

# **Filipino Student Association Constitution**

## **1. Name**

The official name of this recognized campus group is “The Filipino Student Association at the University of Toronto Mississauga.”

The acronym or abbreviation of this group is: UTM FSA

## **2. Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose, objectives, mission and/or mandate of organization is outlined here:

UTM FSA will be a social and cultural club. Our purpose is to create a place for Filipinos and those interested in Filipino culture to gather and communicate. This will be accomplished through social events such as game nights, as well as cultural events, such as a film marathon. These events aim to foster greater appreciation and awareness for Filipino culture, and to represent the Filipino community at large here at UTM.

## **3. Membership**

Membership to the group is open to all the University of Toronto members (students, staff, faculty and alumni). It should be noted that only current UTM students are permitted to run, nominate, and vote in elections and constitutional amendments.

The group is open to non-U of T members. However, these members do not hold the aforementioned rights. Members must register with a designated executive by submitting their full name, student number, and valid email address. If they are a non-UofT member, they only need to submit their full name and email address.

The membership fee will be \$5 per year. Payment of the membership fee enables the member to receive the following benefits: reduced entry fee at in-person events, discounts with our sponsors, etc.

Any member of the club may apply for a refund within one (1) month of becoming a member. No refunds are permitted 30 days after the election periods.

For recognition by the University of Toronto Mississauga Students’ Union (UTMSU), the group must maintain a minimum of 30 members, of which a total of 51% are UTMSU members. These requirements are subject to change and should be checked with UTMSU annually to ensure qualifications are met.

## **4. Executive List and Duties**

The executive committee shall be composed of at least seven (7) elected officers. These include a President (or Co-Presidents), a Vice President of Finance, a Vice President of Internal Affairs, a Vice President of External Affairs, a Vice President of Events, and Co-Vice Presidents of Communications (2).

*The Co-Presidents shall:*

- Share authority and have the final word in any major changes or initiatives.
- Deliberate, consult, and work closely with the team to ensure greater consensus.
- Set direction for the club and take primary responsibility in conceiving, engineering, and implementing projects.
- Delegate council responsibilities and guide the council in executing tasks, including stepping in to fill a role on the occasion that a council member is unable to fulfill their duties.
- Be the first signing officer/s in all financial transactions within the club.

*Note: All major paperwork and/or transactions require the approval and/or signature of one (1) President.*

*The VP Finance shall:*

- Oversee the approval of expenditures.
- Take charge of budget creation and allocation, as well as review the usage of sponsorship money.
- Manage the club's funding and sales records.
- Responsible for the submission of the UTMSU audit.

*The VP Internal shall:*

- Ensure that all of the club's internal affairs are operating smoothly.
- Preside over the club's relations between UTMSU, the UTM Administration, and all other clubs and societies within campus.
- Assist in the coordination of organizational recruitment and promotion efforts within campus.

*The VP External shall:*

- Ensure that all of the club's external affairs are operating smoothly.
- Coordinate the club's relations with organizations outside of campus (e.g., FILCASA), including the handling of community engagement.
- Assist in the coordination of organizational recruitment and promotion efforts within campus.

*The VP Events shall:*

- Organize, plan, and execute event logistics and themes for any UTM FSA event
- Generate unique and creative content to present to the team for possible event ideas and themes
- Ensure a smooth execution of events
- Oversee and delegate tasks to the events team
- Inquire and facilitate room and event space booking, as well as speakers and vendors
- Work with VP's of Finance and Communications to ensure that events are within budget and promoted correctly

*The Co-VPs of Communications shall:*

- Manage and maintain the club's online presence (i.e., social media)
- Handle the creation of promotional materials inclusive of promoting the club's awareness through campus postings and online presence.
- Maintain a contact list of all members.

The group may appoint Directors or Coordinators for various committees such as engagement committee, communications committee, and so on; however, such positions do not hold executive decision-making authority.

## **5. Removal from Office/Termination of General Members**

Any member of the club who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the club and its members, including non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest, may be given notice of removal.

Removal from office can occur after a member of the Clubs Committee (e.g., VP Campus Life) has issued two (2) verbal warnings and one (1) written warning. The warnings must clearly state the problem(s) and the steps to be taken to resolve them.

After such a warning, if failed to oblige, the executives can proceed to hold a vote within the executive team to remove the member from the office. The member up for removal shall have the right to defend his/her actions. The vote should be supervised by the UTMSU, and the results shall be verified by the Clubs Committee. The results of the vote should be two-thirds of the executives in favour of removal. The member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club.

In addition to the above guidelines, the UTMSU reserves the right to intervene as a mediator due to their independence and objectivity in the matter. The VP Campus Life has the right to ensure the procedures were followed accordingly and to rectify the removal of office.

