

UTM Integrated Brain Research Club Constitution 2024 - 2025



Campus Group Name

Integrated Brain Research Club

Abbreviation: UTM IBRC

Purpose

The Integrated Brain Research Club is dedicated to understanding and educating students on the intricate mechanisms by which comorbid psychiatric disorders develop within our brains. By fostering a deeper comprehension of these processes, we aim to bridge the gap between systems neuroscience and mental health awareness. The club envisions a community where students are well-informed about the complex functions that are associated with psychiatric disorders, enabling them to contribute to a more empathetic and scientifically grounded discourse on mental health.

The IBRC will:

1. Educate students about the neural networks and mechanisms that contribute to comorbid psychiatric disorders by inviting specialists in the field of systems neuroscience to discuss topics such as the role of neurotransmitters, brain plasticity, and the impact of genetic and environmental factors.
2. Promote interdisciplinary research and learning opportunities among students interested in systems neuroscience by facilitating student-led research projects where participants can investigate specific questions related to neural mechanisms and psychiatric disorders.
3. Engage in advocacy efforts to highlight the importance of mental health research and support policies that promote funding and resources for systems neuroscience.
4. Raise awareness about the physical, biological structures that influence mental health by collaborating with local schools and community organizations to conduct outreach programs that educate the broader community about brain health. These initiatives will aim to reduce stigma and promote mental health awareness.
5. Encourage students to pursue careers and further studies in systems neuroscience, psychiatry, addiction research, and related fields by connecting students with mentors in the fields of systems neuroscience to guide their academic and career paths.

Membership

- Membership in the *Integrated Brain Research Club* is open to all members of the UTM community (staff, faculty and alumni) and all UTMSU students.
- Executive positions are only open to those who will be registered UTM students in the academic year in which they will serve.
- Only registered general members in the club, who are also UTMSU-registered, 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 and a valid email address.
- The membership fee will be 0\$ per year.

Executive List and Duties

The executive committee shall be composed of ten (10) elected officers. These include a President, Vice President (2), Secretary, Treasurer, Marketing Director, Graphic Designer (3), Mentorship Director, Website Developer, Events Coordinator (4), and an External Outreach Officer.

*The **President** shall:*

- Oversee the operations, management and success of the group.
- Act as the primary representative of the club to the school administration, other clubs, and external organizations.
- Hold signing officer authority along with the *Treasurer* for financial purposes.
- Preside over board meetings as well as general meetings.
- Ensure transition of office to the future Executives.
- Plan and facilitate regular club meetings, ensuring they are productive and inclusive.
- Maintain clear and effective communication with club members, keeping them informed about meetings, events, and other relevant information.
- Set short-term and long-term goals for the club.
 - Develop strategies to achieve these goals and periodically review progress.
- Ensure that accurate records of meetings, events, and other activities are maintained.
- Address and resolve any issues or conflicts that arise within the club.

- Prepare for the transition of leadership by training and mentoring the next president and other incoming officers.
- Ensures all the activities of the organization meet regulations and policies of the University of Toronto Mississauga and the UTM Student Union.
- A minimum of one year involvement in the organization is needed prior to serving in this position.

The Vice President (2) shall:

- Assume the duties of the *President* in his/her absence.
- Oversee the various committees.
- Attends all group's general and executive meetings.
- Ensures all the activities of the organization meet regulations and policies of the University of Toronto Mississauga and the UTM Student Union.
- Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts.
- Help plan and organize club meetings.
 - Take on the role of meeting facilitator if the *President* is absent.
- Help create a welcoming and inclusive environment within the club.
- Help maintain clear and effective communication between club officers and members.
 - Relay information from the president to the members and vice versa.
- Mentor and support other club members and officers, helping them develop leadership skills.
- Regularly reports updates and changes to the *President* via meetings and/or appropriate online communication platforms.
- A minimum of one year involvement in the organization is needed prior to serving in this position.

The Secretary shall:

- Make a list of all registered members.
- Keep organized records of all club activities, events, and communications.
 - Maintain up-to-date contact information for all club members and officers.
- Record detailed and accurate minutes of all club meetings.
 - Distribute meeting minutes to members promptly and maintain them for future reference.
- Assist the president in preparing the agenda for meetings.
- Notify all members of meetings.
- Handle official correspondence of the organization.

