



## **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OPEN PRAxis FORUM (OPF) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCARBOROUGH CAMPUS**

### **Article I: Name of Organization**

- 1.1 The official name of the organization shall be “Open Praxis Forum”.
- 1.2 The Open Praxis Forum may also be referred to by the acronym “OPF”.

### **Article II: Purpose**

- 2.1 The purpose of Open Praxis Forum will be to run a platform created by and for students and early-career researchers to amplify their work and increase the impact of their work (can be research articles, creative pieces, poetry, etc.) by showcasing and archiving their creative pieces and research on our website and social media.
- 2.2 The Open Praxis Forum will enhance the educational, recreational, social, or cultural environment of the University of Toronto Scarborough by prioritizing decolonial, reflexive, consensual, diverse, and caring knowledge creation practices. This will be an opportunity for students to showcase their work on our website and have it reach a wider audience as long as they meet the submissions criteria.
- 2.3 The Open Praxis Forum fundamentally serves a non-profit function within the University of Toronto Scarborough, and will not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.
- 2.4 The Open Praxis Forum operates as an independent entity working within the University of Toronto Scarborough community subject to the values and policies of the University.

### **Article III: Membership**

- 3.1 Membership in OPF is open to all students, staff, faculty and alumni of the University of Toronto Scarborough.
- 3.2 The term of membership for OPF will be from September 1 – August 31 each year.
- 3.3 Each member shall be afforded the following rights through membership in OPF:
  - 3.3.1 The right to participate and vote in group elections and meetings;
  - 3.3.2 The right to communicate and to discuss and explore all ideas;



- 3.3.3** The right to organize/engage in activities/events that are reasonable and lawful;
- 3.3.4** The right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or sexual orientation;
- 3.3.5** The right to be free from censorship, control, or interference by the University on the basis of 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;
- 3.3.6** The right to distribute on campus, in a responsible way, published material provided that it is not unlawful;
- 3.4** Each member shall possess the following responsibilities relative to participation in OPF:
  - 3.4.1** Support the purpose of the organization;
  - 3.4.2** Uphold the values of the organization;
  - 3.4.3** Contribute constructively to the programs and activities offered by the organization;
  - 3.4.4** Attend general meetings;
  - 3.4.5** Abide by the constitution and subsequent official organizational documents;
  - 3.4.6** Respect the rights of peers and fellow members;
  - 3.4.7** Abide by University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines;
  - 3.4.8** Abide by the Laws of the Land, including but not limited to the Criminal Code of Canada.
- 3.5** The OPF values and respects the personal information of its members. The OPF secures its member's information at all times and will not supply names or other confidential information to third-parties without the permission of said members.
- 3.6** The OPF will protect the privacy of member information and must use it only for the delivery of service and not for commercial gain.



**3.7** The process for becoming a member of OPF is as follows:

**3.7.1** When the existing OPF team starts seeking new members they will post on social media calling for students to join the team. Interested students will be asked to explain why they are interested in joining.

**3.7.2** Interviews will be held by existing members for the selected people interested in joining the team and questions will be asked about their interest in OPF and about previous experiences they have that will aid them in their role at OPF.

**3.7.3** For people not interested in becoming members of the core team at OPF and only wish to join as volunteers for a shorter period of time, once they express their interest they may be interviewed and given tasks depending on their availability.

#### **Article IV: Executives**

**4.1** The executives of the organization shall include a Director of Communications, Director of Events, Director of Publications, Director of Finance, and Director of Human Resources.

**4.2** The broad responsibilities of each executive position are as follows:

**4.2.1** Director of Communications

- Acts as a liaison between the organization and other student clubs, societies, organizations, and groups on and off campus
- Responsible for the development of OPF website and social media outreach
- Responsible for managing, training, and organizing members of the Communications team

**4.2.2** Director of Events

- Organizes and plans events
- Oversees events organized by the group for the benefit of members and the campus community
- Responsible for managing, training, and organizing members of the Events team

**4.2.3** Director of Publications

- Acts as an advocate and resource to uphold academic standards and integrity, ensuring accessible, high quality research
- Responsible for editing student submissions to ensure that they are of equitable and integral research



