

# LAW SOCIETY OF UTSC STUDENT GROUP CONSTITUTION

## Constitution of the Law Society of UTSC Student Group

### 1. Article I: The Law Society of UTSC Student Group

- a. The official name of the organization will be “Law Society of UTSC Student Group”,
- b. The Law Society of UTSC Student Group may be referred to by the abbreviation “LSOU Student Group” internally and externally,
- c. The Law Society of UTSC Student Group shall be recognized as a Student Group of the University of Toronto Scarborough

### 2. Article II: Purpose

- a. The purpose of the Law Society of UTSC Student Group will be to
  - i. Encourage all students at the University of Toronto Scarborough to gain knowledge of and experience in the field of law,
  - ii. Provide opportunities for all undergraduate students at the University of Toronto Scarborough to make contacts in the field of law,
  - iii. Assist students at the University of Toronto Scarborough in preparing for legal studies,
  - iv. Promote the study of law among University of Toronto Scarborough students,
  - v. Offer events and opportunities to meet experienced individuals and engage in the LSOU Student Group,
  - vi. Compete in and teach the activities of mooting and mock trial,
  - vii. Offer opportunities to volunteer and give back to the community through humanitarian actions and events,
  - viii. Serve a wholly non-profit function within the University of Toronto Scarborough, and thus not to engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature,
  - ix. The Law Society of UTSC Student Group operates as an independent entity working within the University of Toronto student community subject to the values and policies of the University;

### 3. Article III: Members

- a. There shall be three categories of members within the Law Society of UTSC Student Group, and no distinction shall be made between members from any particular category in terms of rights, entitlements, or privileges accorded to members under this constitution,
- b. The categories are as follows:
  - i. Staff members including the President, Vice Presidents, and all Directors hired pursuant to this constitution,
  - ii. Contributors to any publication of the LSOU Student Group,
  - iii. Members of the Undergraduate Moot Court and Mock Trial teams

maintained by the LSOU Student Group pursuant to this constitution,

- c. Notwithstanding the preceding clauses of this article, only undergraduate students attending the University of Toronto Scarborough shall be members of the LSOU Student Group,
- d. The term of membership shall be from September 1st to August 31st of each academic year except for staff members who shall be members of the LSOU Student Group during the period over which they hold the office from which their entitlement to membership derives,
- e. Without prejudice to any other rights held pursuant to policies of the University of Toronto, the law of the Province of Ontario, or Canadian federal law, the rights of members shall include the following:
  - i. The right to participate and vote in group elections and meetings,
  - ii. The right to communicate and to discuss and explore all ideas,
  - iii. The right to organize/engage in activities/events that are reasonable and lawful,
  - iv. The right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or sexual orientation in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code,
  - v. The right to be free from censorship, control, or interference by the University based on the organization's philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal, or which infringe on the rights and freedoms already mentioned above,
  - vi. The right to distribute on campus, in a responsible way, published material if it is not unlawful,
- f. Each member shall possess the following responsibilities relative to participation in the LSOU Student Group:
  - i. Support the purpose of the organization,
  - ii. Uphold the values of the organization,
  - iii. Contribute constructively to the programs and activities offered by the organization,
  - iv. Attend general meetings,
  - v. Abide by the constitution and subsequent official organizational documents,
  - vi. Respect the rights of peers and fellow members,
  - vii. Abide by University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines,
  - viii. Abide by the Laws of the Land, including but not limited to the Criminal Code of Canada,
- g. The LSOU Student Group will protect the privacy of member information and must use it only for the delivery of service and not for commercial gain,
- h. A membership fee may be applied to any one or more categories of

members subject to the following stipulations:

- i. Any such fee must be approved by a simple majority of attendees at an Annual General Meeting held pursuant to this constitution,
- ii. No membership fee may be imposed upon those holding membership by virtue of their status as staff members,
- iii. No individual who contributes to an LSOU Student Group publication shall be required to pay a fee if they do not intend to exercise the rights of a member of the LSOU Student Group or if they are not an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto,
- iv. A fee levied purely for the provision of LSOU Student Group merchandise, tickets for LSOU Student Group-sponsored events, or any competition attended by members of the Undergraduate Moot Court or Mock Trial Teams shall not be construed as a membership fee under this article and may be levied at the discretion of the President or the Vice President responsible for the department acquiring said merchandise, organizing said event, or training said team;

