

# The Constitution Act

## Women and Gender Equity Centre (WGEC)

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### Article 1: Name

The Women and Gender Equity Centre, to be referred to as 'WGEC' in the rest of this document.

### Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of WGEC is to provide women and gender minorities with a safe space on campus in order to make campus safer and more accessible for women, trans, and non-binary students at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM). Dismantling barriers that UTM students face, specifically sexuality, gender and gender identity by advocating for unheard voices, provide support to students from marginalized communities via services (such as peer support, gender affirming subsidies, and office hours), educate the student population on various topics regarding sex, gender and sexual health.

### Article 3: Membership Requirements

WGEC is open to all levy paying students of the University of Toronto Mississauga community. Those visiting the office cannot be discriminated against based on their race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status or disability.

### Article 4: Executives and Responsibilities

- **Section A: Executives** - The executive committee shall be comprised of 6 coordinators: the executives shall be a Head Coordinator, Financial Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, Equity Coordinator, Events Coordinator, and Marketing Coordinator.
- **Section B: Eligibility** - Executives must have completed at least one full year of study at UTM by the beginning of the fall semester of the applied term. Equity coordinator is required to be a member of the trans community.
- **Section C: Term** - The executives shall serve for one year and their term shall begin May and end in April of the next year. If any officer chooses to resign from their position, two (2) weeks notice must be given to the remaining executives, and they must interview students who apply to be their replacement.
- **Section D: Vacancy** - If a vacancy occurs in the position of any executive, the remaining executives shall open special applications to fill the vacant executive position for the remainder of the term. The newly appointed executive must rerun the following year if they wish to continue their duties.
- **Section E: Roles and Duties** - The executives and their duties are as follows:

#### 4.1 Head Coordinator

- Support all other executives' roles
- Serve as grievance officer
- Serve as a Human Resources representative
- Schedule office hours
- Provide oversight, an additional voice/opinion, assist with budgets and finances, and provide guidance for services and events
- Transition newly elected executives, know about other executives' roles
- Administer biweekly payroll for all WGEC execs, along with occasional payroll for volunteers and event leaders/speakers.
- Hold regular office hours for UofT students to access WGEC services, including, but not limited to, maintaining a clean and safe space, providing peer support, distributing material resources, and referring students to resources.

#### 4.1 Financial Coordinator

- Manage and coordinate all financial systems and processes.
- Use fitting approaches, strategies, and forms with regard to monetary exchanges.
- Screen and record all cash payment, uses, and receipts.
- Develop budgets for each event and work with the events coordinator to ensure all necessary items are bought and available for events.
- Reimburse students for any purchases following the reimbursement programs offered.
- Hold regular office hours for UofT students to access WGEC services, including and not limited to maintaining a clean and safe space, providing peer support, distributing material resources, assisting with reimbursement processes, and referring students to resources.

#### 4.2 Volunteer Coordinator

- Develop training material for volunteers.
- Recruit and train volunteers.
- Organize and manage volunteer opportunities for UTM students.
- Correspond with various on/off-campus collaborations relating to volunteers.
- Hold regular office hours for UofT students to access WGEC services, including but not limited to maintaining a clean and safe space, providing peer support, distributing material resources, and referring students to resources.

#### 4.3 Equity Coordinator (Formerly, Trans Coordinator)

- Must identify as a member of the trans\* community.
- Hold trans-only or women-only office hours.
- Have up to date knowledge about sex, gender, sexuality, LGBTQ2S+ issues, and resources related to these topics.
- Be able to inform peers about these topics.
- Build relationships with teams and organizations focused on empowering underrepresented groups.

- Offer a trans perspective on all WGEC initiatives.
- Provide equitable and unbiased peer support to fellow community members.
- Work with the Events Coordinator and Financial Coordinator to host monthly social or educational events directed at women and the LGBTQ2S+ community.
- Hold regular office hours for UofT students to access WGEC services, including, but not limited to, maintaining a clean and safe space, providing peer support, distributing material resources, and referring students to resources.

#### 4.4 Events Coordinator

- Plan, develop, and facilitate monthly events focused on relevant topics/issues for marginalized groups (e.g., women and/or the 2SLGBTQ+ community).
- Prepare event proposal documents for each event that lists the important information and logistics for the event.
- Outreach to campus clubs, societies, and community members to help collaborate and facilitate events.
- Work with the Equity Coordinator to ensure events are aligned with WGEC's purpose, are equitable and well informed.
- Work closely with the Marketing Coordinator to effectively spread awareness of events and aid in promotion (e.g., writing the Instagram caption for promotional content and creating forms for event registration).
- Book rooms, venues, and all other services required for events.
- Meet with the Financial Coordinator to discuss budgets for events.
- Meet with facilitators to establish event logistics and to discuss any ideas that they have for any events.
- Hold regular office hours for UofT students to access WGEC services, including, but not limited to, maintaining a clean and safe space, providing peer support, distributing material resources, and referring students to resources.

#### 4.5 Marketing Coordinator

- Create and manage content for social media, including Instagram, Discord, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.
- Create and develop a consistent brand
- Work with the Equity Coordinator to determine equitable language for social media posts.
- Regularly update the website and improve SEO goals to increase WGEC's visibility.
- Look for and analyze new areas to increase reach.
- Create an analytics dashboard to measure and track KPIs.
- Generate promotional content (digital and hard-copies) for WGEC branded events.
- Develop and regularly update the social media strategy to grow a follower base.
- Manage and develop eye-catching email campaigns.
- Work with the Events Coordinator and Equity Coordinator to design WGEC's social media calendar.

- Hold regular office hours for UofT students to access WGEC services, including but not limited to maintaining a clean and safe space, providing peer support, distributing material resources, and referring students to resources.

## **Article 5: Meetings and Communication**

- There shall be a minimum of one executive meeting every month during the school year to update executives about plans and events, and discuss any issues. Meeting notes for these formal meetings must be taken.
- Executives have the right to request an executive meeting for any reason.
- Executives must attend all scheduled meetings throughout the school year, to the best of their ability.
- If a meeting is scheduled and an executive cannot attend, they must notify all other executives beforehand and they must have a valid reason for their absence at the meeting (i.e. death, illness, unscheduled work).
- If an executive is unable to attend several meetings and is therefore unfit to fulfill their duties as an executive member of the team, there shall be a vote by the other executives to replace them. It is at the executive's discretion to set the attendance requirement on a case by case basis, as agreed upon by the executives.
- Any formal work communication between executives must be done by email, unless explicitly agreed upon by the executives.

## **Article 6: Elections**

Elections for the WGEC executive team are open to all interested candidates, so long as they are UTMSU members. Elections must be conducted annually in the winter semester, following the timeline set by the UTMSU.

1. Administration of Elections
  - a. A Chief Returning Officer (CRO) must 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.
2. Election Timeline
  - a. Advertising Period: WGEC is required to alert their members that elections are taking place, and how members can participate (via voting or running for a position)
  - b. Nomination Period: All WGEC members who are interested in running for an executive position with WGEC are able to self-nominate during this time. This will be overseen and managed by the CRO.
  - c. 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.

- d. Campaign Period: During this time, candidates are able to campaign themselves to the WGEC membership
  - e. Voting Period: WGEC members will be able to vote for their incoming executives during this time. The CRO will organize the voting platform
3. Vacant Executive Positions
- a. Volunteer Coordinator
  - b. Events Coordinator
  - c. Financial Coordinator
  - d. Marketing Coordinator
4. Appointed Executive Positions
- a. Head Coordinator
  - b. Equity Coordinator
5. Election Rules
- a. All rules listed below may be subject to change at the discretion of the WGEC outgoing executive and the CRO. Such changes must be communicated to the WGEC membership and UTMSU prior to the advertisement period.
  - b. Pre-Campaigning: Pre-campaigning is not allowed, candidates must stick to the campaigning timeline set by WGEC, the appointed CRO and the UTMSU
  - c. Conflict of Interest: Candidates must indicate any conflict of interest prior to participating in the election process. Any candidate who holds a position at WGEC must take a leave of absence from the day of the All Candidates meeting until the end of voting period.
    - i. WGEC positions include but not limited to: elected executives, appointed executives and/volunteers
  - d. Responsibility of Candidates: Candidates are responsible for their actions and violations, as well as the actions and violations of any non-arm's-length party
  - e. Fair Play: Find the Fair & Foul Play rules with the CRO or the UTMSU Campus Groups Coordinator
    - i. Harassment
    - ii. Constant non consensual messaging
    - iii. Malicious and intentional breach of elections policy, and/or undermining of CROs responsibilities and the electoral process
  - f. Campaign Materials: All campaign materials must be approved by the CRO prior to being publicly displayed. Printed materials must follow the UTMSU's Sustainability Policy (contact Campus Groups Coordinator for more information)
  - g. In-Person Campaigning Restrictions: Apart from rules and regulations of Fair and Foul Play, in-person campaigning must also follow the University guidelines. In-person campaigning is prohibited in labs, allocated study spaces, and residences. Classrooms and teaching spaces are allowed with the consent of the instructor.
  - h. Virtual Campaigning Restrictions: Apart from rules and regulations of Fair and Foul Play, virtual campaigners must always seek to implement accessible content.

## 6. Disqualification

- a. Disqualification will be based on a strike system. Candidates can accumulate up to three strikes before disqualification
  - i. Candidates will receive a first strike and a warning
  - ii. Candidates will receive a second strike and be penalized by not being allowed to campaign for 48h
  - iii. Candidates will receive a third strike and be disqualified
- b. Disqualification and issuing of strikes to candidates will be done at the discretion of the CRO. Immediate disqualification can be done by the CRO if significant complaint(s) are raised, refer to Rules of Elections.
- c. Appeals: Candidates reserve the right to appeal any decisions of the CRO prior to ratification, refer to Section 8. Appeals

## 7. Voting Process

- a. The voting system will be conducted via online form.
- b. Voting will be conducted via ranking system, the CRO will set up the form and get it approved by the WGEC Executive Committee
- c. Running Unopposed: in case a candidate is running unopposed, there must be a yes or no ballot

## 8. Election results

- a. The CRO must submit the unofficial results to the WGEC Executive for ratification (approval process to officialize the election results)
- b. Once election results have been ratified, the WGEC Executive must publish on website and applicable platforms
- c. In case of a tie: the decision will rely on the outgoing WGEC Executive via appointment (refer to appointment of executives on Article 8)
- d. Vacancy: any vacant positions will carry out to be vacant until after ratification. Once incoming executives are ratified, they can appoint representatives to take on vacant positions (refer to appointment of executives on Article 8)
- e. Appeals: Candidates reserve the right to appeal the election results prior to ratification, refer to Section 8. Appeals
- f. Non-occurrence of elections and/or Non-submission of results to the UTMSU can lead to withholding of funds

## 9. Appeals Process

- a. Candidates reserve the right to appeal the decisions of the CRO regarding disqualification and strikes. Candidates reserve the right to appeal the election results.
- b. All appeals must be submitted in writing within 72 hours of the end of election period
- c. Appeals must be submitted to the WGEC Appeals Committee, with a written explanation and supporting evidence. The Appeals Committee shall review such Appeal and open an investigation

- i. WGEC Appeals Committee is composed of any WGEC Executive who are not participating in the elections. The CRO may sit in the committee as a non-voting member
  - ii. Investigations must be done in an unbiased manner
  - iii. Appeals Committee may or may not invite the candidate and other witnesses before making the final decision
- d. If the WGEC Appeals Committee upholds the prior decision, the candidates reserve the right to further appeal to the UTMSU.
  - i. The UTMSU Campus Groups Coordinator, along with at least 2 UTMSU Executives and any other applicable UTMSU staff shall create a committee to review the Appeal
  - ii. The UTMSU reserves the right to utilize procedural policies in place from the governing documents of the UTMSU as well as the Memorandum of Understanding between UTMSU and WGEC

## **Article 7: Appointment of Executives**

### Executive positions for Appointment

- Head Coordinator
- Equity Coordinator
- Any vacant positions after ratification

### Timeline

1. After ratification of election results, the incoming and outgoing executives must officially form the committee for appointment of Head Coordinator
2. Once Head Coordinator is selected, incoming executives shall form the committee to appoint the Equity Coordinator and any additional vacancies in the Executive team

### Appointment of Head Coordinator

- Appointment Committee
  - a. The committee shall be composed of: incoming and outgoing Volunteer Coordinators, Marketing Coordinators, Financial Coordinators, Events Coordinators, and outgoing Head Coordinator
- Appointment Process
  - a. The committee shall accept resumes and cover letters from any interested members of WGEC
  - b. The committee shall select a maximum of 6 candidates for an interview
  - c. The committee shall hold interviews and select one candidate to become the Head Coordinator
    - i. Final selection shall be done via voting of the members of the committee, majority vote is 50% +1

### Appointment of Equity Coordinator

- Appointment Committee
  - a. The committee shall be composed of: incoming Volunteer Coordinator, Marketing Coordinator, Financial Coordinator, Events Coordinator, and Head Coordinator
- Appointment Process
  - a. The committee shall accept resumes and cover letters from any interested trans-identifying members of WGEC
  - b. The committee shall select a maximum of 6 candidates for an interview
  - c. The committee shall hold interviews and select one candidate to become the Equity Coordinator
    - Final selection shall be done via voting of the members of the committee, majority vote is 50% +1

### Appointment of vacancies

- Any vacancies shall be appointed by the WGEC executive by using the same process and the appointment of Equity Coordinator.
- Any appointed executives must abide by the executive term set by the constitution, refer Article 4.

## **Article 8: Disciplinary Action and Removal from Office**

- Disciplinary action may be taken when an executive commits a serious or minor offense
- There are two levels of offenses that may result in disciplinary action:
  1. Serious offenses: Includes intentional and malicious misuse, mistreatment, or abuse of office funds, the physical office space, purposeful discriminatory or unequitable behaviours, of any student/staff/faculty, volunteers, and other executives.
    - a. Example offenses include embezzlement, theft of office supplies not intended for student use, and physical or verbal abuse of other individuals.
  2. Minor offenses: Includes unintentional or less serious offenses, including missing meetings, ignoring official WGEC communications, passive aggressive behaviour to students, staff, faculty, volunteers, and other executives, and unintentional discriminatory and unequitable behaviours.
- Serious offenses can result in reevaluation of or dismissal from the office position.
- Minor offenses can result in dismissal from the office position if 3 incidents are brought to the attention of the executives. Less than 3 incidents can be monitored by the head coordinator.
- Removal from office can occur after the executive fails to perform their duties as defined by this constitution, or the demonstration of unacceptable behaviour or serious offenses. Such removal will only occur if, and only if, the following conditions are satisfied:
  1. A request should be submitted which should either:



- a. Specify at least 3 alleged incidents of minor offenses with written or picture proof (written proof being a written account of events); or
  - b. Specify 1 incident of a serious offense with written or picture proof.
- Upon receipt of such a request, a formal meeting with the uninvolved executives must be held, in order to determine if a meeting with the UTMSU must be held. This meeting will determine if the executive requires retraining or immediate dismissal, and if a formal complaint is required to be filed in order to hold the executive accountable. The majority vote determines if the executive shall be removed from office and in the case of a tied vote or undisputed agreements, final action may be at the discretion of the Head Coordinator. If an executive is fired or retires from office, someone may be appointed for that position by the other executive members, or there may be a hiring process for the position to be filled for the remainder of the term.
- The UTMSU must be notified about any dismissals from the office.

### **Article 9: Office Etiquette**

- The use of the office is limited to when executives or active volunteers are present. You cannot leave your friends alone, with the exception of bathroom breaks.
  - Clean up after yourself, including cleaning any utensils or plates used, wiping down the tables, and vacuuming the sofa, if necessary.
  - Clean out the vacuum and replace the vacuum frequently.
  - WGEC items are for WGEC use. Do not give out excessive amounts of office items.
  - Be mindful of who you are inviting to the office, when it is not your office hours.
- Women's Only Office Hours: During women's only hours, only UofT community members who identify as women, woman-aligned, or femininely-aligned are permitted to use the office space.
- Trans Only Office Hours: During trans only hours, only UofT community members who identify as trans, nonbinary, or are affected by transphobia are permitted to use the office space.
- Holding Women's Only Office Hours, or Trans\* Only Office Hours, is up to the discretion of the executive who chooses to hold them. Any student may request the office space to be vacated in order to have serious or private conversations with the executives for the purposes of Peer Support.

### **Article 10: Amendments to Constitution**

All members of the executive committee must approve of any amendment proposal for the constitution to be amended. The revised constitution must be signed by all executives upon approval of amendment. All amendments must be approved by the UTMSU before they are formalized.