- Responsible for managing, training, and organizing members of the Publication team

#### **4.2.4** Director of Finance

- Oversees the organization's finances and is in charge of developing a budget for each financial semester
- Responsible for managing, training, and organizing members of the Finance team

#### **4.2.5** Director of Human Resources

- Provides direction for all components of the organization in a manner consistent with the organization's constitution and policies
- Responsible for hiring all organizational associates while developing human resources practices and policies to maintain a positive and safe working environment for group members
- Responsible for managing, training, and organizing members of the Human Resources team

**4.3** Only student members of the organization may hold executive positions.

**4.4** The executive positions collectively will form a committee that acts as the primary steward of the organization.

**4.5** This committee is collectively responsible for the day-to-day decision making of the organization including but not limited to monitoring finances, event planning and execution, member services, and advocating on behalf of members to Administration and student government.

**4.6** This committee cannot make amendments to the constitution without the approval of the general membership at a valid general meeting.

**4.7** The term of each Director will last from May 1 following their election to April 30 of the following year.

**4.8** Any executive of the organization may resign, provided that such resignation is made in writing and sent to the executive team. Unless any such resignation is, by its terms, effective on a later date, it shall be effective on delivery to the executive team, and no ratification by the organization shall be required to make the resignation official.

**4.9** Any vacancy of executives shall be filled by any member of the team until such a time where a by-election is held, a permanent appointment occurs, or a hiring process is conducted.



## **Article V: Removal of Members and Executives**

**5.1** The process for removing a member or executive may be initiated when a committee of no less than three (3) general members and two (2) executives appointed by the general membership to investigate a complaint determines that:

**5.1.1** A member or executive has engaged in unlawful actions or activities;

**5.1.2** A member or executive has violated the constitution;

**5.1.3** A member or executive has violated University of Toronto policies, procedures, or guidelines;

**5.1.4** A member or executive has violated the rights of a fellow member;

**5.1.5** A member or executive has not fulfilled their organizational responsibilities;

**5.1.6** Other criteria deemed to be appropriate by the Executive Committee in consultation with and approved by a majority of the general membership.

**5.2** The process for removing a member or executive may also be initiated when:

**5.2.1** A petition calling for a vote and bearing the signatures of a majority of the general membership is submitted to any member of the executive.

**5.2.2** A motion for a removal vote is put forward by any member of the executive and passed by a two-thirds majority vote of the executives. The individual facing potential removal vote is entitled to vote on the motion if they are an executive or be given an opportunity to explain themselves if they are a general member.

**5.3** The removal of members and executives will be facilitated by a *three tier* procedure which operates as follows:

**5.3.1** First Tier:

- The executive or member will be warned both verbally and in writing that their behavior constitutes grounds for removal from the organization and that it should cease effective immediately.

**5.3.2** Second Tier:

- Initiated because the member or executive has violated section 5.1 after receiving a first tier warning relative to a particular action or behavior.



- The director of human resources will be responsible for contacting the executive or member and facilitate training or suggest best practices on how to correct the issues of concern.
- The director of human resources must address all complaints in writing by formulating an action plan and timeline to correct any issues involving executives or members within fourteen (14) calendar days.
- The executive or member accused of violating section 5.1 will be given fourteen (14) calendar days from receiving the written response to demonstrate progress or correction of behavior.

### **5.3.3 Third Tier:**

- Initiated because the member or executive has violated section 5.1 after receiving second tier warning relative to a particular action or behavior.
- The removal vote must take place at a valid general meeting of the membership. A representative supporting the motion for removal and the executive or member facing removal (or an individual they designate), may speak for up to five minutes each.
- The removal of a member requires a 2/3 majority vote of all of the members present at a valid general meeting (including executives). The executive or member facing removal is entitled to vote on the motion.

## **Article VI: Finances**

**6.1** The funds of the organization shall be expended pursuant to the operating budget approved by the general membership at a valid general meeting.

**6.2** Notwithstanding section 6.1, the executive committee may not approve any unbudgeted expenditure of the organization's funds above \$100.00 without the approval of the general members at a valid general meeting.

