



**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO MANDARIN DEBATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

Constitution of the University of Toronto Mandarin Debate Student Association

1. Article One – Name and Purpose

1.1. The official name of the recognized student group is “University of Toronto Mandarin Debate Student Association”

1.2. The official acronym or abbreviation of the group is “UTMDA”

1.3. The purpose, objectives, mission and mandate of the organization is to promoting Mandarin-language debate as a bridge for cultural exchange and intellectual growth. Our mission is to provide students with opportunities to enhance their critical thinking, public speaking, and reasoning abilities in Mandarin, while deepening their understanding of Chinese language and culture. UTMDA actively organizes training programs, workshops, and tournaments, and represents the University of Toronto in national and international Mandarin debate competitions. We strive to foster an inclusive community where students can engage in meaningful dialogue, cultivate cross-cultural perspectives, and contribute to the global representation of Mandarin debate excellence.

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 who are committed to and capable of contributing to the mission of the association.

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 who are committed to and capable of contributing to the mission of the association. Unless otherwise stated, non-voting members do not hold any rights awarded to voting members.

2.5. There is no membership fee. Membership in the association is free of charge.

3. Article Three – Rights of Members

3.1. All voting members have a right to attend all general meetings of members.

3.2. All voting members have a right to cast votes at all general meetings of members.

3.3. All voting members have a right to stand for election unless otherwise stated in this document.

3.4. All voting members have a right to cast votes in all group elections and referenda.

3.5. All voting members have a right to propose and vote on amendments to this constitution.

3.6. 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 15th to May 14th.
- 4.2. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of Six(6) voting members.
- 4.3. All voting members of the Executive Committee must be currently registered students of the University of Toronto.
- 4.4. 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.
- 4.5. The Executive may appoint Directors or Coordinators for various committees who do not hold executive decision-making authority and are not eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee.

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 financial management, compliance, and major decision-making of the association,
 - 5.1.3. Serve as the official spokesperson for the association,
 - 5.1.4. Hold signing and financial authority along with the The Outreach Chair,
 - 5.1.5. Preside over meetings of the Executive Committee and/or members,
 - 5.1.6. Ensure a smooth transition of office from one year to the next.
- 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. Oversee the planning and execution of events and promotional activities,
 - 5.2.4. Ensure that the activities of the association comply with the policies of the University of Toronto.
- 5.3. The Secretary shall:
 - 5.3.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
 - 5.3.2. Organize and coordinate specific events and activities,
 - 5.3.3. Manage administrative matters including scheduling, attendance tracking, human resources, and technical operations,
 - 5.3.4. Maintain records of member participation and attendance

5.4. The Outreach Chair shall:

- 5.4.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.4.2. Lead sponsorship outreach efforts and maintain relationships with sponsors,
- 5.4.3. Oversee financial planning and approve budget proposals,
- 5.4.4. Liaise with government bodies, university departments, and corporate partners,
- 5.4.5. Hold signing and financial authority along with the President.

5.5. The Public Relations Chair shall:

- 5.5.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.5.2. Design and implement publicity strategies for the association,
- 5.5.3. Create promotional materials and manage the association's publicity platforms,
- 5.5.4. Handle emergency public relations and crisis communication as needed.

5.6. The Debate Team Leader shall:

- 5.6.1. Be eligible to cast votes at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 5.6.2. Coordinate and schedule coaching sessions and training programs,
- 5.6.3. Plan and manage participation in debate competitions,
- 5.6.4. Oversee the development of debate-related curriculum and workshops for members.

6. Article Six – Elections

- 6.1. All positions on the Executive Committee shall be filled through an annual election.
- 6.2. All group members shall be eligible to seek nomination and cast a ballot for any position.
- 6.3. The nominee receiving the highest number of votes for each position shall be deemed the winner.
- 6.4. The elections must be held in a fair and unbiased manner. At least two members who are not running for any position must participate in planning and administering the election.
- 6.5. For all unfilled positions, the remaining officers will share the duties and responsibilities until someone can be found to fulfill the position(s) through a by-election.
- 6.6. The Annual Election Meeting may be held either as an online zoom meeting or as an in-person event.

7. Article Seven – Finances

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

7.3. The Executive Committee must approve all expenditures over \$100.00 through a majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee.

7.4. The group may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature.

7.5. The group will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus chapter of a commercial organization.

7.6. The group will not provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the group.

7.7. The group will not pay salaries to any of its officers.

8. Article Eight – Meetings

8.1. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly. The quorum for Executive Committee meetings shall be 50%+1 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. 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, including non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest. (Due to the educational and training nature of this debate club, a significant amount of club resources are required for member training and competition participation. Therefore, this club strictly prohibits any member from being involved in any other University of Toronto clubs that participate in Chinese-language debate competitions in any capacity, as this constitutes a serious conflict of interest.)

9.2. A two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee is required to approve any motion to revoke membership.

9.3. Any member facing removal shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Executive Committee to the general membership.

9.4. 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.

9.5. 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.

9.6. Executive Committee members are subject to the same termination of membership process as general members.



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 shall submit the revised constitution to staff in the Division of Student Life at the University of Toronto within two (2) weeks.

10.4. 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.