment. All members of the group, whether a part of the executive council or a general member have the right to propose constitutional amendments. These changes will be voted upon at general meetings.
- b. For amendments to be ratified, at least two thirds of the General Member's present vote must favour of the amendment.
- c. Notification of the General Meeting in which the referendum will be held shall be provided to all General members with at least two (2) weeks' notice.