**6.3** All Budgets shall be prepared by the finance and events members in accordance with the organization's priorities as determined by the executive committee in consultation with general members at a valid general meeting.

**6.4** The Director of Finance shall present a proposed operating budget for the next fiscal semester (Fall Semester: September-December, Winter Semester: January-April, Summer Semester: May-August) to the general membership for its consideration at the final general meeting of each semester.



**6.5** The operating budget shall be the major budget for the semester and provide for all expenditures of the organization for the subsequent semester.

**6.6** The operating budget shall be approved by a majority vote of the general members present and voting at a valid general meeting.

**6.7** The banking business of the organization, or any part thereof, shall be transacted with such bank, trust company or other firm or body corporate as the team may designate, appoint or authorize from time to time and all such banking business, or any part thereof, shall be transacted on the organization's behalf by one or more Officers or other persons as the team may designate, direct or authorize from time to time and to the extent thereby provided.

**6.8** The Director of Finance, Director of Events, and the Director of Human Resources shall be the sole signing authorities of banking instruments for the organization.

**6.9** Open Praxis Forum will ensure that proper and accurate financial records are maintained and passed on to incoming executives following each year's elections.

**6.10** Open Praxis Forum will accept full financial and production responsibility for all activities it sponsors, plans, or executes.

## **Article VII: General Meetings**

**7.1** The purpose of General Meetings is to provide a forum for executives to overview the activities of the organization and solicit feedback from members, to engage in policy-making, to propose amendments to the constitution, and to report on the financial status of the organization.

**7.2** General meetings will be facilitated by a Director of Human Resources selected by the general membership from the executive committee. The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for:

**7.2.1** Formulating and distributing an agenda for each meeting no later than two (2) days before the meeting;

**7.2.2** Ensuring appropriate conduct and leading the meeting in an efficient, reasonable manner;

**7.2.3** Moderating the discussion at meetings according to the agenda;

**7.2.4** Suspending members from participating in meetings for constitutional or procedural violations.



**7.3** The procedure at meetings of members shall be governed in accordance with the process outlined in Appendix A.

**7.4** There shall be a minimum of one (1) general meeting held each month. The date of each subsequent general meeting will be confirmed at the preceding general meeting and will be reiterated to members via email or the Slack app a minimum of two (2) calendar days prior to the meeting.

**7.5** General meetings may be called to order by the Director of Human Resources or at the notice of any general members should there be any need

**7.6** General meetings are open to registered members of the organization only. Quorum will first be established by the presence of a simple and clear majority of the executives.

**7.7** All executives are expected to make brief progress reports on their activities at every general meeting.

**7.8** Minutes of all general meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes.

**7.9** Members must contact the Director of Human Resources to inform them of new business they wish to discuss. All changes to the meeting agenda will be made known to other members of Open Praxis Forum.

**7.10** Any question at a valid general meeting shall be decided by a show of hands.

**7.11** Whenever a vote by show of hands occurs, a declaration by the Director of Human Resources that the vote upon the question has been carried, carried by a particular majority, or failed shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

**7.12** In case of an equality of votes at a valid general meeting, the meeting will be adjourned to revote. If the case of an equality of votes remains, Open Praxis Forum will consult the Knowledge Equity Lab (the University of Toronto organization which Open Praxis Forum operates under).

**7.13** The Chairperson presiding over a meeting of members may, with the consent of the majority of members, decide to adjourn these meetings from time to time.

## **Article VIII: Executive Meetings**





**8.1** 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.

**8.2** Executive meetings will be facilitated by the Director of Human Resources of the organization. The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for:

**8.2.1** Formulating and distributing an agenda for each meeting;

**8.2.2** Ensuring appropriate conduct and leading the meeting in an efficient, reasonable manner;

**8.2.3** Moderating the discussion at meetings according to the agenda;

**8.3** There shall be a minimum of one (1) executive meeting held at least once (1) every month during the period September 1 to April 30. The date of each subsequent executive meeting will be confirmed at the preceding meeting and will be reiterated to executives via email a minimum of two (2) calendar days prior to the meeting.

