

# **Constitution of “University of Toronto Portuguese Student Association”**

## **1. Article One – Name and Purpose**

- 1.1. The official name of the recognized student group is “University of Toronto Portuguese Student Association”.
- 1.2. The official acronym or abbreviation of the group is “UTPA”.
- 1.3. The purpose, objectives, mission and/or mandate of the organization is to bring together individuals interested in learning about and celebrating Lusophone culture while actively supporting the educational aspirations of Lusophone youth. Through a range of campus cultural events, annual scholarship fundraising at our gala, and outreach presentations in local schools, we celebrate diversity and promote higher education. We value post-secondary education and continue to help lower dropout rates and increase college and university enrollment rates of Lusophone youth. We invite all University of Toronto students to join us in our mission to embrace the richness of Portuguese heritage, empower the next generation, and contribute to the vibrant cultural tapestry of our university community.

## **2. Article Two – Membership and Membership Fee**

- 2.1. The group shall maintain a list of group members.
- 2.2. Voting membership is open to all registered students of the University of Toronto.
- 2.3. Voting membership is open only to registered students of the University of Toronto.
- 2.4. Non-voting membership is open to University of Toronto staff, faculty, alumni, and to persons from outside the University. Unless otherwise stated, non-voting members do not hold any rights awarded to voting members.
- 2.5. The membership fee will be \$0 per year.

## **3. Article Three – Rights of Members**

- 3.1. All members may apply for a full refund of their membership fee within one (1) month of becoming a member.
- 3.2. All voting members have a right to attend all general meetings of members.
- 3.3. All voting members have a right to cast votes at all general meetings of members.
- 3.4. All voting members have a right to stand for election unless otherwise stated in this document.
- 3.5. All voting members have a right to cast votes in all group elections and referenda.
- 3.6. All voting members have a right to propose and vote on amendments to this constitution.
- 3.7. The rights prescribed in Article Three are not awarded to non-voting members as described in Article Two.

## **4. Article Four - Executive Committee**

- 4.1. The term for all positions on the Executive Committee shall be from May 1st to April 30th.

- 4.2. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of a minimum of three (3) voting members and a maximum of six (6) voting members, including the following mandatory positions:
  - 4.2.1. President
  - 4.2.2. Vice-President
  - 4.2.3. Treasurer
- 4.3. All voting members of the Executive Committee must be currently registered students of the University of Toronto.
- 4.4. Non-voting members may hold only non-voting positions on the Executive Committee.
- 4.5. The maximum amount of non-voting positions on the Executive Committee shall be one (1) position or ten per cent (10%) of the positions on the Executive Committee, whichever is greatest.
- 4.6. Persons holding non-voting positions on the Executive Committee cannot serve as an officer, financial authority, signing authority, primary contact, or secondary contact.
- 4.7. No person may serve as a financial authority or signing authority for the group if they are currently serving as a financial authority or signing authority for another recognized student group at the University of Toronto.

## **5. Article Five - Executive Committee Composition and Duties**

### **5.1. The President shall:**

- 5.1.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.1.2. Oversee the operations, management, and success of the group,
- 5.1.3. Serve as spokesperson for the group,
- 5.1.4. Hold signing and financial authority along with the Treasurer,
- 5.1.5. Preside over meetings of the Executive Committee and/or members,
- 5.1.6. Ensure a transition of office from one year to the next,
- 5.1.7. Contact community partners from previous year at the start of their term.
- 5.1.8. Update our contact information with the “Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations of Ontario (ACAPO)”,
- 5.1.9. Attend all ACAPO meetings.

### **5.2. The Vice-President shall:**

- 5.2.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.2.2. Assume duties of the President in their absence,
- 5.2.3. Ensure activities of the club comply with policies of the University of Toronto,
- 5.2.4. Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts.
- 5.2.5. Manage group’s logistics, such as venue booking and catering.

### **5.3. The Secretary shall:**

- 5.3.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.3.2. Maintain a list of group members,
- 5.3.3. Maintain a list of organization we work with,
- 5.3.4. Record notes and motions for all meetings,
- 5.3.5. Attend every single meeting, unless otherwise agreed upon with the majority of the Executive Committee
- 5.3.6. Notify all members of general meetings,
- 5.3.7. Schedule all the group’s meetings.

### **5.4. The Treasurer shall:**

- 5.4.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.4.2. Record all financial transactions of the group,
- 5.4.3. Hold signing and financial authority along with the President,
- 5.4.4. Maintain a budget of income and expenses,
- 5.4.5. Advise members on financial position of the group,
- 5.4.6. Manage the group's financial investments,
- 5.4.7. Handle all event-related payments,
- 5.4.8. Prepare an annual budget for the group.

**5.5. The Community Outreach Officer shall:**

- 5.5.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.5.2. Plan and executing club events and activities,
- 5.5.3. Build relationships with external organizations, including the Portuguese community in Canada, and exploring partnerships or collaborations,
- 5.5.4. Identify community service or volunteer opportunities,
- 5.5.5. Promote membership recruitment and retention,
- 5.5.6. Coordinate fundraising efforts,
- 5.5.7. Welcome and onboard new members.

