

South Indian Students Association **(SISA) Constitution 2024-2025**

Developed by the SISA Executive Committee, 2024-2025, in accordance with UTSC OSEW & SCSU policies

Article I: Name of Organization

1.1 The official name of the organization will be “South Indian Students Association”.

1.2 The organization may be referred to, and will hereby be referred to, by the acronym “SISA”.

Article II: Purpose

2.1 The purpose of SISA is a vibrant community dedicated to celebrating the diverse and rich cultural heritage of South India while offering a supportive space for students on campus. Whatever their southern roots may be, SISA aims to be their second home! Through a wide range of events, such as cultural showcases and traditional festivals, we strive to engage and unite both our members and the broader UTSC community. We encourage fellow South Indian students, explore their cultural roots and build lifelong friendships. Together, we embrace our heritage, celebrate diversity, and create lasting memories at SISA UTSC!

2.2 SISA will enhance the educational, recreational, social, or cultural environment of the University of Toronto Scarborough by providing a community to introduce, learn, and play an entertaining table sport native to South Asia.

2.3 SISA 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 SISA 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 SISA is open to all students, staff, faculty, and alumni of the University of Toronto Scarborough.

3.2 The term of membership for SISA will be from September 1–June 30 each year.

3.3 Each member shall be afforded the following rights through membership in SISA:

3.3.1 The right to participate in events and general member 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 :

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 SISA will not collect a mandatory membership fee from each member each year.

3.6 SISA values and respects the personal information of its members. It secures its member's information at all times and will not supply names or other confidential information to third parties.

3.7 SISA will protect the privacy of member information and must use it only for the delivery of service and not for commercial gain.

3.8 The process for becoming a member of SISA is as follows:

3.8.1 Submit an application form and attend an interview to become an executive member; OR

3.8.2 Submit an application form or subscribe to the club's marketing channels (e.g. mailing list, social media accounts) to become a general member.

Article IV: Executive

4.1 The executives of the organization shall include:

4.1.1 Co-Presidents (2)

4.1.2 Vice President External (1)

4.1.3 Vice President Internal (1)

4.1.4 Director of Marketing (1)

4.1.5 Director of Finance (1)

4.1.6 Director of Events (2)

4.1.7 Director of Promotion and Outreach (1)

4.1.8 Director of Operations (1)

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

4.2.1 The Co-president is the official spokesperson of SISA and provides direction for all components of the organization in a manner consistent with SISA's constitution and policies. They are also responsible for, organizing and leading executive and general meetings, attending club training and recognition sessions, managing club logistics, training executive members, delegating tasks, overseeing all events and content for accuracy, and leading executive member recruitment. They are also responsible for communication with non-members and maintaining the club's brand.

4.2.2 The Vice President External will act as the primary correspondent for any external interactions and sponsorships. Maintains contact with all external stakeholders, such as sponsors and any partnerships created in previous or current years. The Vice President of External will spearhead any collaborations with other clubs on campus - including other healthcare groups and the SCSU - and oversee Director of Promotion and Outreach, Director of Operations, and Director of Marketing (s). They will also have the responsibility of deputy co-president, where, in the absence of a co-president, they have the authority to make changes on their behalf.

4.2.3 The Vice President Internal acts as the primary correspondent for all internal operations and oversees the Events Director(s) and Finance Director(s), maintaining constant contact with them to ensure that SISA programming runs smoothly. They also ensure that all the financial documents and sponsors are taken care.

4.2.4 The Director of Marketing is responsible for all non-administrative communications and coordinating the promotion of club events on all club marketing channels. They will prepare and broadcast public announcements for all media, intake and direct all inquiries from social media and other communicative platforms to the respective executive members. They are also responsible for the creation of digital media content for the club and for broadcasting general communications with club members.

4.2.5 The Director of Finance is responsible for attending finance training sessions and managing the general financial operations of SISA. They will work with the Co-Presidents and the rest of the executive team to develop sponsorships, submit grants and bursary applications, manage fundraisers and create financial reports. They will also ensure the ethical and accountable management and expenditure of funds.

