



University of Toronto's Student Environmental Resource Network Constitution
Amended through AGM on March 15, 2021, Petitioned by UTERN Policy Committee

Article 1: Name

The official name of the organization shall be University of Toronto's Student Environmental Resource Network. The abbreviation of the name shall be UTERN.

Article 2: Purpose

The mandate of UTERN shall be to:

- 1) Establish a network to encourage and improve communications within and beyond the environmental community at the University of Toronto.
- 2) Engage students, faculty, and staff to participate in and promote region-based environmental planning practices and sustainability on all three University of Toronto campuses.
- 3) Encourage partnerships among groups and individuals within and outside of the environmental community to promote deeper understandings of environmentalism on campus.
- 4) Acting as a mediator, facilitator, and liaison by which groups and individuals on campus interested in environmental issues, can pool their resources and network.
- 5) Provide resources and ongoing support for marginalized and Indigenous groups at UofT while going beyond simple themes of reconciliation and fundamentally promoting decolonization at UofT.

In addition to the principles above, UTERN will follow the principles and goals outlined under the Equity Policy of UTERN.

Article 3: Membership

- 1) Individual membership is open to all students, staff, faculty, and alumni of the University of Toronto.
 - a. An individual is considered a member in good standing if they are an undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Toronto and have paid a membership fee for at least one semester for the year.
- 2) Group membership may include student organizations, University of Toronto academic departments/programs, and facilities located at the University of Toronto.



- 3) There is a membership fee of \$0.25 per semester (or also known as the levy) to be considered a member.
 - a. The membership fee is the set levy for full-time undergraduate and full-time and part-time graduate students across all three campuses.
- 4) No discrimination on the basis of ascribed race, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation, and other forms of identifiable characteristics will be tolerated within UTERN.

Article 4: Structure

The Executive

- President
- Treasurer
- Project Manager
- Executive Secretary
- Network Executive Liaison
- Events and Campaigns Coordinator
- Marketing Director
- UTM/UTSC/Grad Coordinator

Events

- Events and Campaigns Coordinator
- Marketing Director
- Network Executive Liaison
- UTM/UTSC/Grad Coordinators

Constituency representations include: UTM Coordinator, UTSC Coordinator, Grad Coordinator

Regular Committees

Finance

- President
- Treasurer
- Project Manager
- Executive Secretary

The Network

The network shall be composed of the Network Executive Liaison, Directors, Coordinators, and the participants of the Environmental Working Group. Membership will be determined by participation in EWGs on a semesterly basis. The network membership list will be updated in a separate policy document.

Policy

- President
- Other executives dependent on policy priorities of the year

Sub & Ad-Hoc Committees

The UTERN Executive by consensus, shall decide at the beginning of the year, any sub committees and their composition if necessary

- 1) All Executive Members must be University of Toronto students.
- 2) Executive Secretary and President must attend all meetings if possible.
- 3) The Executive is responsible for calling all annual general meetings.
- 4) Appointed and elected officials, excluding non-elected but hired members of the UTERN



Executive team, shall have voting rights on decisions.

- 5) The Executive is responsible for conducting a discussion of funding applications and discussing the related budgets to ensure that all funding amounts and budgets are reasonable before the vote.
- 6) Decisions will generally be made under a Consensus Decision Making Model, however, there are exceptions to this rule listed under this clause.

5.6.A. Decisions not limited those addressing the structure of UTERN, Financial Policy, Governing and Operating Principles, Hiring and Appointment Decisions (Including the appointment of the Chief Returning Officer) shall be decided upon by votes of at least 75% of the executive present.

5.6.B. All decisions undefined in the previous clause shall be decided upon by a simple majority vote, but can be subject to limitations by future policy and executive committees (50%+1).

