

# LGCU Constitution and Policies

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## **1 Constitution of the Linguistics Graduate Course Union**

*University Of Toronto*

(created 8 September 2014; amended 8 October 2021)

### **I Name**

Linguistics Graduate Course Union.

### **II Membership**

All graduate students registered in the Department of Linguistics shall automatically be members of the Union. A person's membership in the Union is automatically terminated at the end of the term in which the person ceases to be registered as a graduate student in the Department of Linguistics.

### **III Executive**

The Executive of the Union shall consist of the President (or two Co-Presidents), the Treasurer (or two co-Treasurers), the Secretary, and one or more UTGSU Representatives. The Executive shall be elected by the members of the Union in the beginning of each academic year.

### **IV Elections**

All individuals who will be members of the Union for the duration of the term of office are eligible to be members of the Executive.

### **V General Meetings**

At least one General Meeting shall be called in the fall of each academic year.

### **VI Financial Responsibility**

The handling of all funds held by the Union shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer(s) and the President(s). The Treasurer(s) shall present a brief report on the financial status of the Union at the first General Meeting of each academic year.

### **VII Passing and Amending the Constitution**

The constitution may be passed or amended by a majority of those members present at a General Meeting, so long as the votes in favour represent at least twenty-five percent of the total membership.

## VIII Quorum

Motions may only be moved and voted on at meetings that meet quorum, which shall be 10% of the total membership; the Executive don't count towards quorum unless there are no non-executive members in the membership.

## IX Fiscal Year-End

The fiscal year-end date is September 30.

## 2 LGCU policies

This section contains policies that have been properly moved and ratified by the LGCU at its meetings or online. This document contains those policies that have ongoing relevance for the LGCU, and which are not reflected elsewhere (e.g. updates to committee descriptions are maintained in the committee description list, not here). The policies are presented here in reverse chronological order, with the most recent first.

### 2.1 LGCU pub night system

*Ratified at LGCU meeting on 2018-04-11*

The LGCU weekly pub night is for the benefit and enjoyment of graduate students in our department. We want it to be a place where all of our grad students feel welcome. In order to ensure this is the case, the following system is in place:

- LGCU members' partners and LGCU alumni are welcome to attend. No email notification is needed for these people. Any objections can be raised using the Pub Objection Form (see screen shot below)
- LGCU members are free to invite other people to pub night. In this case, they should send an email to the LGCU by noon on Thursday letting people know about the person they would like to invite, and asking if there are any objections. They should include a link to the Pub Objection Form that can be filled out if there is an objection (<https://goo.gl/forms/cb1iMAqVOuesXZUJ2>). The Chair of the AHT will monitor this form and let the inviter know by 5pm on Thursday if there are any objections. The inviter can then tell the invitee whether they are welcome or not.
- It is particularly important that the process described above is followed for invitations to faculty, postdocs and undergrads (UofT or elsewhere). The general understanding is that a person in one of these categories would not be regularly invited. This applies to LGCU members' partners who are also faculty/postdocs/undergrads.
- Note that the GSU pub is a public space, so there is no way the LGCU can enforce anything. However, we can make it clear whether a person is welcome or not.
- You can feel free to use the Pub Objection Form at any time.
- If you'd like to talk more about an objection you can talk to the Anti-Harassment Taskforce Chair, LGCU Presidents or anyone else you feel comfortable talking with.

# Pub objection form

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You can use this form to voice your objection to someone attending pub. If you'd like to talk more about this with someone you can talk to the Anti-Harassment Taskforce Chair, LGCU Presidents or anyone else you feel comfortable talking with.

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Whose attendance at pub are you objecting to?

Short-answer text

.....

Are you objecting to this person attending:

- This week only
- Other (please specify)

Anything else? (Optional)

Short-answer text

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## 2.2 Departmental code of conduct

*Ratified at LGCU meeting on 2018-04-11*

### [Conference/workshop/etc. name] Code of Conduct

All attendees, speakers, sponsors, and volunteers at our conference are required to agree with the following code of conduct. Organizers will enforce this code throughout the event. We expect cooperation from all participants to help ensure a safe environment for everybody. Any questions regarding this code of conduct should be directed to the [conference/workshop/etc.] organizers.