#### **4. Article IV: Organizational Structure**

- a. The LSOU Student Group shall be composed of the following departments:
  - i. The Mooting and Mock Trial Department, which shall be responsible for maintaining Undergraduate Moot Court and Mock Trial Teams at the University of Toronto's Scarborough Campus, and organizing events related to moot court and mock trial,
  - ii. The Events Department, which shall be responsible for organizing events to further the purposes, aims, and goals of the LSOU Student Group pursuant to this constitution,
  - iii. The Publications Department, which shall be responsible for producing and supervising law-related publications which may include but are not limited to magazines, journals, podcasts, and blogs,
  - iv. The Administration and Communications Department, which shall supervise the LSOU Student Group's finances, sponsorships, website and other centralized services for the benefit of the other departments,
- b. Each Department shall be led by a Vice President who shall be responsible for the supervision of its affairs and who shall be accountable to the President and the other Vice Presidents,
- c. To the extent that the adoption of this article modifies the organizational structure of the LSOU Student Group, the following provisos apply:
  - i. The incumbent Director of Publications shall assume the role of Vice President for Publications in accordance with clause d of Article V,

- ii. Incumbent directors in any department who are currently responsible for any task outlined in clause c of Article VI shall assume the roles described in said clause,
- iii. The existing marketing, external, and finance departments shall remain unaltered until the next election held pursuant to Article X,
- iv. The incumbent Vice President of Internal Affairs shall assume the role of Vice President for Events and all incumbent directors within the Department of Internal Affairs shall be deemed to be Events Directors as per clause b of Article VI,
- v. Except as provided in this clause (i.e. clause c of Article IV), incumbent directors shall retain their office and shall remain within their current department,
- vi. This clause (i.e. clause c of Article IV) applies *mutatis mutandis* with regard to Article V and shall be deemed to be spent immediately following the next election held pursuant to Article X,
- vii. Changes effected by or in connection with any other article shall apply immediately following its approval except where the context dictates otherwise;

## **5. Article V: Duties of the President and Vice Presidents**

- a. The President shall:
  - i. Serve as the organization's official spokesperson,
  - ii. Provide direction for and coordinate between the four departments
  - iii. Be responsible for mediating disputes that arise between Vice Presidents or between a Vice President and another staff member,
- b. The Vice President for Mooting and Mock Trial shall:
  - i. Oversee all mootings and mock trial logistics, training, and development of the mootings and mock trial team,
  - ii. Supervise the planning and organization of events related to mootings and mock trial,
  - iii. Maintain partnerships with other universities' mootings and mock trial teams,
- c. The Vice President for Events shall:
  - i. Oversee the planning and organization of academic and social events furthering the purposes of the LSOU Student Group,
  - ii. Supervise the planning of debates, discussions, and panel events pertaining to questions of interest to law students,
  - iii. Facilitate the organization of information sessions and other services for undergraduate students interested in law school,
  - iv. Collaborate with other student organizations to plan and organize events of mutual interest,
- d. The Vice President for Publications shall supervise all publications produced by the LSOU Student Group in a manner that:

- i. Preserves the editorial independence of said publications,
  - ii. Respects the freedom of expression of contributors to said publications,
  - iii. Notwithstanding anything else in this clause, upholds the LSOU Student Group's commitment to equality, equity, and inclusivity,
- e. The Vice President for Administration and Communications shall:
  - i. Supervise the LSOU Student Group's relations with university administration and external sponsors,
  - ii. Oversee the maintenance of the LSOU Student Group's website,
  - iii. Supervise the LSOU Student Group's finances and the provision of centralized services for the various departments as deemed desirable by the President and Vice Presidents;
- f. Each Vice President shall:
  - i. Hire directors within their respective department,
  - ii. Supervise and direct all activities within their respective departments,
  - iii. Be responsible for mediating any disputes that arise wholly within their department,
  - iv. Attend executive meetings facilitated by the President in accordance with Article VIII of this constitution,
  - v. Produce such progress reports as are deemed necessary by the President and Vice Presidents at executive meetings;

## **6. Article VI: Directors**

- a. The Mooting and Mock Trial Department shall consist of the following:
  - i. Up to 2 Mooting Directors, responsible for training members of the undergraduate moot court team,
  - ii. Up to 2 Mock Trial Directors, responsible for training members of the undergraduate mock trial team,
  - iii. At least 1 Mooting and Mock Trial Logistics Director, responsible for the logistics of training sessions, event organization, and attending competitions,
  - iv. Such additional directors as the President may approve,
- b. The Events Department shall consist of the following:
  - i. As many directors as the Vice President for Events and the President deem necessary or desirable for the organization of events and the promotion thereof,
  - ii. Such additional directors as the President may approve,
- c. The Publications Department shall consist of the following:
  - i. At least 2 Publications Directors tasked with overseeing the LSOU Student Group's written publications,
  - ii. At least 1 Publication Director tasked with overseeing podcasts and other audiovisual publications,