- 7) Advisors and other invited guests have speaking rights in all meetings but do not vote on funding decisions.
- 8) Appointment is by a positive 50+1 vote executive. Hiring/volunteers is done by the President in consultation with the wider executive team.

a. The process of filling positions on the UTERN Executive Team is as follows:

Executive Members Process (All are eligible for CCR)
Elections
By-Elections
Hiring
Appointment/Volunteers

- 9) If any executive member has a conflict of interest resulting from other affiliations, that member is required to declare the conflict and refrain from debate and voting.
- 10) Each UTERN Executive member has one equal vote. In regards to decisions that deal with their constituency, UTSC, UTM, and Graduate Coordinators have a weighted vote of 2.0.
- 11) Groups must attend the first EWG meeting of the semester or send apologies to the Network Executive Liaison with indication of their intention to continue their membership in the network.
- 12) Groups maintaining their membership agree to have their group listed on the UTERN website.
- 13) Constituency Representatives must belong to their respective constituency. Constituency Representatives that are appointed by the executive body can only vote on constituency issues.



- 14) The treasurer shall be hired by the president in consultation with the wider executive team.
- 15) A Policy Committee requires the membership of at least 3 executive members (including the president).
- 16) Spending Limitations for each subcommittee shall be decided upon through consensus (75%) at the beginning of the year through the executive committee. Financial regulations may be further expanded upon in the Financial Policy of UTERN. Financial regulations must be enacted before the midyear fiscal update in January. The Finance and Policy Committees must jointly accept equivalent changes to the financial policy before matters come to the Executive Committee. Each subcommittee may make decisions on how to allocate funds within their designated budget. Spending must be reported back to the executive committee but need not be approved by the executive committee unless projected spending exceeds the designated budget allocation, in order to achieve their designated objectives
- 17) The Network Executive Liaison or equivalent may codify an endorsement and voting structure relating to the Environmental Working Groups under a policy designed with the consultation of EWG members. This process bypasses the Operational Policy Process and instead only requires the simple majority (50% + 1) approval of the UTERN Executive Team.
- 18) In addition to any financial regulations within this policy, UTERN's Financial Policy is a quasi-constitutional document subject to the procedures under the Operational Policy Amendment Process. This clause delegates constitutional authority to the UTERN Financial Policy and places most financial regulations under the policy document.

Article 5: Executive Positions

Description of positions: the description of positions will be defined in a separate document for UTERN job descriptions

- 1) Any changes to the description of positions shall require a positive/negative vote of 75% or more of the executive.
- 2) Proposed changes to descriptions of positions may only be brought forth by members of the policy committee or current executive.
- 3) Proposed changes must be raised at least a month before UTERN's annual election or by elections.
- 4) UTERN's executive shall be composed of elected and appointed officials.

Article 6: Advisors

- 1) Advisors are staff and/or faculty at the University of Toronto appointed by the Executive and are non-voting members with speaking rights.
- 2) There should be one or more Advisors involved with UTERN for a minimum two-year term.
- 3) It is beneficial and important to reach across the different constituencies to include



advisors that have experience with that constituency.

- 4) The primary function of an Advisor is to provide guidance to the students on the Executive. This may include contributing meaningfully to discussion about proposals, administrative decisions and finances.
- 5) The advisors have the right to intervene if an executive decision is clearly unconstitutional and hence could jeopardize the future of the organization. Advisors must reach a consensus before appealing a decision of the Executive. If the advisors choose to appeal an executive decision, they are responsible for setting up a meeting with the Executive to discuss the issue. The goal of the meeting should be to reach a consensus between the Advisors and the Executive.
- 6) The Advisors will be consulted by the Executive on complex operational and application decisions.

