

AGSU Constitution

We, the graduate students of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Toronto, do hereby band together in the Anthropology Graduate Students' Union and we do adopt the following constitution to ensure the protection and advancement of our interests.

Throughout this document the Anthropology Graduate Students' Union will be referred to as the 'AGSU'.

Article I: Objectives of the AGSU

The objectives of the AGSU will be:

To promote and maintain communication between graduate students of Anthropology and both the Department of Anthropology and the administration of the University.

To represent individual Anthropology graduate students, as well as groups of graduate students, in matters relating to the interests of such students.

To initiate, sponsor, coordinate and promote the social functions of the AGSU.

To work with the Faculty of the Department of Anthropology in an effort to gain representation for the AGSU on any committee within the Department dealing with matters of interest to the AGSU, as recommended in the President's Report, 1978-1979 and the AGSU Student Survey Report of 2004-2005.

Article II: Membership

The following will be members of the AGSU:

All full- and part-time students registered with the School of Graduate Studies in the Department of Anthropology.

Article III: Government

1. Executive

Structure: The Executive of the AGSU will consist of the following:

- (a) President/Co-Presidents (2)
- (b) Social Coordinator/Co-Social Coordinators (2)
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Communications Coordinator
- (f) Computer Coordinator
- (g) Mental Health Committee Coordinators (2)
- (h) UTGSU Representative (2, based on enrolment; see UTGSU Bylaw 5.2.1)
- (i) Members-at-large (2-4)
- (i) Medusa Coordinator (1-2), one voting member sits on the AGSU Executive Committee
- (j) Office Coordinator

All members of the Executive are to be elected directly by the Membership for a term of one year. For details of this process see Article VI – Meetings.

CUPE 3902 Stewards serving Unit 1 members that work in anthropology are entitled and invited to attend all AGSU Executive meetings. Unit 1 stewards are encouraged to report upon CUPE 3902 matters to the executive committee and collaborate with them on initiatives. In their capacity as CUPE 3902 representatives, however, they are not voting members of the AGSU executive committee. For clarity, this means that a member of the AGSU elected as a steward may also run for an AGSU executive position.

2. Duties:

The President is the Chief Executive of the AGSU and is responsible, in principle, for the activities of the Executive. They are one of the signatories on the cheques issued by the AGSU. They chair Executive Meetings, set the Agenda for future Meetings, and notify the Executive members by email. The President is responsible for disseminating relevant information to the General Membership through the listserv.

The President will submit, at the end of their term of office, a 'Report' outlining the activities and accomplishments of the AGSU and, also, containing recommendations for future goals of the AGSU. All members of the Executive should sign this document. Dissenting opinions may be added.

The Social Coordinators are responsible for the planning, organization, advertising, and scheduling of AGSU social events. These include at minimum the mentorship event and three department Wine and Cheese events. Other AGSU events proposed by the membership should be vetted by the Social Coordinators.

The Secretary will take the minutes of all Meetings of the Executive, and of the General Meetings. In collaboration with the communications coordinator, they will post all minutes to the AGSU website within one week of the Meeting and distribute copies to members upon request.

The Treasurer is the second signatory on all cheques issued by the AGSU. They are also responsible for maintaining account books (see Article VII – Finance for details). The Treasurer is responsible for approving and signing off on budget requests for events, etc., once approved at the executive level. As well, they are required to compose a preliminary budget at the beginning of the academic year (October), and a final budget at the end of the academic year (May). The final budget will be made available to the Membership, as required by the UTGSU.

The Computer Coordinator is responsible for coordinating access to and maintenance of the AGSU computer lab and the upkeep/upgrading of the equipment therein.

The Communications Coordinator updates the AGSU webpage with meeting minutes, event notices, and graduate student bios.

The Coordinator(s) of the Mental Health committee shall be responsible for organizing committee meetings, representing the committee on the AGSU executive, and guiding the committee in the fulfillment of its mandate. The Mental Health Committee Coordinators will be elected during the September executive elections.

The UTGSU Representative attends the monthly Graduate Student Union meetings and reports to the Executive of the AGSU on the activities of that organization.

Members-at-large attend Executive Meetings, sit on AGSU committees, and provide assistance to other executives in their respective roles. Members-at-large may be asked to perform duties in a member's absence.

Medusa Coordinators are responsible for the organization, scheduling, and advertising of the Medusa Graduate Conference. This event occurs annually in the Winter semester.

The Office Coordinator maintains a list of all Ph.D. students who currently have office space in the Department of Anthropology. They also solicit and process office space requests before the start of the academic year, in collaboration with department management.

3. General Responsibilities:

All Executive members may act as fair witnesses in a meeting between Graduate Student(s) and Faculty should either party so desire. This is as per the President's Report 1978-79.