- Handle logistical details such as scheduling, venue booking, and coordination with other clubs or organizations.
- Assist with special projects and initiatives undertaken by the club leadership.
- Regularly reports updates and changes to the *President* via meetings and/or appropriate online communication platforms.

The Treasurer shall:

- Manage the club's bank accounts and ensure that funds are properly deposited and withdrawn.
- Holds signing officer authority along with the *President* for financial purposes.
- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of all financial transactions.
- Develop and propose an annual budget in collaboration with other club officers.
- Monitor the budget throughout the year, ensuring that the club stays within its financial means.
- Ensure that receipts and invoices are collected and filed for all transactions.
- Work closely with other club officers, particularly the president and secretary, to coordinate financial planning and management.
- Collaborate with committees or sub-groups within the club on financial matters related to specific projects or events.
- Train and mentor the incoming treasurer to ensure a smooth transition.
- Attends audit training sessions held by the UTMSU.
 - Be mainly responsible for bi-annual audits to the UTMSU.
- Regularly reports updates and changes to the *President* via meetings and/or appropriate online communication platforms.

The Marketing Director shall:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan to promote the club and its events.
- Identify target audiences and tailor marketing efforts to reach them effectively.
- Create promotional materials for club events, including flyers, posters, and digital content.
- Use various channels to advertise events, such as social media, email newsletters, school bulletin boards, and the club's website.
- Maintain a consistent brand image for the club across all marketing materials and communications.
- Ensure that content is high-quality and aligned with the club's goals and values.
- Conduct surveys and gather feedback from members to understand their interests and improve marketing strategies.

- Work with the event planning team to ensure that marketing efforts are integrated into event logistics.

The Graphic Designer (3) shall:

- Report back to the *Marketing Director*.
- Design flyers, posters, banners, and other promotional materials for club events and activities.
- Create digital graphics for use on social media, the club's website, and email newsletters.
- Ensure that all visual content is consistent with the club's branding, including logos, colors, fonts, and overall style.
- Work closely with the marketing director and other club officers to understand the visual needs of the club.
- Manage multiple design projects simultaneously, ensuring timely delivery and adherence to deadlines.
 - Prioritize tasks based on the club's needs and the importance of upcoming events.
- Incorporate feedback from club members and officers to refine and improve designs.

The Mentorship Director shall:

- Design and implement mentorship programs that align with the club's goals and members' needs.
- Create a structured plan that outlines the objectives, activities, and expected outcomes of the mentorship program.
- Work to recruit mentors and mentees alike.
- Organize and/or facilitate training to mentors.
- Develop a system for pairing mentors and mentees based on interests, goals, and expertise.
 - Ensure that matches are well-suited to foster productive and beneficial relationships.
- Organize orientation sessions for both mentors and mentees to introduce them to the program and its expectations.
- Provide training and resources to mentors on effective mentorship practices and communication skills.
- Plan and coordinate mentorship-related events, such as workshops, networking events, and social gatherings.
- Organize regular check-ins and group activities to encourage interaction and bonding among participants.
- Host regular executive meetings for mentors.

- Develop methods for evaluating the effectiveness of the mentorship program, such as surveys and feedback forms.

The Website Developer shall:

- Design and develop a user-friendly and visually appealing website that aligns with the club's branding and goals.
- Regularly update the website with fresh content, including news, event announcements, meeting minutes, and member spotlights.
 - Ensure that all content is well-organized, accessible, and easy to navigate.
- Troubleshoot and resolve technical issues related to the website.
- Provide support to club members who need assistance with the website.
- Integrate the website with the club's social media accounts, email newsletters, and other digital platforms.
- Work with the *Marketing Director, Graphic Designer*, and other club officers to gather and create content for the website.
- Ensure that all published content aligns with the club's overall messaging and branding.
- Gather feedback from club members and website users to identify areas for improvement.

The Events Coordinator (4) shall:

- Develop event ideas and concepts that align with the club's goals and interests.
- Create event proposals outlining objectives, budgets, timelines, and resources needed.
- Research and identify suitable venues for events, considering factors such as capacity, location, and cost.
- Plan and coordinate event logistics, including setup, signage, equipment rental, transportation, and catering.
- Create detailed event timelines and checklists to ensure all tasks are completed on time.
- Attend all events.
- Oversee all aspects of event execution, including setup, registration, program flow, and cleanup.
- Coordinate with volunteers and committee members to delegate tasks and ensure smooth operations.
- Identify and invite guest speakers, performers, or special guests for events.
- Prepare post-event reports detailing key metrics, attendance figures, budget expenditures, and outcomes.

