

Constitution of “The University of Toronto Mental Health Student Association”

Name

The official name of this recognized campus group is “The University of Toronto Mental Health Student Association”

The acronym or abbreviation of this group is: UofTMHA

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose, objectives, mission and/or mandate of organization is outlined here:

The purpose of this not-for-profit student-run association is to break the stigma surrounding mental health and empower students through their mental health journeys while also practicing diversity, equity & inclusion. We strive to educate and promote healthy coping mechanisms among students struggling with their mental health and aim to make mental health resources a lot more accessible to students. We aim to do this by hosting events, seminars, workshops, fundraisers, and other initiatives throughout the year to raise awareness and educate UofT students as well as members of the community on various mental health themes. In our approach, we aim to increase representations of various mental health topics and amplify voices of underrepresented groups within the university space online and in-person, while constantly obtaining ongoing feedback from club members and the UofT community to better cater our initiatives towards their needs.

Membership

Executive and general members with voting privileges shall be currently registered students (Undergraduate or Graduate, part-time or full-time) of the University of Toronto.

Staff, faculty, or alumni members may hold non-voting executive positions. These nonvoting executive positions shall be limited to a maximum of one (1) or ten per cent (10%) of the full executive body, whichever is greatest. Persons holding these nonvoting executive positions cannot serve as an officer (including financial signing officer) or contact person of the Student Group.

Non-voting membership may be extended to interested staff, faculty, and alumni, or persons from outside the University, without restriction on those grounds outlined by the Ontario Human Rights Code’s Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination. 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 \$8 per year.

Any member of the club may apply for a refund within one (1) month of becoming a member. No refunds are permitted 30 days after the first executive meeting.

For recognition by the University of Toronto Students’ Union (UTSU), the group must apply yearly (typically between April 1 and September 30) to become/renew the membership as a SOP-recognized club. The club must maintain a minimum of 30 members, a total of 51% of membership are UTSU members. The group must also maintain recognition from the Office of Student Life. These requirements are subject to change and should be checked with UTSU annually to ensure qualifications are met.

Executive List and Duties

The executive team shall be composed of twenty five to thirty five (25-35) members. These include:

The President(s) shall:

- Oversee the operations, management and success of the group
- Be the spokesperson for the group
- 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
- Additional responsibilities may include:
 - Possible veto in decision-making processes

The Vice-President(s) shall:

- Assume duties of the President in their absence
- Oversee the working of the various executive teams
- Ensure that all the activities of the club meet regulations and policies of the University of Toronto
- Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts
- Will report to presidents

The Secretary(ies) shall:

- Make a list of all registered members
- Maintain the web sites and member contact list
- Record notes and motions for meetings
- Notify all members of meetings
- Handle official correspondence of the organization

The Treasurer(s) shall:

- Record all financial transactions of the group
- Hold signing officer authority along with the President for financial purposes
- Maintain a budget of income and expenses along with receipts
- Advise members on financial position of the group
- Prepare an annual budget for the group as well as budgets for specific events

The Fundraising Director(s) shall:

- Reach out to different stakeholders, collaborators, businesses or groups to foster engagement and collaboration for fundraising
- Plan and promote various events aimed at fundraising
- Work with the Treasurer to ensure any donations are properly secured into the bank account
- Respond to any fundraising requests or inquiries

The Sponsorship Director(s) shall:

- Respond and manage any and all sponsorship requests or inquiries
- Work in collaboration with the fundraising team to secure sponsorships for various events throughout the year
- Work with the Creative & Events Director(s) to create, edit, and finalize a sponsorship package for dispersal
- Reach out to various entities and individuals to secure sponsorships

The Social Media and Marketing Director(s) shall:

- Manage and regularly update all social media accounts

Respond to any inquiries, questions, comments, or concerns received via social media channels, and/or forward any of the aforementioned to the President(s) if required
Work with the Creative & Events Director(s) to create a workback schedule for the year, with predetermined social media monthly themes and events
Work with any collaborators on marketing material for upcoming events

The Creative and Events Director(s) shall:

Work with the Social Media Director(s) to create a workback schedule for the year, with predetermined social media monthly themes and events
Assist Social Media and Marketing Director(s) in any capacity, including but not limited to editing social media content, responding to social media inquiries, comments, concerns, etc
Plan, create and oversee the strategic vision of the Club

The Mentorship Director(s) shall:

Create and publish a mentorship package which explains the mentorship program
Oversee the mentorship program, including recruitment, onboarding, and any/all questions, comments, concerns, or inquiries
Provide monthly updates to the President(s) on the mentorship program
Work with the Social Media Director(s) and Creative Director(s) to promote and market the mentorship program

The Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Director(s) shall:

Work with the executive team to coordinate a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion framework for the association
Oversee any comments, questions, or concerns relating to diversity, inclusivity, and equity within the organization
Promote the aforementioned framework and make it visible and transparent for the student body
Plan and execute events, initiatives, and workshops that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion
Create and disseminate a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion survey

In the 2024-2025 academic year, there will be two presidents, six vice presidents, two secretaries, three treasurers, three fundraising directors, three sponsorship directors, five social media and marketing directors, five creative and events directors, three mentorship coordinators, six diversity, equity, & inclusion directors, and two first-year representatives. This will be the composition of the executive team. The number of general members each year will vary based on need and demand.