- iii. Such additional directors as the President may approve,
- d. The Administration and Communications Department shall consist of the following:
  - i. As many directors as are necessary for the maintenance of the LSOU Student Group website, sponsorships, finances and relations with university administration,
  - ii. As many directors as are necessary for the provision of any other service for the other departments that the Vice Presidents collectively determine to be desirable,
- e. In the event of a vacancy arising with regard to a director role, the appropriate Vice President shall hire a replacement as soon as reasonably practicable,
- f. For the avoidance of doubt, wherever it is provided that additional directors may be hired as the President may approve, the selection of such directors shall be within the remit of the appropriate Vice President pursuant to clause f of Article V;

#### **7. Article VII: Removal and Resignation of Staff Members**

- a. The process for removing the President, a Vice President, or a director may be initiated when a committee of no less than three (3) LSOU Student Group members other than staff members and two (2) staff members appointed by the general membership to investigate a complaint determines that,
  - i. A member or executive has engaged in unlawful actions or activities,
  - ii. A member or executive has violated the constitution,
  - iii. A member or executive has violated University of Toronto policies, procedures, or guidelines,
  - iv. A member or executive has violated the rights of a fellow member,
  - v. A member or executive has not fulfilled their organizational responsibilities,
  - vi. Other criteria deemed to be appropriate by the Executive Committee in consultation with and approved by a majority of the general membership,
- b. In the event that a determination is made pursuant to clause a of this article or a staff member resigns, the relevant staff member shall be replaced as follows:
  - i. In the case of the President being removed or resigning, the Vice Presidents shall choose an interim president from amongst themselves who shall assume the responsibilities of the President until the next election,
  - ii. In the case of a Vice President being removed or resigning, the President shall nominate a replacement from amongst the directors of the relevant department who shall take office upon being

- approved by a majority of the remaining Vice Presidents,
- iii. In the case of a director being removed or resigning, clause e of Article VI shall apply;

#### **8. Article VIII: Executive Meetings**

- a. The purpose of executive meetings is to provide a forum for the organization's executives to discuss and make decisions on day-to-day matters affecting the organization,
- b. Executive meetings shall be attended by:
  - i. The President,
  - ii. All Vice Presidents,
  - iii. Any director or other person invited by the President,
- c. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the constitution, a Vice President may designate a director from their respective department as a proxy to attend any one or more executive meetings
- d. Executive meetings will be facilitated by the President of the organization. The President shall be responsible for:
  - i. Formulating and distributing an agenda for each meeting,
  - ii. Ensuring appropriate conduct and leading the meeting in an efficient, reasonable manner,
  - iii. Moderating the discussion at meetings according to the agenda,
- e. There shall be a minimum of one (1) executive meeting held every two (2) weeks during the period September 1 to April 30 and the date of each subsequent executive meeting will be confirmed at the preceding meeting and will be reiterated to executives a minimum of two (2) calendar days prior to the meeting,
- f. The frequency of executive meetings occurring between May 1 and August 31 will be left to the discretion of the President,
- g. Minutes of all executive meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes;

#### **9. Article IX: Annual General Meetings**

- a. There shall be at least one Annual General Meeting during the course of an academic year,
- b. The Purpose of an Annual General Meeting is to hold the President and Vice Presidents of the LSU Student Group accountable to the organization's members at large,
- c. The Constitution of the LSU Student Group may be amended at such meetings subject to the following stipulations:
  - i. Amendments to the constitution require the approval of two-thirds of the members present at a valid general meeting (a general meeting that has achieved quorum),
  - ii. Notice of proposed constitutional amendments shall be given to each

- member at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the change,
- d. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the procedure outlined in Appendix A,
  - e. All members of the LSOU Student Group are entitled to attend Annual General Meetings held pursuant to this article,
  - f. Emergency meetings can be called for extenuating or unforeseen circumstances that may arise from time to time subject to the following stipulations:
    - i. These meetings must abide the rules applicable to Annual General Meetings under this article,
    - ii. Notice of these meetings must be provided a minimum of 24 hours in advance through email,
    - iii. Less notice for emergency meetings may be provided at the discretion of the President with the concurrence of a minimum of three Vice Presidents;