The Executive should act as fairly as possible as a whole, with responsibility to the Membership. The Executive should take the responsibility to act rationally and therefore not force proceedings into a rigid framework. However, if the President(s) judges that conditions make it necessary, they may enforce Bourinot's Rules of Order, following the UTGSU Constitution.

If an Executive position is vacated or a position is not filled during an election, the Executive Committee is entitled to appoint a member to the position. Members of the executive will share the responsibilities of the vacant position until it is filled. A vacant position may also be filled by petition from the General Membership, whereby a candidate with 25 or more signatures from the AGSU membership is appointed to the position. If two such petitions are submitted to the Executive within one week of each other, then an election will be called in accordance with the "Executive Election Guidelines" (see Appendix).

Article IV: Affiliated Organizations and Societies

Members of the AGSU may form Societies for the advancement of their particular interests within the Department of Anthropology. These Societies must be

incorporated into the AGSU by the force of a bylaw, and must abide by this Constitution and any of its by-laws.

Any affiliated organizations must be recognized by the AGSU under their by-laws. A memorandum of agreement shall be drawn between the AGSU and each organization wishing to be affiliated with it. This memorandum of agreement will be interpreted as a by-law under the AGSU Constitution.

Article V: Committees

The Executive retains the right to form standing and ad-hoc Committees to study matters of interest to the AGSU, as these matters occur.

Such committees will be governed by the Constitution of the AGSU, and will be responsible to report at the Executive Meetings on their progress.

Committees (ad-hoc or departmental) will be staffed by elected members of the AGSU and will operate under the student representative mandates appended to this document.

Graduate board and graduate policy committees have two representatives. If there are Co-presidents, both sit on these committees. If there is a single President, the second member should be the President from the previous year, where possible. These representatives will operate under the graduate board and graduate policy protocols, appended to this document.

Departmental Committee Descriptions:

Graduate Board Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)

The Graduate Board is the largest standing departmental committee. Members include: the Department Chair, Graduate Coordinator, the entire graduate faculty, and two graduate student representatives. This committee deals with the larger issues affecting the anthropology graduate program at U of T. Motions are passed on a majority vote.

Graduate Policy Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)

Graduate Policy members include the Graduate Coordinator, four faculty members (representing the three campuses and four-subfields), and two graduate student

representatives. This standing committee discusses and reviews policy affecting graduate students, drafts motions for consideration by the wider board, serves as consulting body for graduate office and graduate chair.

Community/Colloquium Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)

Community/Colloquium is a standing committee that oversees the department colloquium series and newsletter. Its primary mandate is to review and develop strategies for enhancing a sense of departmental community.

Space and Resources Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

This committee makes decisions about the allocation and use of key department equipment and rooms.

Repatriation Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

This committee responds to any requests for repatriation of material in department collections.

Master's Review Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)

An ad-hoc committee formed in the 2004/2005 academic year to review and potentially revise the master's curriculum. Dissolved in 2006.

Teaching Assistant Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)

An ad-hoc committee struck in the 2004/2005 academic year to help deal with TA issues brought up in the Graduate Student Report 2005, that are outside the purview of CUPE. Dissolved in 2005.

Constitution Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)

An ad-hoc committee created in 2005 to draft a constitution and/or bylaws for the department. Committee reconvened in 2007-2009 to amend and ratify the Constitution.

Faculty Search Committee (1 Graduate Student Per Committee)

Committees are created during each new faculty search. The AGSU member has a non-voting position on the committee.

Tri-Campus (0 Graduate Student Positions)

This standing committee makes decisions concerning departmental administration, the hiring of new faculty, and the tenure of faculty. As many of the issues handled by this committee are confidential in nature, student representation is not allowed.

Hughes Building Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

An ad-hoc committee struck in 2006 by the university to prepare for the department's move from the Sidney Smith building at St. George to the Hughes building. Dissolved in 2008.

Article VI: Meetings

1. General

A minimum of two (2) General Meetings (GM) will be held each academic year, one in September/October (Autumn) and one in March/April (Spring).

At the Autumn GM, elections will be held to fill the positions on the Executive, except for President/Co-presidents and Social Co-ordinator(s). These two positions will be elected during the Spring GM. This meeting should be held before Oct. 1 as this is the UTGSU's deadline to be informed of changes in personnel.

All decisions of the General Body of the Membership will be by majority vote except for Constitutional matters such as Amendments and By-laws (see Articles VIII and IX).

If a motion is raised in the General Meeting that voting should be by secret ballot and if this is approved by the majority of members present then this shall be put into effect during that meeting. See appended Election Guidelines for procedures (both executive positions and for committee positions).

In the General meeting Quorum will consist of 25 members of the AGSU.

2. Executive

(a) The Executive of the AGSU must meet at the minimum of once a month between September-April. Additional meetings will be called at the discretion of the President/Co-President, or, by the Executive as a whole.