**8.4** The frequency of executive meetings occurring between May 1 and August 31 will be left to the discretion of the executive committee.

**8.5** Executive meetings may be called to order by the Director of Human Resources or at the notice of any Directors should there be any need.

**8.6** Executive meetings are restricted to executive members only. Quorum will be established by the presence of a simple and clear majority of the total executives for the organization.

**8.7** Minutes of all executive meetings must be recorded and maintained for reference purposes.

**8.8** Directors must notify the Director of Human Resources a minimum to inform them of new business they wish to discuss. All changes to the meeting agenda must be made known to other members of Open Praxis Forum.

**8.9** Each executive member of the organization shall be entitled to one (1) vote at a valid executive meeting.

**8.10** Any question at an Executive Meeting shall be decided by a show of hands.

**8.11** Whenever a vote by show of hands occurs, a declaration by the Director of Human Resources that the vote has been carried, carried by a particular majority, or failed shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.



**8.12** In case of an equality of votes at a valid general meeting, the meeting will be adjourned to revote. If the case of an equality of votes remains, Open Praxis Forum will consult the Knowledge Equity Lab (the University of Toronto organization which Open Praxis Forum operates under).

**8.13** The President may, with the consent of the majority of executives, decide to adjourn these meetings from time to time.

### **Article IX: Emergency Meetings**

**9.1** Emergency meetings can be called for extenuating or unforeseen circumstances that may arise from time to time.

**9.2** These meetings must abide by the respective rules outlined in sections VII and VIII depending on the nature of the meeting.

**9.3** Notice of these meetings must be provided a minimum of 24 hours in advance through email or Slack.

**9.4** Less notice for emergency meetings may be provided at the discretion of the President in agreement with a minimum of five (5) general members.

### **Article X: Elections**

**10.1** Elections for director positions will be held prior to March 31 each year.

**10.2** Candidates for directorship positions shall be selected through an application process subject to meeting a set of minimum qualifications for holding a particular position. These qualifications will be established by the outgoing executive team each year prior to the commencement of the application submission period and enforced by the Director of Human Resources.

**10.3** Only student members who meet the minimum qualifications to hold an executive position shall be permitted to participate in an election and hold executive positions.

**10.4** All screening of candidates will be conducted by the Director of Human Resources along with general members who will assess each candidate's qualifications against pre-established criteria for holding the positions.



**10.5** Notification of the acceptance of applications for executive positions will be sent via email to all general members a minimum of twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the general meeting at which the election will be held.

**10.6** All application periods must commence a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the general meeting at which the election will be held. The application period must end a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the general meeting at which the election will be held.

**10.7** Successful candidates will be permitted to give a short speech at the general meeting where the election is being held. Each speech will be followed by a short question and answer period. The length of each speech and the question/answer period will be left to the discretion of the Director of Human Resources.

**10.8** Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot, and overseen by an election oversight committee separate and unique from the candidate selection committee described in section 10.4.

**10.9** This committee will be comprised of two (2) general members and one (1) director.

**10.10** Successful candidates will be determined by accrual of the most number of votes tallied from amongst the general membership.

**10.11** Final results of the election must be presented to the membership for ratification of the process only. The results themselves should not be brought into question; only the process through which these results were tabulated.

**10.12** 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.

**10.13** Candidates who run for a position unopposed must receive a simple and clear majority of the total eligible votes at a valid general meeting in which an election is held to be declared the winner of that election.

## **Article XI: Amendments**

**11.1** The organization may make, amend or repeal the constitution or certain sections therein.

**11.2** Notice of a meeting called to consider such a resolution shall be given as follows:



**11.2.1** Notice of the full text of the proposed constitutional amendment shall be given to each member at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the change;

**11.2.2** A summary of the rationale for the proposed amendment shall be given to each member at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the change.

**11.3** 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).

**11.4** The general membership must have the final say on amendments to the constitution.

## **Article XII: Transition**

**12.1** 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.

**12.2** 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.

**12.3** 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.

## **Article XIII: Emergency Powers**

**13.1** In the case of extenuating circumstances, the executive shall be afforded the ability to act without direction from the organization's members.