Alternatively, an executive member may be removed from office by the club itself for failing to perform their duties as defined by the club constitution and by-laws. Such removal will occur if, and only if, the following conditions are satisfied:

- A request is submitted to the VP Campus Life which should:
  - Be signed by at least 30% of the Club membership or two-thirds (2/3) of the club executive membership
  - Specify the alleged incidents of neglect of duty
- Upon receipt of the request, the council shall be required to hold a referendum within twenty (20) days.

In case of a council member being removed from office, a by-election will be held if necessary, according to the election rules as previously described under “Elections Procedures”.

## **6. Elections**

Clubs must follow set election dates and procedures, including the procedure of nomination, majority vote and eligibility of vote. Students may create additional positions in September particularly for first-year students in an effort to encourage first-year student involvement. If election procedures are deemed to be unfair by reasonable standards by the Clubs Committee, these results will be subject to petition by a member and re-election will be held under the supervision of the UTMSU Campus Groups Coordinator.

Procedures:

- All registered clubs must hold an election by the end of February.
- Elections must open to all interested candidates that are UTMSU registered members of the club.
- Advertising for elections are mandatory and are to take place over a period of a minimum of one week. Advertising must be visible throughout campus. Mass emails should be sent to all UTMSU registered members of the club as well as the Campus Groups Coordinator and VP Campus Life prior to the week of accepting nominations.
- All elections must have a CRO (Chief Returning Officer) supervising the electoral process. The CRO must be non-biased and must be approved by the club executive and the Campus Groups Coordinator.
- A Nomination period following the advertising period should be set for a period of at least one week.
- A campaign week will be held in the week following nominations' close.
- Elections are to take place at a location designated for this purpose by the clubs' executive in the week following campaigning, consisting of a period of two (2) or three (3) days. In the case of by-elections, clubs must still follow the above regulations.
- If no one opts to run in the election for a particular position, the former executives have the right to collectively appoint a suitable candidate for that position. This candidate must be subsequently approved by the VP Campus Life.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, elections may be held virtually. In addition to the procedure outlined above, the following procedures are added to cater to the online setting.

- All elections require a Chief Returning Officer (CRO) who will set up the elections online via Google Forms.
- To ensure visibility, advertisements were posted through the club's social media platforms.
- Nominees are required to attend an All Candidates Meeting to create a space to meet all candidates running for election, and for the CRO to explain election procedures.
  - Should candidates be unable to attend, they are required to have a proxy attend on their behalf.
- Campaigning is restricted to online-only.

- When voting, members vote for the candidate they believe will be most successful in the position. In the event that a candidate is running unopposed, members have the following options: “vote for,” “vote against,” and “abstain.”

Any complaints that arise during the course of elections, or as a result of elections must be brought to the attention of the Campus Groups Coordinator in a written format within 72 hours of the election.

The Clubs Committee withholds the right to nullify any club election results if evidence of gross misconduct has been found in the operation of the election.

Non-occurrence of elections will result in an immediate effect of cancellation of club status.

Non-submission of election results will result in later loss of club status through the Clubs Committee.

If undemocratic election procedures are suspected, the election results or even the club status may be put forward to the Clubs Committee by the VP Campus Life.

## **7. Finances**

The VP Finance shall keep records of all income and expenses. The VP Finance shall present the group’s financial health at the annual general meetings. The Executive Committee will vote on expenditures of over \$100.00 by majority vote at an executive meeting. Such expenditures require the approval of at least one (1) President.

The group’s executive members may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the group, or of charges for specific activities, programs or events, or to prohibit groups from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, the group will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization, will not provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization, and will not pay salaries to some or all of its officers.

## **8. Meetings**

### **A) Annual General Meetings (AGMs):**

The group shall hold general meetings at least twice per year, i.e. once per academic term.

The Executive Committee will announce these dates two (2) weeks prior to holding the meetings. These meetings are intended to go over the group’s annual activity plan, financial health and propose or vote on constitutional amendments, if any. Motions will require a two-thirds majority of registered members in attendance for a vote to be cast. The motion with the most votes will be passed.

### **B) Executive Meetings:**

The Executive Committee shall meet on a weekly basis where date and times are to be set by the President. The quorum of executive meetings shall be two-thirds of executives.

Executives must attend a minimum of 70% of all meetings held. In the case where this is not met, these executives may not receive CCR or can make up for lost meetings by taking on additional work as seen fit.

## **9. Amendments**

Any registered U of T members may propose and vote on amendments to this constitution. The Executive Committee will administer the process of having amendments discussed at general meetings.

Constitutional amendments shall require a two-thirds majority to be passed at Annual General Meetings by registered U of T members in attendance.

The Executive Committee shall formally adopt the new constitution and submit the revised constitution to the respective University offices (i.e., the Centre for Student Engagement, the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.