

# **United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter**

## **Article 1**

Section 1: Our name and affiliation.

United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter is a chapter of United for Literacy, which is a Canada wide, volunteer based, literacy organisation.

Section 2: Our purpose and goal.

United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter was founded for the purpose of teaching people to read and write and to nurture an environment favourable to lifelong learning in the community close to the campus. We believe in literacy as a right and we work to achieve literacy for all.

Section 3: Our guiding principles.

1. Everyone can learn, and everyone has a right to literacy.
2. We go where people are.
3. We value innovation and encourage people to bring us new ideas about learning.
4. Students will decide what they want to learn and how they want to learn it.
5. Volunteer tutors will help achieve the aforementioned principle (Sect 3:4).
6. We are committed to working with people who have been rejected or not given adequate learning opportunities elsewhere.

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## **Article 2**

Individuals become members of United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter through expressing a desire to volunteer with our programs, and then completing the screening process, which is open to all current U of T students looking to support and work alongside the non-profit organization. Membership is open to any U of T community member, including students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Voting membership is only open to currently registered U of T students. Members participate and contribute to our programs through sharing their knowledge and skills. Members or volunteers, as title deems appropriate, are not required to provide the organisation with any monetary means in the form of fees and/ or collections.

Members/ Volunteers are required to follow the following guidelines and/ or principles that United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter encourages through active participation in our programs in various communities that surround U of T St. George.

1. Freely accept the terms and conditions that are stated by the Volunteer Canada.
2. Commit time for the minimum period of six (6) months to volunteer in our community.
3. Volunteer for the minimum period of between two-four (2-4) hours each week.
4. Freely accept the terms and conditions that subject all members to a police check to ensure safety of clients (primarily children) and hence conform to guidelines as stated by United for Literacy.
5. Help promote United for Literacy and our primary purpose of encouraging literacy in Canada.
6. Help preserve United for Literacy commitment to the individuals, our partners and the communities we serve as literacy volunteers.
7. To attend various conferences, orientations and training sessions to be held at pre-determined times during the committed period of volunteering.
8. To maintain the principles that United for Literacy has represented since 1899.
9. To behave in accordance with United for Literacy policies for volunteers.
10. Achieve our mission by the following proven methods:
  - i) Operating and refining small, high quality, literacy program.
  - ii) Developing and launching new and innovative programs.
  - iii) Training external members from the community and/ or new members in the setup of similar programs or the development of their own.
11. To behave in accordance with Volunteer Canada's policies for volunteers.

United for Literacy believes everyone has the capacity to help another person improve their literacy or English language skills. United for Literacy also provides volunteers with comprehensive training and follow-up support.

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### **Article 3**

#### **Officers and Duties**

All officers are elected so long as they are a currently registered U of T student serving a full academic year at the time of the election. All officer positions shall be filled through an annual election. The elections must be held in a nonbiased manner. No individual who is seeking election may participate in planning or administering the election. All registered U of T students shall be eligible to seek nomination to and cast a ballot for each officer position. The nominee winning the plurality of votes cast in the election for each position shall be deemed the winner.

Officers are free to choose to step down due to personal reasons. As positions become available, officers are replaced. Members present their name to a nominating committee who then decide upon whether the person can fulfil the duties of the position.

Titles and references to officers are deemed unnecessary unless for formal reasons/ purposes. At which time internal organisational titles of the Organisational Team

members may be applied to officers who are also recognised externally by the following positions:

**Chair:**

- work closely with the United for Literacy Community Coordinator to plan and organize program, and to ensure mission and policies of United for Literacy are being implemented
- provide direction and support to OT members to carry out program
- take lead in organizing and carrying out recruitment strategy for fall
- become familiar with all U of T United for Literacy program sites and community partners
- support Site Coordinators as needed with planning and organizing of programs
- plan and organize special fundraising and literacy awareness events
- mobilize OT members to assist with events and activities
- coordinate and chair monthly team meetings
- oversee campus office and requirements for club status
- oversee bank account, including deposits and payments
- implement program decisions following policies and mission of United for Literacy

**Site Coordinator:**

- meet with community partner to plan and organize program
- maintain regular communication with partner to ensure smooth running of program
- assist with tutor interviews, particularly for your program site
- orient new volunteers, referred by Volunteer Coordinator, to your program site
- maintain regular communication with volunteers at your site
- provide tutor support and guidance
- maintain or oversee tutor attendance records
- plan and organize special learning activities (i.e. poetry or story writing, word games) for learners in homework clubs
- plan and organize volunteer and learner recognition events
- attend scheduled OT meetings and participate in other events and activities
- other responsibilities as assigned by OT Chair

**Special Events and Communications Coordinator:**

- Spearhead the organization of one or more special events on campus during the year to raise awareness among students about the issue of literacy and United for Literacy, and/or to raise money to support our program.

- Recruit other volunteers and OT members as needed to assist with organizing and running the event
- Outreach and liaise with other campus groups and organizations
- Take the lead in planning and organizing volunteer recognition/appreciation parties or other events as decided upon by the Organizational Team
- Attend regular OT meetings and participate in other events and activities
- other responsibilities as assigned by OT Chair

**Webmaster:**

- At beginning of year, update calendar, OT list, program site info, recruitment and orientation sessions, office hours
- Upload revised tutor application forms, tutor training agenda, etc.
- Post info on upcoming events, attend event and take photos (if possible) or obtain photos to post after event, with short write-up
- Upload newsletter
- Double-check all links on all pages are working
- Two to 3 times a year, check how much space all files are using on the webserver.
- Update various webpages with summertime messages at end of program session

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**Article 4**

**Rules of Election**

Currently registered UofT student members are permitted to run or be nominated for executive positions. Any executive appointments to the executive position shall be ratified at a general meeting through majority vote. Only members from the U of T community are eligible to participate in voting.

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**Article 5**

**Dues and Finances**

Section 1: Donations and Fundraising

- a) Money that is fundraised or donated to United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter shall be deposited directly into the United for Literacy at U of T St George Student Chapter account.
- b) Money in the United for Literacy at U of T St George Student Chapter account can be used for providing program site resources, funding events, and for making voluntary donations to the United for Literacy parent organization.

- c) Members are not required to donate, pay membership fees, or provide United for Literacy at U of T St George Student Chapter with any other monetary means.

Section 2: Budget

- a) A budget for the school year will be presented at the first general members meeting in September, where members can vote in favour of or against the proposed spending.
  - b) The budget will be prepared by the members of the executive.
  - c) Any proposed spending that is not used will remain in the bank account, to be available for use in the following year's budget.
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**Article 6**

**Meetings and Events**

Meetings for members/volunteers are designated by United for Literacy at U of T St. George Student Chapter. Details regarding the event, time and purpose are relayed and disseminated to all members/ volunteers prior to the occurrence of that event/ meeting.

Conferences, meetings and special literacy based events are also conducted in accordance with national and global literacy events.

Meetings and events will have no predefined times of occurrence excepting in the case of monthly meetings of the executives and the annual general meeting.

Meetings and events are optional attendance to all members/ volunteers and are encouraged for the betterment of skills and learning capabilities of members/ volunteers.

An agenda is set prior to the meetings by the Chair. Members are excused from attending meetings for the following reasons:

1. Examinations.
  2. Personal assignment deadlines
  3. Holidays of any nature as stated in U of T St. George Student Chapter's Lecture Schedule, including provincial and national.
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**Article 7**

**Amendments**

Any amendments to the constitution shall be brought forth during the annual general meeting and any change shall be ratified by a majority vote.

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