

# **Constitution of “UTM PeerMinds”**

## **1. Name**

The official name of this recognized campus group is “UTM PeerMinds”.

The acronym or abbreviation of this group is: PeerMinds.

## **2. Purpose and Objectives**

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

The purpose of this club is to give students a space to relax, study, make new friends/study partners, and develop healthy study habits. We will introduce study techniques to students through hands-on interactive activities throughout the semester, and host a ‘study hall’ during exam season to provide students with a quiet study space and refreshments. The goal is to teach students how to learn more efficiently and create an environment that removes some stress from studying. By promoting healthy habits, stress management, and community, we aim to improve the academic success and mental health of the UTM student body.

## **3. Membership**

Membership to the group is open to all the University of Toronto members (students, staff, faculty and alumni).

U of T members are permitted to run, nominate, and vote in elections and constitutional amendments. The group is open to non-U of T members. 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 \$0 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 election periods.

For recognition by the University of Toronto Mississauga Students’ Union (UTMSU), the group must maintain a minimum of 30 members, a total of 51% of membership are UTMSU members. The group must also maintain recognition from the Centre for Student Engagement. These requirements are subject to change and should be checked with UTMSU annually to ensure qualifications are met.

## **4. Executive List and Duties**

The executive committee shall be comprised of eight(8) elected officers. These include:

President (1)

Vice-President (1)  
Secretary (1)  
Events Directors (2)  
Social Media Coordinator (1)  
Graphic Designer (1)  
Treasurer (1)

*The President 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: N/A

*The Vice-President shall:*

- Assume duties of the President in his/her absence.
- Oversee the various committees.
- Ensure that all the activities of the club meet regulations and policies of the University of Toronto.
- Coordinate organizational recruitment efforts.

Additional responsibilities may include: N/A

*The Secretary shall:*

- Maintain an up-to-date 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.

Additional responsibilities may include: N/A

*The Events Directors shall:*

- Create and plan events.
- Communicate with all executive members to manage all aspects of event management from start to finish.
- Brainstorm event ideas, collaborate on budgets, manage event details, and evaluate event success.
- Book rooms for events

Additional responsibilities may include: N/A

*The Social Media Coordinator shall:*

- Take charge of all social media accounts belonging to the club (i.e., Instagram, Facebook, UTM Engage, etc).
- Respond to social media inquiries about the club.

- Advertise the club on all social media platforms.
- Collaborate on graphics to be used for the promotion of the club.
- Reach out to other clubs via social media to collaborate on events.

Additional responsibilities may include: N/A

*The Graphic Designer shall:*

- Generate new posts for social media promotion.
- Generate different templates for goal setting sheets.
- Create visually appealing designs for various club materials (i.e., posters, flyers, social media graphics, event banners, etc).

*The Treasurer shall:*

- Be responsible for handling group finances by creating an annual budget for the club, keeping track of cash flow, and maintaining all financial records such as receipts, grants, budgeting, and spendings.
- Apply for sponsorships and grants to fund the club's activities.
- Complete insurance paperwork, be a co-signing authority for financial matters, and prepare all UTMSU audits.

The group may appoint Directors or Coordinators for various committees such as social committee, publicity committee, and so on; however, such positions do not hold executive decision making authority.

### **Termination of Executives or General Members:**

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, may be given notice of removal.

The member up for removal shall have the right to defend his/her actions.

General member removal:

- Notice of removal - any general member will be notified via email that their membership in the club is under review and provided a list of reasons as to why. Once the decision to remove a general member has been made, the member will be notified via email and provided the reasons for removal.
  - Important note: executive members will receive a written warning regarding their behaviour first. If the issue(s) persists, then the member will be notified that they are being placed under review and considered for removal.
- Voting process - executive members will vote on whether the general member under review should be removed. A two-thirds majority vote of the executive members present in favour of removal is required.
- Appeal process - if a general member is notified that they are being removed from the club, they may respond to the email asking for an appeal. The member has the right to an appeal before the executive membership. The member will meet the executive team either in person or virtual

to plead their case, after which the executive members present will vote again. The majority vote of the executive membership will have the final say on the matter.