- Maintain accurate records of event planning documents, contracts, correspondence, and financial transactions.
- Prepares a monthly calendar detailing the events team's plans and activities and submits the calendar to the *President & Vice President* for review and approval.

The *External Outreach Officer* shall:

- Identify potential partners, sponsors, and collaborators for the club's activities and initiatives.
- Reach out to external organizations, businesses, and community groups to explore partnership opportunities.
- Attend networking events, conferences, and meetings to connect with individuals and organizations relevant to the club's mission.
- Collaborate with external organizations on joint initiatives, events, or projects that align with the club's goals.
- Advocate for issues and causes relevant to the club's mission within the broader community.
- Seek funding opportunities, grants, and sponsorships to support the club's activities and initiatives.
- Develop proposals and pitch presentations to secure financial support from external sources.
- Respond to club emails.
- Maintain records of external outreach activities, including contact information, correspondence, and partnership agreements.

Termination of Executives and/or 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.
- The member up for removal shall have the right to defend his/her actions.
- A two-thirds majority vote of the current members present in favor of removal is required. The member must have the right to an appeal before the general membership, and the majority vote of the general membership will have the final say on the matter.
- The member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club.

- Executive members are subject to the same termination or impeachment process and, as determined by the vote, may lose their executive position along with their membership to the group.

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

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

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

Elections

The *Integrated Brain Research Club* will follow election dates and procedures set by the UTMSU; including the procedure of nomination, majority vote and eligibility of vote. If election procedures are deemed to be unfair by reasonable standards by the Clubs Committee or the Academic Societies Affairs Committee, these results will be subject to a petition by a member and re-election will be held under the supervision of the UTMSU Campus Groups Coordinator.

Election Procedures

- The *Integrated Brain Research Club* will hold an election in the fourth week of March during the Winter Semester, following the timeline set by the UTMSU.
- A Chief Returning Officer (CRO) will be appointed to supervise the elections. The CRO must be an unbiased third party to the election, and must be approved by the outgoing executives and the Campus Groups Coordinator. The CRO must not be running for a position on the incoming executive team.
- Elections will be open to all interested candidates that are UTMSU registered members and are registered general members of the group.
- Prior to the week of accepting nominations, emails shall be sent to all UTMSU-registered club members as well as the Club's Coordinator and VP Campus Life.

Election Timeline

- **Advertising Period:** Advertising for elections is required and is to take place for a minimum of one week. Mass emails should be sent to all UTMSU registered members of the group
- **Nomination Period:** All members who are interested in running for an executive position are able to self-nominate during this time. This will be overseen and managed by the CRO.
- **All Candidates Meeting:** A meeting with all the candidates must be held to go over the elections rules. This meeting is mandatory for all future candidates, and if unable to attend, they must send a representative.
- **Campaigning Period:** During this time, candidates are able to campaign themselves to the Campus Groups's membership.
- **Voting Period:** UTMSU students are eligible to vote in elections only if they are registered members of the club. Registrations will be accepted throughout the year without exceptions. The CRO will organize the voting platform. Further, elections shall take place over a week, unless otherwise stated by the Executive Committee.

Election Policies

- 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 and ASAC withhold the right to nullify any group's election results if evidence of gross misconduct has been found in the operation of the election.
- Non-occurrence of elections will result in the immediate effect of cancellation of a group's status.
- Non-submission of election results will result in later loss of group recognition status through the Club's Committee or ASAC.
- If undemocratic election procedures are suspected, the election results or the group status may be put forward to the Clubs Committee/ASAC by the VP Campus Life or VP University Affairs.
- Former executives have the power to nominate a qualified candidate for a position if no one chooses to participate in the election for that position. This nominee must then be authorized by the VP Campus Life.
- On the last day of the academic year, the newly elected Executive Committee will take over management of the group.

Finances

- The Treasurer shall keep records of all income and expenses. The Treasurer 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.
- The group's executive or 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.

Meetings

- Annual General Meetings
 - 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 2/3 majority of registered members in attendance for a vote to be cast. The motion with the most votes will be passed.
- Executive Meetings
 - The executive committee shall meet on a date and time determined by a poll during the first week of every month throughout each academic term.

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 2/3 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. Centre for Student Engagement, The University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union, etc) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.