Article 7: Meetings

- 1) The St. George campus Environment Working Group must meet at least once a month. More frequent meetings may occur if deemed necessary. All Environmental Working Group members and invited guests are welcome to the meetings.
- 2) The Environmental Working Groups on the UTSG campus run by the Network Executive Liaison, shall happen once a month between September to November, and January to March.
- 3) Mississauga UTM and Scarborough UTSC coordinators must, with the guidance of the Network Executive Liaison, hold EWGs on their respective campuses.
 - a. Mississauga (UTM) and Scarborough (UTSC) coordinators must hold at least one EWG a semester.
- 4) The Executive meets once every week during the academic school year with the exception of breaks, and at least once a month during the summer semesters. Meetings are private. Guests may participate only with prior authorization from the Executive.
- 5) All regular committees must meet at least once a month and more if necessary.
- 6) Foreseeable regrets must be sent to the Executive Secretary or President with 6-hour notice.
- 7) Quorum will consist of 50% +1 of the Executive members.
- 8) Annual General Meetings shall be called at least two weeks prior to the proposed date. Members must be informed of the meeting happening, at least two weeks prior to the proposed AGM date.
 - a. The Chair of the AGM shall be selected within executives.
 - b. The AGM shall be a place where executives must report on the activities and finances of the year.
- 9) Open Meetings can be held when the Executive perceives the need to do so in order to provide space for external input.



Article 8: Nominations

- 1) Nominations for all UTERN Executive positions shall be kept open for a two-week period or longer.
- 2) Nomination procedures shall be available on the UTERN website and from the Chief Returning Officer(s).
- 3) All nomination statements must be submitted before the nominations close.
- 4) Election details and deadlines, and description of open Executive positions shall be prominently advertised on all three campuses.
 - a. The term ‘prominently advertised’ within the UTERN Constitution will also mean strong and persistent advertisements on the satellite campuses and in the graduate constituency with connections to stakeholders on those campuses to reach more people.
- 5) These statements shall be prominently posted by the Chief Returning Officer(s) online, for informational purposes at the time of election.
- 6) The Chief Returning Officer for annual elections must be appointed within the UTERN Executive, provided that the individual selected is not returning, and will be provided with a separate and independently managed e-mail to making unilateral judgments about the administration of the election.
 - a. The CRO can be someone from the current administration for by-elections, and appointed by a consensus of executives.
- 7) Candidates seeking executive positions shall submit to the CRO the following: A candidacy statement of no more than 1000 characters or according to the voting platform and an original PDF of their ACORN invoice to show the UTERN levy paid.

Article 9: Elections

- 1) Elections for the UTERN Executive should be held annually no later than March 31st of each academic year.
- 2) A candidate requires a plurality of votes to be elected by secret first past the post ballot. Voting may occur in a consecutive 48h period via internet or paper ballot for cases requiring accessibility.
- 3) By-elections to fill empty positions can be held at any time at the discretion of the executive.
- 4) At least 2 weeks’ notice by e-mail of an election must be given to all individual and group members, and Executive members.

Article 10: Constitutional Amendments

- 1) Amending the Constitution or any parts therein shall be considered if petitioned for by 15 members.
- 2) The petitioners shall send a written copy of the proposed amendment(s) to the Executive,



vetted by the policy committee to ensure they are in accordance with the UTERN Mandate. The Executive shall, within 14 days, inform the general membership that a vote on the proposed amendment(s) shall take place at the following general meeting.

- 3) Amendment of the Constitution shall necessitate a two-thirds majority of those voting either Yea or Nay. This vote may be held by way of a secret ballot.
- 4) Constitutional amendment procedures are as follows:
 - a. Approval from the Policy Committee to address any substantive and procedural issues and take it to the executive for a vote.
 - b. Consensus Approval from the entire executive (above 75%).
 - c. 66% from the general public at the AGM.