- Final vote process - during an appeal, after the member has finished pleading their case, they will be politely asked to step out of the room or enter a breakout room to allow the executive members present to deliberate. Once the executive members have discussed, the President will ask them to vote on whether the general member should be allowed to stay or if they will follow through with the removal. Once a decision has been made, the general member will be called back into the room and the decision will be shared with them. This decision will be final.

If removed from the club's membership, a member 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.

Executive member removal:

- Notice of removal - any executive member will be notified by the President that their membership in the club is under review and provided reasons as to why. Once the decision to remove an executive member has been made, the member will be notified by the President and provided the reasons for removal.
  - Important note: executive members will receive a written warning regarding their behaviour first. If the issue(s) persists, then the member will be notified that they are being placed under review and considered for removal.
- Voting process - executive members (excluding the executive member under review) will vote on whether the executive member under review should be removed during an executive meeting. A two-thirds majority vote of the executive members present in favour of removal is required.
- Appeal process - if an executive member is informed that they are being removed from the club, they may request an appeal. The member has the right to an appeal before the executive membership. The member will meet the executive team, either in person or virtual, to plead their case, after which the executive members present will vote again. The majority vote of the executive membership will have the final say on the matter.
- Final vote process - during an appeal, after the member has finished pleading their case, they will be politely asked to step out of the room or enter a breakout room to allow the remaining executive members to deliberate. Once the executive members have discussed, the President will ask them to vote on whether the general member should be allowed to stay or if they will follow through with the removal. Once a decision has been made, the member will be called back into the room and the decision will be shared with them. This decision will be final.
- Appointment/by-election - Following the removal of an executive member, the President and Vice-President will share the responsibilities of that executive role until the position is filled. Elections will be announced to general membership via email and shared more broadly via social media. A deadline to apply would be shared through the same means. Anyone interested would fill out a Google Form expressing their interest. After the deadline, the Secretary would email all applicants to schedule their interview. All applicants will be interviewed by the entire current executive team. Once all applicants have been interviewed, the executive team will vote on the candidates they want to return for a second round of interviews. The second round will be more in depth. After the second round of interviews, the executive team will vote on the candidate they want to fill the role. The majority vote will win. In the event of a tie, the President's vote will be counted twice.

- Important note: in the event that the President is the executive member being removed, the Vice-President will be promoted to the role of President and the Vice-President role is the position that will be filled through by-election.

## 5. Elections

The executive committee shall strike the Elections Committee and appoint one (1) Senior Election Officer (SEO) 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 SEO Election Officer shall accept nominations only from group members that are also registered U of T members (staff, faculty, students and alumni) for candidacy of 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 SEO shall select **three (3) election dates before March 30<sup>th</sup> 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 SEO shall provide each U of T member with a paper ballot on the voting dates and ask the member to place their ballot in an enclosed box.

In preparation for a tie, the SEO shall select an 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, the SEO shall break the seal and count the ballot in order to break the tie.

After the election is over, the SEO shall count the ballots. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position. The SEO shall submit a report of the results of the elections to the Executive Committee and general members. In the event of a tie, the SEO will open the envelope containing the ballot cast by the selected executive member and will count the ballot.

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

Only U of T members 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.

## 6. Finances

The Treasurer shall keep records of all income and expenses. The Treasurer shall present the group's financial health at the annual general meetings. The Executive Committee will vote on expenditures of over \$100.00 by majority vote at an executive meeting.

The group's executive or 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.

## **7. Meetings**

### **A) Annual General Meetings (AGMs):**

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

The Executive Committee will announce these dates two (2) weeks prior to holding the meetings. These meetings are intended to go over the group's annual activity plan, financial health and propose or vote on constitutional amendments, if any. Motions will require 2/3 majority of registered members in attendance for a vote to be cast. The motion with the most votes will be passed.

### **b) Executive Meetings:**

The executive committee shall meet on a bi-weekly basis where date and times are to be set by an executive. The quorum of executive meetings shall be 50%+1 of executives.

## **8. 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 Annual 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. Centre for Student Engagement, The University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union, etc) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.