Elections

The executive committee shall strike the Elections Committee and appoint one (1) Chief Returning Officer (CRO) and two (2) Scrutinizers from the general members on the committee to conduct and hold elections in March. All members of the Elections Committee shall be non-biased in the results of the election and shall be required to disclose any and all conflicts of interest in the election.

The CRO Returning Officer shall accept nominations only from group members that are registered U of T students for voting positions, and staff, faculty, or alumni members for non-voting executive positions from the general membership before the beginning of March. Candidates have to be members in good standing and be part of the group for at least one month prior to the nomination period.

The CRO shall select three (2) election dates before March 30th for the voting period. These dates will be announced in a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to elections dates and must fall on weekdays.

The CRO and Scrutinizers shall provide each voting U of T registered student with a link on the voting dates and ask the student to place their vote through the link.

In preparation for a tie, the CRO shall select a U of T registered student executive from amongst the executive committee, to cast their ballot and seal it in an envelope. In the event of a tie for an executive position, one of the two Scrutinizers shall break the seal and count the ballot in order to break the tie.

After the election is over, the CRO and Scrutinizers shall count the ballots. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position. The CRO and Scrutinizers shall submit a report of the results of the elections to the Executive Committee and general members.

Registered U of T students may not vote by proxy. Non-registered students may not nominate or vote in elections.

Only registered U of T students who have paid any applicable membership fees and have been a member in good standing for 30 days prior to election dates are eligible for voting.

Term of executive positions shall be from May 1st to April 30th.

Finances

The Treasurer(s) shall keep records of all income and expenses. The Treasurer(s) shall present the group's financial health at the team meetings whenever necessary. The Executive Team will vote on expenditures of over \$700.00 by majority vote at an executive meeting.

The group's executive 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

a) UofTMHA General Meeting:

The group shall hold general meetings at least twice per year, i.e. once per academic term.

These meetings will be attended by both Executive and General members and can be held online/hybrid (depending on the majority's preference accounted for by vote). These meetings are intended to go over the group's upcoming activity plan, financial health, giving team updates, etc.

b) Executive Meetings:

The executive team shall meet on a monthly basis where date and times are to be set based on the majority's availability. The quorum of executive meetings shall be 50%+1 of executive members. These meetings can be held online/hybrid (depending on the majority's preference accounted for by vote). The executive members are required to attend at least 75% of these monthly meetings throughout the whole academic year.

c) Leadership Team Meetings:

The leadership team (i.e. the Presidents and Vice Presidents) shall meet on a bi-weekly basis where date and times are to be set based on the majority's availability. These meetings can be held online/in-person/hybrid (depending on the majority's preference accounted for by vote). The leadership team members are required to attend at least 90% of these weekly meetings throughout the whole academic year.

Termination of membership

If you receive more than one warning (as mentioned above), this will lead to termination of the member.

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.

Some reasons that may lead to warning/termination:

Verbal, written, physical and visual harassment and abuse/abusive language (ex. Spam messages, inappropriate language, racism, sexism, bullying etc.)

Inability to follow communication guidelines written above

If safety and personal threats are made to other members of the team

Committing an act that negatively affects the interests of the club and its members, including non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest.

Once the member is removed from the club's membership, they will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club. Once the removal is finalized, no current member of the club will be obligated to respond to the individual if they try to reach out.

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 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. The Office of Student Life, The University of Toronto Students' Union, etc) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.

Policies & Procedures

Communication

The main mode of communication for the team is the team Gmail (uoftmha@gmail.com) and the 2023-2024 UofTMHA Slack workspace, unless given permission by the personal user for communication via other social platforms (ex. Instagram direct messages).

Members are required to check messages sent on the 2024-2025 UofTMHA Slack workspace at least once a day. To indicate acknowledgement of messages, members should use the react tool on Slack for the messages.

Immediate replies are not expected by any member, team members are required to give 2-4 business days for responses from others if needed.

If urgent, members can contact the Co-Presidents (Rhea Raghunauth & Jackie Zhao) or Vice Presidents (Tiffany Hui, Julia Do, Yan Qing Lee, Krishna Khanna, River Zhang or Katya Hortogiannos) via Slack with details of their inquiry or concern.

If executive members anticipate absence/uninvolvement from club duties due to certain reasons (e.g. vacation, mental health break, or any other unforeseen circumstances), they are required to inform any one of the Co-Presidents or Vice-Presidents privately via Slack in advance so their absence can officially be noted.

However, if a member of the club (executive) is inactive/not contributing on Slack for 2 weeks while meeting the 3 hours per week average without a prior heads up given to any member of the leadership team, they will be sent a warning email whereupon they have one week more to respond and discuss their commitment. If the member is still unresponsive after this week, they will be removed from the team's Slack workspace.

Safety

Verbal, written, physical and visual harassment or abuse will not be tolerated (ex. Spam messaging, inappropriate language, racism, sexism, bullying etc.). This will result in a formal warning. A second warning will result in your termination from the club.

If someone directly threatens to harm themselves, you, or someone else on the team, 911 is to be called immediately (you are not obligated to tell the person you are calling 911). UofT police (416-978-2222) is to be contacted immediately after, followed by the Presidents.

Community Safety Office (CSO): (416-978-1485) - to be contacted for personal safety issues, including stalking and harassment, bullying, domestic and family violence, workplace conflict and volatile behaviour.

You are not obligated to answer personal questions, or share personal information with anyone on the team (ex. Address, phone number, job, social media accounts, etc.).