Article 11: Conflict Resolution and Disciplinary measures

- 1) Motions of impeachment shall be entertained if petitioned for, by a minimum of 15 members representing at least two campuses with at least five members from total constituency.
- 2) Disciplinary measures shall be divided into internal and external offences.
 - a. External offences shall be resolved through the impeachment process.
 - b. Internal offences shall be resolved by the UTERN executive in consultation with the staff/Faculty advisors.
- 3) External offences necessitating disciplinary measures consist of actions that seriously misrepresent UTERN in a manner that undermines UTERN's mandate.
 - a. External offences include but are not limited to receiving unsolicited donations/gifts, violations of norms of personal conduct on social media, using UTERN social media for personal gains.
- 4) Internal offences necessitating disciplinary measures consist of actions by executives contrary to UTERN equity policy, UTERN's Financial Policy, or any other internal operational policies.
- 5) Internal offences include but are not limited to failure to attend meetings or meet job requirements, bullying and harassment, physical and verbal transgressions, misuse of UTERN finances.
- 6) Conflict resolution and disciplinary measures shall be divided into the internal conflict resolution process and impeachment-for external offences.
- 7) The President shall be responsible for determining conflict resolution and disciplinary measures pertaining to Internal and external offences in every unique situation. In consultation with the UTERN staff and Faculty Advisers, the President will undertake the process of fact finding, consult with affected parties, and decide on a disciplinary measure if necessary.
 - a. If the offence involves or represents a real or perceived conflict of interest for the President, responsibilities for fact-finding and determining conflict resolution and disciplinary measures shall be given to the Faculty Adviser.



- b. Categories of conflict resolution and disciplinary measures include but are not limited to: verbal warnings, written warnings, suspension of duties, and removal from UTERN.
 - c. UTERN executive members under investigation for internal offences have the right to privacy, can request of the President to not disclose information regarding their situation with other executives, be informed of all potential offences within a 48 hour period of the fact-finding process beginning, can request a trial of their peers within 48 hours of the fact-finding process conclusion, be presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, given accessibility accommodations until undue hardship, and only be investigated for this offence once.
 - d. UTERN Executive members under investigation for any offences have the power to know what offences are being investigated by The President or Faculty Adviser within 24 hours of the beginning of the investigation.
 - e. A UTERN Official under the internal fact-finding process has the right to request consideration of mitigating circumstances.
- 8) Impeachment shall be the course of action taken when external offences are grave enough to warrant removal from UTERN. The process will consist of fact finding, and a disciplinary hearing among the executives, and all steps under impeachment clauses 12.1, 12.2, and 12.3.
- a. The President shall be responsible for fact-finding, while the Faculty Adviser will act as a mediator and oversee the impeachment process.
 - b. If the impeachable offence involves or represents a real or perceived conflict of interest for the President, they shall remove themselves from the process and assign Presidential responsibilities to the Project Manager.
- 9) UTERN executives faced with impeachment have the following rights:
- a. A UTERN official as the subject of the impeachment fact-finding has the right to due process in the fact-finding process.
 - (1) The UTERN executive member in question may not be suspended without good reason given to the Faculty Adviser.
 - (2) The UTERN executive member in question may choose not to participate in the fact-finding process.
 - (3) The UTERN executive member in question must be/have the right to: informed of all potential offences within a 48 hour period of the fact-finding process beginning, notified of an impending hearing if necessary within 24 hours of the completion of the fact-finding process, not participate in the hearing which they are the subject in question, presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, a fair and impartial executive team, given accessibility accommodations until undue hardship, and only go through this process once for the particular offence(s).



- (4) These tenets of procedural justice must be followed by all UTERN executives at the trial level.
 - b. A UTERN official under impeachment review has the right to request consideration of mitigating circumstances in the fact-finding process.
- 10) All processes under section 12 shall be conducted in English only.
- 11) Appeals to fact finding conclusions will be handled by The Faculty Adviser who will decide if a finding of guilt or not guilty, warrants an appeal on the basis of improper investigations, improper facts, misinterpretation of constitutional provision, and/or violations of due process rights.
 - a. The Faculty Adviser may suggest one of the following: a new fact-finding process, a finding of non-guilt or acquittal, a finding of guilt, or a finding to permanently or temporarily stay any resolution to the fact-finding process, in consultation with the UTERN executive.
- 12) Executives affected personally by actions undertaken by other executives may seek a temporary leave of absence, and other accommodations if needed.
 - a. a) UTERN shall report to the Annual General Meeting, any next steps for creating safer spaces.
 - b. Every 10 years, UTERN shall audit the history of UTERN, examine whether next steps were being made, and recommend further action if necessary.
- 13) All affected parties may agree to a set of alternative conflict resolution mechanisms so long as every party affected by the incident or series of incidents agrees to resolving the incident(s) alternatively.
 - a. This process does not include alleged financial acts of misconduct.
 - b. UTERN collectively, may be a represented party and thus, by simple majority vote (50% + 1) UTERN can express a stance on whether to engage in alternative conflict resolution mechanisms.

Article 12: Approach to Decision Making

- 1) The rules contained in the current edition of The Guide to Consensus Building (by Lawrence Susskind, Sarah McKernan, and Jennifer Thomas Larmer) shall govern the University of Toronto's Student Environmental Resource Network in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this constitution and any special rules of order UTERN may adopt.
- 2) In making decisions about sensitive issues, UTERN will refer to lessons of precedence of previous executives.
- 3) Endorsements and position/stances must only be agreed upon by a consensus (75%) of executives.
- 4) Precedence changing decisions, will be recorded both in minutes and transition documents.

Article 13: Awards



- 1) The UTERN Policy Committee has the right to make awards, and the right to make the procedures to make awards; and to pass on the decision making of award to the UTERN Executive.

Article 14: Operational Policies

- 1) The UTERN executive has the full power to create, amend, and adopt operational policies within the academic year that would clarify or help with the operations of UTERN.
 - a. Policies that are to be added as an appendix to the constitution may be brought to the Annual General meeting for consideration of adoption by the UTERN Executive or the UTERN Policy Committee.
 - b. Any such operational policy created and scheduled for adoption at the AGM must receive a ⅔ vote in favour of the policy to put it into the constitution.
 - c. Operational policies to be added to the constitution as an appendix may be amended at special general meetings called throughout the year with a 14-day notice to the membership along with the petition signed by the executive or committee.
 - d. Operational policies mentioned in this constitution must include additional specific instructions on how to reform the specific policy in accordance with the process afforded to UTERN in Clause 14.4.
- 2) The UTERN Executive also has the expressed power to change how financial matters and funding applications are addressed.
- 3) Operational policies will be published on our website along our constitution.
- 4) In order to enact, amend, or remove operational policies, The UTERN Executive must follow this process:
 - 1) Issues must be raised with or referred to the Policy Committee by anyone on the executive team.
 - 2) Policy Committee will receive the issue, and schedule at least 1 meeting devoted to the issue.
 - 3) Policy Committee, to create/enact, amend, or remove a policy, must pass a vote of 67% or greater of the members present.
 - 4) Equity Policies, Financial Policies, and Position Description Policies are excluded from this provision and require a unanimous vote in favour of removal.
 - 5) In the above situation, the issue shall be considered by the UTERN executive team at the next Executive meeting or a special meeting before the term has ended.
 - 6) The UTERN executive, to create/enact or amend a policy that has been considered by the Policy Committee, must pass a vote of consensus (75%) of members present with at least 6 executives present at the meeting.



- 7) The UTERN executive, to remove a policy that has been considered by the Policy Committee, must pass a unanimous vote for the policy to be removed.
- 8) The UTERN executive authorizes the associated executive(s) to enact the policy thereafter.
- 9) Operational policies mentioned in this constitution must be included in the transition packages of incoming executives.
- 10) Operational policies under the mandate, financial management policies, and other vital transparency, governance, and equity policies are not to be amended without a formal public consultation via the Environmental Working Group of The St. George Campus.

Article 15: Partisan Stances

- 1) UTERN should refrain from making partisan stances in favour of or against any candidate or any group internal or external of this group or university.
 - a. 'Partisan' refers to groups or parties or people seeking political office.
 - b. 'Political' does not always mean partisan, it may be non-partisan while referring to issues groups or people interested in affecting the issue through governmental and non-governmental levers such as protesting.