#### **10. Article X: Election of President and Vice Presidents**

- a. Elections will be held prior to the start of Summer Semester but no earlier than March 20th each year to select the President and the Vice Presidents,
- b. The election process will be supervised by a committee appointed by the President with the concurrence of at least 3 incumbent Vice Presidents that shall consist of:
  - i. Three members of the LSOU Student Group other than an incumbent President or Vice President,
  - ii. One Chief Returning Officer who may not be a member of the LSOU Student Group and who shall preside over the committee,
- c. No member of a committee established under the preceding clause may be a candidate during the election,
- d. A committee constituted under clause b of this article shall have the authority (without prejudice to the university's regulatory power) to determine whether an individual has violated clauses e or f, and whether a candidate is eligible to stand for election under clause g,
- e. Each candidate must campaign individually and there shall be no slates, factions, or other form of collusion between candidates for different offices,
- f. Any candidates who attempt to secure votes through bribery or through promises to appoint prospective voters as directors, who conduct themselves as though they were a slate or faction, or who collude with other candidates, are disqualified from the election and barred from membership of the LSOU Student Group for a period of one year,
- g. Only individuals who have held a director or Vice Presidential role at the LSOU Student Group in the preceding academic year may be candidates,
- h. Notification of the election will be sent via email to all general members a



- minimum of 12 calendar days prior to the commencement of voting,
- i. The email sent pursuant to the preceding clause shall include a registration form for candidates and shall provide a registration deadline that is to be no later than 5 calendar days prior to the commencement of voting,
  - j. The full list of candidates for each position shall be made available to voters no later than 1 calendar day prior to the commencement of voting,
  - k. Elections shall be held electronically using a platform determined by the incumbent President and Vice Presidents to be reliable,
  - l. If, due to extenuating circumstances, an election cannot be held over a reliable electronic platform, said election shall be conducted by secret ballot subject to the following stipulations:
    - i. Subject to the following subclauses, no vote shall be discarded or otherwise rendered invalid solely because it was cast by proxy,
    - ii. An individual may only serve as a proxy for one voter,
    - iii. Only members may serve as proxies,
    - iv. Despite the preceding sub-clause, neither an incumbent Vice President or President nor a candidate for any position shall serve as a proxy,
  - m. Successful candidates will be determined by accrual of the most number of votes tallied from amongst the general membership,
  - n. Final results of the election must be presented to the membership for ratification of the process only and the results themselves should not be brought into question; only the process through which these results were tabulated,
  - o. If an error in the process is found, the election should be re-held at the final General Meeting with a new election oversight committee,
  - p. Candidates who run for a position unopposed must receive a simple and clear majority of the total eligible votes to be declared the winner of that election;

### **11. Article XI: Transition**

- a. All outgoing executives are required to transfer all organizational resources used relative to a particular role over the course of the preceding year to new executives upon leaving the position,
- b. All outgoing executives are responsible for providing a detailed report to incoming executives that stipulates the status of ongoing projects in their portfolio and evaluations of previous projects and programs that they lead,
- c. All outgoing and incoming executives will participate in a joint training session occurring no later than the end of May each year to assist with the transition between new executive teams;

### **12. Article XII: Food Handling on Campus**

- a. The Law Society of UTSC Student Group will conform to Provincial and

Municipal Health Regulations when events which include the sale and/or service of food products are held on any property belonging to or otherwise administered by the University of Toronto;

**13. Article XIII: Precedence of University Policies**

- a. The LSOU Student Group will abide by all pertinent University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines
- b. Where the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines conflict with those of the LSOU Student Group, the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines will take precedence,
- c. No staff member of the LSOU Student Group shall be subjected to any disciplinary proceedings, reprimand, or removal pursuant to this constitution or other policies of the LSOU Student Group for any action or omission intended in good faith to comply with or avoid violating university policy;

**14. Article XIV: Legal Liability**

- a. The University of Toronto Scarborough does not endorse Law Society of UTSC Student Group's beliefs or philosophy nor does it assume legal liability for the group's activities on or off campus;

**15. Article XV: Banking**

- a. The Law Society of UTSC Student Group agrees to provide the name of the bank, the branch number and address, transit number, bank account number, and a list of all signing officers for all bank accounts opened in the organization's name to the Department of Student Life, University of Toronto Scarborough.