**13.2** An extenuating circumstance is defined as any instance that may jeopardize the immediate functioning of the organization including but not limited to: executive vacancies, unexpected cancellations, removal from position, or lack of response from members.

**13.3** Emergency powers may only be used for such a period of time as is needed to address an extenuating circumstance.

**13.4** General members have the ability to remove emergency powers where appropriate through submission of a signed petition from at least 10% of the entire general membership.



#### **Article XIV: Food Handling on Campus**

**14.1** Open Praxis Forum will conform to Provincial and Municipal Health Regulations when events which include the sale and/or service of food products are held on the University of Toronto Scarborough campus.

#### **Article XV: Precedence of University Policies**

**15.1** Open Praxis Forum will abide by all pertinent University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines. Where the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines conflict with those of Open Praxis Forum, the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines will take precedent.

#### **Article XVI: Legal Liability**

**16.1** The University of Toronto Scarborough does not endorse the Open Praxis Forum's beliefs or philosophy nor does it assume legal liability for the group's activities on or off campus.

#### **Article XVII: Banking**

**17.1** Open Praxis Forum 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 Office of Student Experience and Wellbeing at University of Toronto Scarborough, should the university request it<sup>[JC4]</sup>

### **Appendix A: General Meeting Rules of Order**

#### **I. Call to Order**

**1.** The Director of Human Resources may call the meeting to order only if a quorum of general members is present in person or virtually. If a quorum does not exist, the meeting is not qualified to conduct business. A general member may not appear by proxy or mail ballot.



2. The meeting must be open to all applicable general members. General members must receive notice of the meeting in accordance with the constitution.

## **II. Review of the Agenda**

1. The first draft of the agenda is prepared by the Director of Human Resources prior to the meeting. Agenda items should ordinarily appear in the order set forth in these rules of order.

2. The agenda belongs to all general members. The agenda may be modified before the meeting starts during the check-in period.

## **III. Approval of Previous Minutes**

1. 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.

2. The minutes are prepared by either the Director of Human Resources, a member of the Human Resources team, 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 Director of Human Resources that there is a disagreement.

## **IV. Executive Reports**

1. Directors may report their findings or recommendations to the general membership at this point of the agenda.

2. 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.



3. This time should also be used for any presentations to be made to the general membership.

## **V. Open Forum**

1. Open Praxis Forum will dedicate a portion of the meetings to allow general members an open forum to ask questions and speak about their concerns to the team at the end of the meeting.

2. Strict time limitations should be imposed by the Director of Human Resources and these limitations must be enforced. Each general member should address the Director of Human Resources regarding an issue and must speak courteously and to the point.

## **VI. Old and New Business**

1. All items that were tabled during previous meetings must be revisited during the business portion of the agenda occurring after executive reports if time permits and after all business of the day's current agenda has been addressed.

2. The general membership may vote to postpone consideration of any old business or it may remove any item from consideration.

3. Except in the case of emergency business, all new items of business are heard only after all of the old items have been addressed by the general membership.

4. All business must be conducted in the form of deliberation to allow ample input from all Open Praxis Forum members, and adopted by a general agreement the general membership.

## **VII. Motions and Deliberations**

1. When an item of business is to be discussed, the Director of Human Resources announces the item to be discussed and opens the floor to discussion.

2. All general members must speak courteously and politely at all times during the meetings.

3. The Director of Human Resources 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.



4. The Director of Human Resources shall be responsible for facilitating meeting discussions to ensure that all general members are given ample and viable opportunities to voice their thoughts on all motions or items of business being discussed.

5. When it appears to the Director of Human Resources that all general members have had the opportunity to fully discuss the matter at hand, the Director of Human Resources should announce that the item of business is ready for a vote.

### **VIII. Voting**

1. There are 3 basic motions for each item of business:

- A motion to adopt a specific action by the board.
- A motion to postpone the item to another meeting (including fact-finding assignments to a person or committee).
- A motion to remove an item from consideration

2. 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.

3. After the general membership has had the opportunity to discuss each motion presented for consideration, the Director of Human Resources will call each motion presented to a vote.

4. 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.