4.2.6 The Director of Events will be responsible for planning and hosting events, ensuring they run smoothly. They will plan which room the event will take place, how many people will attend, what food we will use, and any other precautions needed. They will work closely with the marketing team, ensuring their ideas for the event are captured in any marketing done.

4.2.7 The Director of Promotions and Outreach will be responsible for advertising the event to the student body, finding sponsors, and ensuring that everything runs smoothly and works along with the Director of Finance and Director of Marketing.

4.2.8 The Operations Director is responsible for taking minutes at all meetings, attending club and finance training and recognition sessions, assisting in inter-executive communications and projects and managing club logistics as a whole alongside the Co-president. They are also responsible for assisting in tabling and event logistics, promoting all club events and taking photographs of events.

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 executive will last from May 1 following their election to June 30 of the following year.

4.8 Any executive of the organization may resign, provided that such resignation is made in writing and delivered to the Co-Presidents(s) one (1) month in advance. Unless any such resignation is, by its terms, effective on a later date, it shall be effective on delivery to the Co-Presidents, and no ratification by the organization shall be required to make the resignation official.

4.9 Any vacancy of executives shall be filled by the Co-Presidents or designate of the organization until such a time as a permanent appointment, appointed by a simple and clear majority of the executive committee, or a hiring process is conducted.

4.10 If the Co-Presidents resigns, notice of such resignation must be submitted in writing and delivered to the executive committee at a valid executive meeting with a minimum of two (2) month notice. Unless any such resignation is, by its terms, effective on a later date, it shall be effective on delivery to the executive committee, and no ratification by the organization shall be required to make the resignation official.

4.11 Any vacancy of the Co-President(s) shall be filled by the following executives, respectively:

4.11.1 Vice President External OR;

4.11.2 Vice President Internal

until such a time when a permanent appointment, appointed by a simple and clear majority of the executive committee, 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) non-executive 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 non-executive 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:

- a) 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:

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

- b) The Co-Presidents(s) will be responsible for contacting the executive or member and facilitating training or suggesting best practices on how to correct the issues of concern.
- c) The Co-Presidents(s) 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.
- d) The executive or member accused of violating section 5.1 will be given fourteen (14) calendar days from receiving the Co-Presidents(s)' written response to demonstrate progress or correction of behavior.

5.3.3 Third tier:

- a) Initiated because the member or executive has violated section 5.1 after receiving a second tier warning relative to a particular action or behaviour.
- b) 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.
- c) The removal of an executive or 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 Director 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 Finance Director shall present a proposed operating budget for the next fiscal year to the general membership for its consideration at the final general meeting.

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

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 Executive 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 Executive may designate, direct or authorize from time to time and to the extent thereby provided.

6.8 The Co-Presidents, the Finance Director, and only in special circumstances the Campus Life Director shall be the sole signing authorities of banking instruments for the organization.

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

6.10 SISA 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 the Co-Presidents, who shall be responsible for:

7.2.1 Formulating and distributing an agenda for each meeting at the previous executive 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 a minimum of two (2) calendar days prior to the meeting.

7.5 General meetings may be called to order by the Co-Presidents, through a petition by a petition signed by three (3) executive members, or by a petition signed by five (5) non-executive general members.

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 For quorum to remain valid, the number of non-executive general members present at a general meeting must exceed the number of executives present at all times.

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

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

7.10 Members must contact the Co-Presidents a minimum of 96 hours before a general meeting to inform them of new business they wish to discuss. The Co-Presidents will then add the discussion item to the agenda upon approval of the executive team.

7.11 Each member of the organization shall be entitled to one (1) vote at a general meeting except the Co-Presidents who shall only vote in the event of a tie.

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

7.13 Whenever a vote by show of hands occurs, a declaration by the Co-Presidents 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.

7.14 In case of an equality of votes at a valid general meeting, the Co-Presidents of the meeting shall have the deciding vote.