**5.6. The Digital Media Officer shall:**

- 5.6.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.6.2. Keep members informed about club news and updates,
- 5.6.3. Maintain the group's digital channels, this includes:
  - 5.6.3.1. LinkedIn
  - 5.6.3.2. Instagram
  - 5.6.3.3. Facebook
  - 5.6.3.4. Email
  - 5.6.3.5. Newsletter
- 5.6.4. Maintain the website, this includes:
  - 5.6.4.1. Regular updates,
  - 5.6.4.2. Promptly posting information about the new executive team following elections,
  - 5.6.4.3. Ensure that information about upcoming events is displayed and kept up to date.
- 5.6.5. Provide regular reports on website traffic, social media engagement, and digital communication efforts to the Executive Committee.
- 5.6.6. Collaborate with Community Outreach Officer to promote club activities through digital channels.

**5.7. The Alumni Advisor shall:**

- 5.7.1. Not be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.7.2. Serve as a valuable resource and mentor to current club members,
- 5.7.3. Offer guidance and insights based on their experience as a former member of the club,
- 5.7.4. Provide historical context and institutional knowledge about the club's past activities and initiatives,
- 5.7.5. Offer support in organizing alumni-related events or reunions, if deemed appropriate.

## **6. Article Six – Elections**

- 6.1. All the **required** voting positions on the Executive Committee shall be filled through an annual election.
- 6.2. All voting group members shall be eligible to seek nomination to and cast a ballot for each voting position.
- 6.3. All non-voting group members shall be eligible to seek nomination only for non-voting positions on the Executive Committee.
- 6.4. Non-voting group members shall not be eligible to cast a ballot for any elected position.
- 6.5. The nominee winning the plurality of votes cast in the election for each position shall be deemed the winner.
- 6.6. In the event of a tie, where two or more nominees receive an equal number of votes for a particular position, the current Executive Committee shall convene to break the tie. The method for breaking the tie shall be determined by a majority vote of the current Executive Committee members. The decision of the Executive Committee in breaking the tie shall be final and binding.
- 6.7. The policy for conducting fair elections is the following:
  - 6.7.1. Nonbiased Election Oversight:
    - 6.7.1.1. The club shall make every effort to ensure that elections are conducted in a nonbiased manner.
    - 6.7.1.2. Whenever possible, individuals who are not seeking election shall be appointed to plan and administer the election process to maintain impartiality.
  - 6.7.2. Exceptional Circumstances:
    - 6.7.2.1. In cases where there are insufficient eligible members available who are not seeking election to oversee the process, the following steps shall be taken to maintain fairness:
      - i. The Executive Committee, excluding candidates, shall appoint a neutral observer to supervise the election process.
      - ii. The neutral observer shall ensure that the election is conducted fairly and in accordance with group's bylaws.
      - iii. The neutral observer may not seek election or hold a position within the group during the election cycle.
  - 6.7.3. Transparency and Accountability:
    - 6.7.3.1. The club shall maintain transparency and accountability in the election process by providing clear guidelines and procedures to all candidates and members.
    - 6.7.3.2. Any member with concerns about the election process may raise them with the neutral observer or the Executive Committee for resolution.

## **7. Article Seven – Finances**

- 7.1. The group shall establish an annual budget outlining expected income and expenses.
- 7.2. The Treasurer shall keep an active record of income and expenses.
- 7.3. The Treasurer shall present the group's updates on the group's financial position at annual general meetings.

- 7.4. The Executive Committee must approve all expenditures over \$500.00 through a majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 7.5. The group may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.
- 7.6. The group will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus chapter of a commercial organization.
- 7.7. The group will not provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the group.
- 7.8. The group will not pay salaries to any of its officers.
- 7.9. Group funds shall only be used for group-related purposes, events, and activities as outlined in the group's mission and bylaws.

## **8. Article Eight – Meetings**

- 8.1. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly. The quorum for the Executive Committee meetings shall be three (3) of the voting members of the Executive Committee.
- 8.2. The group shall hold general meetings at least twice per year to provide the general membership an opportunity to review the group's annual activity plan, financial health, and propose or vote on constitutional amendments.
- 8.3. Any member in good standing may propose a motion during a general meeting. Members present at the general meeting shall have the opportunity to vote in favor, against, or abstain on the proposed motion.
- 8.4. For a motion to be adopted and move forward, the number of votes in favor must be greater than the combined total of votes against and abstentions. In other words, the motion shall be deemed approved if the "votes in favor" exceed the sum of "votes against" and "abstentions."
- 8.5. The Executive Committee must announce the date of a general meeting to the general membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

## **9. Article Nine - Termination of Membership**

- 9.1. The Executive Committee may revoke the membership of any member of the club who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the club and its members.
- 9.2. A vote to revoke membership must be held at a meeting of the Executive Committee.
- 9.3. A two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee is required to approve any motion to revoke membership.
- 9.4. Any member facing removal shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Committee to the general membership.
- 9.5. In the case of an appeal, a simple majority vote at a meeting of the general membership shall be required to sustain the revocation of membership.
- 9.6. Following a termination of membership, the member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club.
- 9.7. While Executive Committee members are subject to the same termination of membership process as general members, the revocation of an Executive Committee member's membership only requires a simple majority vote from the Executive Committee to be approved.

## **10. Article Ten – Amendments**

- 10.1. All constitutional amendments shall require a 2/3 majority vote to be passed at a general meeting.
- 10.2. All voting members may propose and vote on amendments to the constitution.
- 10.3. The Executive Committee possesses the authority to reject an amendment provided that unanimous agreement is reached within the entire Executive Committee.
- 10.4. The Executive Committee shall submit the revised constitution to staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto within three (3) weeks.
- 10.5. Amendments to the constitution shall take effect only once the revised constitution has been approved by staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto.