

**Material Culture and Semiotics Student Union**  
**(MCSSU) Constitution**

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

1. This organization shall be known officially as the “Material Culture and Semiotics Student Union;” or “MCSSU” for short.

## **ARTICLE II: GOALS AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Material Culture and Semiotics Student Union is to represent those enrolled in courses offered by the Material Culture and Semiotics Program.

We act as a liaison between Material Culture and Semiotics students and their department as a whole, providing them with the platform to voice their concerns and ideas, offering guidance on navigating the program and accessing support services, and helping them build meaningful connections with faculty, peers, and staff.

Furthermore, we aim to foster both academic and social enrichment within the union, which is why the MCSSU intends to offer a variety of activities tailored for students interested in the program throughout the year; this includes academic seminars, career information sessions, movie/game nights, trips, and more. We work closely with the Arts and Science Student Union, receiving vital funding and support from them to facilitate these initiatives.

The MCSSU welcomes all University of Toronto students with open arms, regardless of abilities, gender identity, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Abiding by the University of Toronto Student Code of Conduct, we strive to cultivate an atmosphere steeped in respect, empathy, and personal growth. Above all, the MCSSU pledges to nurture a supportive and accepting environment where every student feels comfortable, valued, and empowered.

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

All voting members, as well as any executive members of this association, must be:

- 1) full-time Arts & Science students;
- 2) enrolled in the Material Culture and Semiotics Program OR;
- 3) are taking at least ONE 0.5 credit Material Culture and Semiotics course.

## **ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

The term of office for executive members will be one year (May 1st to April 30th), leaving time for the voting period before exam season starts in early April, and allowing results to be determined as exam season ends.

Executive members **MUST** meet the requirement of a full-time student enrolled in the Material Culture and Semiotics Program or at least 0.5 credits of a Material Culture and Semiotics (MCS) course.

The following list represents the role and responsibilities of each executive member of the student union:

**1. President (1 position)**

- In charge of broad organization, including scheduling of meetings, agendas, activities, etc.
- One of the two members signing off for funding at the bank (alongside treasurer)
- Responsibilities of overall presence, representation, and engagement of the student union on campus
- Ensure that all meetings and activities abide by the constitution, responsible when any line is crossed or broken
- Maintaining communication with the director of Material Culture and Semiotics
- Must attend ALL ASSU meetings (or arrange proxy)
- Ensure that each executive member attends at least one ASSU meeting per year
- Seek out possible collaboration partners
- Ensure that each executive member is on the same page, and that no decisions are made without general consensus of all executive members involved

**2. Vice President (1 position)**

- Facilitating during assembly and meetings, Minute-taking, Note-taking, etc..
- General organization (keeping record of things like emails, passwords, accounts, and a history of promos for both current and future members)
- Acts as a stand-in and supportive role alongside the president, taking on and aiding with presidential organization if applicable

**3. Treasurer (1 position)**

- Keep detailed records of transaction history and provide findings and financial advice to the executive team regularly.
- Attend all 4 budget-focused executive meetings (between September and April)
- Create budget sheets for events, meetings, and other activities, ensuring that the union never runs deficit
- Sign off on any transactions made with the bank (alongside President)
- Ensure that proper funds are available for future elected members of the following year

**4. Communications Coordinator (1 position)**

- In charge of general communication sources (email, social media, etc.)
- Aiding in drafting mass emails to members of the union (such as any general student union updates, promotional messages, and any other form of mass communication)
- In charge of general outreach within the student union's general members
- In charge of first year outreach and promotion to aid in the growth of the program

**5. Events Coordinator (1 position)**

- Working with the president to facilitate and organize events, bring new ideas for activities to the table each general meeting
- Working with treasurer to ensure budget for each event will be correctly met
- Creating and designing promotional material
- Working alongside Communications to advertise and promote any events material

*If there are no nominations for an executive position, another election will be held in the Fall term to fill the position.*

## **ARTICLE V: FINANCES**

1. The MCSSU will possess a bank account with the name “Material Culture and Semiotics Student Union.” This account will secure all funds received from ASSU, the University, donations, and fundraising. The MCSSU is not to take out a bank loan under any circumstances.
2. Any funds generated by the MCSSU are to be under the storage and supervision of the Treasurer. Detailed records of cash flows (including all original itemised receipts) must be maintained and made available for inspection by the executive board and the ASSU.
  - a. The Treasurer shall conduct monthly reconciliations of financial statements and shall be held liable for any discrepancies in financial records.
3. The Budget Request Form is to be discussed, filled out, and voted on in an executive meeting at the start of each semester, with submission to the ASSU being contingent upon a majority vote in favour of its approval. At the end of each semester, this budget will be compared to the union’s financial records and used to determine any changes that need to be made for the next period. This totals to 2 executive meetings per semester and 4 meetings per academic year that are dedicated to managing the budget.
4. There will be two signing officers: the President and the Treasurer. After the completion of their term in office, they shall transfer the signing authority to the next elected students. This must be done before April 30th (the MCSSU’s fiscal year-end).

## **ARTICLE VI: ASSOCIATION MEETINGS**

### **General meetings:**

1. A minimum of 1 general meeting will be held in the Fall (September - December) and Winter (January - April) terms.
2. General meetings are open to all members of the MCSSU, and will be held in an accessible and advertised location.
3. Notice of meeting date and motions must be provided to the general membership through MCSSU email list (and social media if applicable) at least two weeks in advance. At least 2 executive members must be present at general meetings.

### **Executive meetings:**

1. Executive meetings must be held at least once a month during the 8-month fall and winter terms (September to April) in addition to general meetings.
2. Executive meetings are mandatory to attend by executive members, with an exception to those with legitimate excuses communicated to the executive membership before the meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII: VOTING PROCEDURE**

### **General Voting Procedures:**

1. Voting will take place in person, where the maximum number of votes per member is one ballot. All voting will be anonymous, and facilitated by a non-voting member of the union or, if needed, an official within ASSU.
2. Anyone present at the meeting where the voting occurs will be a part of the voting population. We will not hold elections online.
3. Voting dates will be advertised through the MCSSU email list, and if applicable, any existing social media accounts run by MCSSU. A date must be announced two weeks in advance of the meeting, and must be held in an open and easily accessible location.

### **Voting For Executive Positions:**

1. All general voting procedures listed above apply to voting in executive members.
2. Nominations will be collected through an online form. However, as the voting process occurs in-person, any nominees who do not show up to the election meeting will be disqualified.
3. Each nominee will give a 1-minute (max.) statement during the general meeting before the election occurs, to ensure each voting member is familiar with the candidate. This segment of the meeting will act as the campaigning period.

As listed above in Article V: *If there are no nominations for an executive position, another election will be held in the Fall term to fill the position.* Any unusual and unexpected occurrences in the election must be discussed with the executive team to determine how to move forward as per constitution rules.

## **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

1. Proposed amendments to the constitution must be submitted in writing at a regular meeting (either executive or general) of the organization to be voted on in the subsequent general meeting.
2. Proposed amendments must be communicated to executive and general members of the organization at least 2 weeks before the vote.
3. A proposed amendment will be adopted if and when a 2/3rds majority of the general membership present vote in the affirmative of its adoption.
4. If adopted, an amendment to the constitution will come into effect immediately following the general meeting in which they were voted in.

## **ARTICLE IX: IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL**

1. If an executive member fails to attend 3 or more executive meetings, or if their actions have been deemed to not be in accordance with our union's mission and values, they will be subject to impeachment.

- a) The impeachment will be enforced if  $\frac{3}{5}$  of the executive council and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the general members who are present vote in favour.
- b) The impeachment is effective immediately following the vote.

2. After the impeachment, the empty role will be assigned to two current executive council members until the next election can be held, assessed and discussed on a case-by-case basis.