## Appendix A: General Meeting Rules of Order

- b. Call to Order
  - i. The Chairperson may call the meeting to order only if a quorum of executives and non-executive general members is present in person. If a quorum does not exist, the meeting is not qualified to conduct business,
  - ii. The meeting must be open to all applicable general members. General members must receive notice of the meeting in accordance with, the constitution,
- c. Review of the Agenda
  - i. The first draft of the agenda is prepared by the chairperson prior to the meeting. Agenda items should ordinarily appear in the order set forth in these rules of order,
  - ii. The agenda belongs to all general members. The agenda may be modified only by a majority vote. This power should only be used when necessary as proper functioning of meetings and the organization requires advance planning,
  - iii. At this point in the agenda, general members may add or delete items from the agenda and may change the order of presentation,
  - iv. When possible, changes to the agenda should be done by acquiescence of all general members. Formal voting on the agenda is only necessary where it appears to the chairperson that there is a disagreement,
- d. Approval of Previous Minutes
  - i. The minutes need not be read aloud but they should be entered into the organization's official minute ledger upon approval by the general membership,
  - ii. The minutes are prepared by either the Vice President of Operations or some other individual appointed by the general membership to act as recording secretary. Any general member may suggest changes to the minutes before the general membership adopts them. The suggested changes should be set forth in the minutes for the record, and then the general membership should adopt or reject such changes,
  - iii. Minutes should state precisely each motion considered by the general membership, and identify the general members voting in favor, against, or abstaining, and whether the motion was carried. Minutes need not reflect the comments made except in those instances when the member desires to make his/her comments recorded,
  - iv. When possible, changes to the minutes and adoption of the minutes should be done by acquiescence of all general members. Formal voting on the minutes is only necessary where it appears to the

Chairperson that there is a disagreement,

- e. Executive Reports
  - i. Executives may report their findings or recommendations to the general membership at this point of the agenda,
  - ii. The full report should be presented and then general members, in turn, may ask questions or comment. It is not appropriate to make motions or discuss items of business during this portion of the meeting,
  - iii. This time should also be used for any presentations to be made to the general membership,
- f. Open Forum
  - i. It is the custom and practice of most organizations to allow general members an open forum to ask questions and speak about their concerns to an executive after a report has been provided,
  - ii. Strict time limitations should be imposed by the Chairperson and these limitations must be enforced. Each general member should address the Chairperson regarding an issue and must speak courteously and to the point,
- g. Old and New Business
  - i. All items that were tabled during previous meetings must be revisited during the business portion of the agenda occurring after executive reports,
  - ii. The general membership may vote to postpone consideration of any old business or it may remove any item from consideration,
  - iii. Except in the case of emergency business, all new items of business are heard only after all the old items have been addressed by the general membership,
  - iv. All business must be conducted in the form of motions or resolutions adopted by a vote of the general membership,
- h. Motions and Deliberations
  - i. When an item of business is to be discussed, the Chairperson announces the item to be discussed and opens the floor to discussion,
  - ii. No general member may speak until recognized by the Chairperson. No general member may interrupt the speaker who has the floor,
  - iii. The Chairperson may impose reasonable time limitations. All time limitations must be uniformly imposed upon all of the general members. The speaker shall be given a one-minute warning before time runs out. By vote of a majority of the general membership, time limits may be extended,
  - iv. The Chairperson is to recognize each general member in turn. Discussion shall be limited to the item of business at hand, and the Chairperson shall have the authority to take the floor from a speaker who does not limit discussion to the item of business at hand,

- v. No general member may speak to an issue for a second time until all other general members have had the opportunity to speak to it for the first time. Likewise, no general member may speak to an issue for a third time until all other general members have had the opportunity to speak to it for a second time,
  - vi. When it appears to the Chairperson that all general members have had the opportunity to fully discuss the matter at hand, the Chair should announce that the item of business is ready for a vote,
- i. Voting
- i. There are 3 basic motions for each item of business:
    - 1. A motion to adopt a specific action by the board,
    - 2. A motion to postpone the item to another meeting (including fact-finding assignments to a person or committee),
    - 3. A motion to remove an item from consideration,
  - ii. The general membership is limited to discussing one item of business at a time, but there are no limits to the number of motions that may be considered as to how to dispose of that item of business,
  - iii. After the general membership has had the opportunity to discuss each motion presented for consideration, the Chairperson will call each motion presented to a vote,
  - iv. The fact that a motion has been adopted or failed does not prevent the item of business from being added to the agenda in the future and all motions may be reconsidered at any time by the general membership.