#### The Quick Version

[Conference/workshop/etc. name] is dedicated to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), nationality, gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, language (including dialect or linguistic proficiency), body size, or physical appearance. We do not tolerate harassment of conference participants in any form. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any conference venue, including talks, workshops, parties, Twitter, and other online media associated with the conference. [Conference/workshop/etc.] participants violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from [conference/workshop/etc. name] *without a refund* at the discretion of the organizers.

## **The Less Quick Version**

Harassment includes but is not limited to engaging in a course of comments or conduct that is known or ought to be known to be unwelcome. This particularly applies to comments or conduct related to race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, language use, body size, or physical appearance. Harassment also includes deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, non-consensual photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention. Displaying of sexual images in public spaces, sharing sexual images, or any other behaviour that otherwise contributes to a sexualized environment is considered inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

Participants asked to stop any harassing or inappropriate behavior are expected to comply immediately. If a participant engages in harassing or inappropriate behavior, [conference/workshop/etc. name] organizers may take any action they deem appropriate, up to and including expulsion from the conference with no refund.

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact a member of [conference/workshop/etc.] staff immediately. Conference staff can be identified by [specific to conference/workshop/etc.]. Staff will be happy to help participants contact [hotel/venue/campus/etc.] security or local police services, provide assistance securing safe transportation, and otherwise take action to safeguard attendees' rights to a safe and harassment-free environment for the duration of the [conference/workshop/etc.]. We value the well-being of all [conference/workshop/etc. name] attendees, and will endeavour to ensure that there are no barriers to your participation.

We expect all participants to follow these rules at conference and workshop venues as well as conference-related social events and social media.

### **Who do I contact?**

[Conference/workshop organizers' information.]

### **Additional Resources:**

- Contact information for WalkSmart
- Contact information for the Campus Police
- Contact information for Sexual Harassment Office
- Contact information for the Community Safety Office

### **Confused? Here are some *Dos* and *Don'ts*:**

- DO: Ask other participants before taking photos or videos of them or their work
- DO: Ask permission before touching other participants
- DO: Be aware that some participants may not be comfortable shaking hands with you

- DO: Inform [conference] organizers (and/or speak up yourself if you feel safe to do so) if you see something that goes against the spirit of this code of conduct
- DO: Check on the well-being of your fellow conference attendees
- DO: Check your laptop backgrounds, screensavers, presentation materials, browser tabs, and imagery or slogans on clothing to ensure that they are appropriate for the conference
- DO: Respect other participants' decisions about which talks, workshops, or events they choose to attend
- DO: Make sure that your tweets and social media posts about the conference are in line with this policy
- DON'T: Ask offensive or inappropriate questions, or make offensive or inappropriate comments
- DON'T: Express judgement about other people's eating decisions
- DON'T: Pressure other participants to drink alcohol

Adapted from <http://confcodeofconduct.com/> via <https://creativecommons.org/>

### **2.3 LGCU election procedures**

*Ratified at LGCU meeting on 2016-10-15*

*Amended at LGCU meeting on 2021-10-08*

BIRT after the first LGCU meeting of the year, there is a single online election for all positions requiring election or approval. BIFRT the positions that require election are the executive and any other position with more volunteers than spaces available. BIFRT the executive positions require a vote of approval (simple majority of votes) even when there are not more volunteers than positions available. BIFRT this vote is preferably run by an outgoing or previous exec member who is not involved in any of those elections.

### **2.4 LGCU statement on labour strikes**

*Ratified at LGCU meeting on 2015-05-22*

The LGCU recognises that strikes are difficult for all involved, and that all people have the right to make their own individual decisions about their level of involvement and actions during a strike. Our department's culture of respect and inclusion should be maintained in all cases; we are linguists first.

The LGCU also recognises that strikes are only effective if members stand united to improve our collective working conditions. The primary way this is achieved is through striking (that is, withholding labour). The LGCU strongly discourages strike-breaking (that is, working for the employer during a strike) for the following reasons. Firstly, strike-breaking damages the strength of the labour union, and decreases the likelihood of a swift and effective end to the strike. Secondly, those who strike-break ultimately benefit from any improvements gained through the sacrifices that others make by striking.

As always, there are real and urgent reasons why people consider strike-breaking. One reason may be extreme financial difficulty. The LGCU encourages all people in this position to talk to the union stewards, LGCU presidents, or anyone else about their particular issues. Usually some solution can be

found, for example an interest-free loan. Talking about individual struggles also allows members of the LGCU to support each other during a strike. Anyone who strike-breaks should not fear recrimination and should be treated with the same level of respect due to all members of the department.