7.15 The Co-Presidents 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 Co-Presidents of the organization. The Co-Presidents 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 every two (2) weeks during the period September 1 to June 30. The date of each subsequent executive meeting will be confirmed at least 96 hours prior to the meeting date and will be reiterated to executives via email or a WhatsApp message a minimum of two (2) calendar days prior to the meeting.

8.4 The frequency of executive meetings occurring between July 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 Co-Presidents or through a petition signed by three (3) executive members.

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 Executives must notify the Co-Presidents a minimum of 48 hours before an executive meeting to inform them of new business they wish to discuss. The Co-Presidents will then add the discussion item to the agenda.

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 Co-Presidents 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 an Executive Meeting, the motion will be recorded as having failed.

8.13 The Co-Presidents 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 48 hours in advance through email (or WhatsApp message when appropriate).

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

Article X: Elections

10.1 Executive elections will be held prior to June 30th each year.

10.2 Candidates for executive 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.

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 a committee comprised of majority number of non-executive general members and minority number of executives 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 (7) 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 (7) calendar days prior to the general meeting at which the election will be held. The application period must end a minimum of seven (3) 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 Co-Presidents.

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) non-executive general members and one (1) executive.

10.10 Successful candidates will be determined by the 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 seven (7) 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 a 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 the submission of a signed petition from at least 10% of the entire general membership.

Article XIV: Food Handling on Campus

14.1 SISA 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 SISA will abide by all pertinent University of Toronto policies, procedures, and guidelines. Where the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines conflict with those of SISA, the University's policies, procedures, and guidelines will take precedence.

Article XVI: Legal Liability

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

Article XVII: Banking

17.1 SISA 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 Department of Student Life, University of Toronto Scarborough.

Appendix A: General Meeting Rules of Order

I. Call to Order

1. The Co-Presidents may call the meeting to order only if a quorum of executives and non-executive general members is present in person. 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 Co-Presidents 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 only by a majority vote. This power should only be used when necessary as proper functioning of meetings and the organization requires advance planning.
3. At this point in the agenda, general members may add or delete items from the agenda and may change the order of presentation.
4. When possible, changes to the agenda should be done by the acquiescence of all general members. Formal voting on the agenda is only necessary when it appears to the Co-Presidents that there is a disagreement.

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 Co-Presidents, Director of Operations or another appointed executive.
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 with the acquiescence of all general members. Formal voting on the minutes is only necessary where it appears to the Co-Presidents that there is a disagreement.

IV. Executive Reports

1. Executives 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 inquiries, comments and/or presentations to be made to the general membership.

V. Open Forum

1. It is the custom and practice of most organizations to allow general members an open forum to ask questions and speak about their concerns to an executive after a report has been provided.
2. Strict time limitations should be imposed by the Co-Presidents and these limitations must be enforced. Each general member should address the Co-Presidents 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.
2. The executive 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 motions or resolutions adopted by a vote of the general membership.

VII. Motions and Deliberations

1. When an item of business is to be discussed, the Co-Presidents announces the item to be addressed and opens the floor to discussion.
2. No general member may speak until recognized by the Co-Presidents. No general member may interrupt the speaker who has the floor.
3. The Co-Presidents 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.
4. The Co-Presidents's role is to recognize each general member in turn. Discussion shall be limited to the item of business at hand, and the Co-Presidents shall have the authority to take the floor from a speaker who does not limit discussion to the item of business at hand.
5. No general member may speak to an issue for a second time until all other general members have had the opportunity to speak to it for the first time. Likewise, no general member may speak to an issue for a third time until all other general members have had the opportunity to speak to it for a second time.
6. When it appears to the Co-Presidents that all general members have had the opportunity to fully discuss the matter at hand, the on Co-Presidents 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. A motion to adopt a specific action by the board.
 - b. A motion to postpone the item to another meeting (including fact-finding assignments to a person or committee).
 - c. 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 Co-Presidents 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.