(b) Quorum for Executive Meetings will consist of five (5) members.

(c) Electronic Voting

General Meetings are an opportunity for graduate students to discuss the pros/cons of decisions which affect the entire student body, and are important for all students to attend; however, at any given time, the majority of graduate students in the Department of Anthropology may not be on campus to vote on important issues because of fieldwork. In order to allow the maximum number of students to vote on important issues, the meeting will be held virtually and/or an electronic vote will be issued one day after a General Meeting to provide an opportunity for all graduate students to vote. Issues that may be voted on include, but are not limited to, changes to the AGSU Constitution, AGSU elections, Graduate Policy mandates, etc.

In the rare circumstance that the AGSU Executive or AGSU Membership must vote on a time sensitive issue, and there is not an opportunity to hold an emergency Executive Meeting or General Meeting with quorum, the President(s) can create an online survey and request that all Executive members or the AGSU Membership vote on the issue. As with all Executive votes, quorum must be reached (5) and the decision must be by majority; similarly, as with all General Membership votes, quorum must be reached and it must pass with a majority vote, unless the vote is on Amendments to the Constitution or By-Laws, in which case it must pass with a 2/3 majority vote.

(d) Quorum for electronic votes will consist of 20% of the current AGSU membership. With the acceptance of the proposed change to electronic voting, it should not be difficult to achieve quorum if all students have access to vote on a topic.

3. Miscellaneous

General Meetings are to be called by the Executive or by a Petition of 25 Members of the AGSU. This Petition must be presented to the Executive who will call a meeting giving the Membership one week's notice.

Each member of the Executive will have one vote in the Meetings of the Executive. After two (2) attempts to break a tie (i.e. after the third vote) the President(s) will cast the deciding vote.

Article VII: Finance

The responsibility of maintaining account books rests with the Treasurer. Accounts must be kept in an appropriate manner so that transference of responsibilities will be facilitated.

All funds received by the AGSU, from any source, are to be held in a chequing account at a bank or other financial institution.

All cheques issued by the AGSU are to be signed by either the Treasurer or the President/Co-President, and only these members. Appropriate documentation must be included in this process.

All decisions concerning Finances must be made by the Executive as a whole. Notice of spending is available to any member of the AGSU on request of the Treasurer.

Article VIII: Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Membership of the AGSU present at a General Meeting.

Written notice of any proposed Amendment will be prepared and copies distributed to all AGSU members at least two (2) weeks in advance of such a Meeting. The reception by the Executive of such an Amendment is sufficient cause for them to call a Meeting of the General Membership of the AGSU.

Article IX: By-laws

All decisions of the Executive of the AGSU or an AGSU Referendum that will be intended as having the force of law within the AGSU, will be enacted and recorded as By-laws.

By-laws may be enacted or amended at any meeting of the AGSU Executive or AGSU General Meeting if the proposed By-law or Amendment is included in the agenda for that Meeting.

Any By-law may be challenged by a petition with more than twenty-five (25) signatures of Members of the AGSU. Upon receipt of the Petition the By-law must then be submitted to a Referendum (see Article X – Referenda).

Article X: Referenda

Referenda may be called in any of three (3) ways:

(1) By Executive decision.

(2) By decision at a General Meeting (2/3 majority vote).

(3) By Petition of twenty-five (25) Members of the AGSU, to be presented to the Executive who will initiate Referenda procedures.

Procedures for carrying out a Referendum vote are outlined in the UTGSU Constitution. It is recommended that these be followed by the AGSU (see Article IX and By-law 18 in the UTGSU Constitution).

Article XI: Censure

Any Member holding office on the Executive of the AGSU will resign if they are censured by either the Executive or by a Referendum of the AGSU.

Any Member so censured is eligible to run for office in future elections.

Article XII: Implementation

When changes are made to the Constitution, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote favouring implementation of this new Constitution is required. Following Article VI:1, this vote takes place at a General Meeting of the AGSU. A copy of the proposed constitution draft must be circulated to the General Membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the GM. Upon the majority vote, the Constitution and all its provisions will come into force, replacing previous versions.

This Constitution, when in force, precedes all previous constitutions, written or implied.

Appendix: Mandates and Guidelines

Student Representative Mandates

When selecting students, every effort should be made to have representation from two sub-fields on each committee (e.g. socio-cultural and archaeology). It is the mandate of each student committee member to represent the entire graduate student body. As such, the student representative may use the 2005 Graduate Student Survey Report,

any subsequent reports or surveys or will solicit student input via open forums or widely circulated emails, to ascertain the overall student position on any given issue. Student representatives will not allow their personal opinion to influence their committee vote on any departmental matter when their opinion does not reflect the position of the graduate student majority. Committee members (with exception to students sitting on faculty search committees) will keep the AGSU Executive informed of all agendas, meetings, and votes. Whenever possible, committee members will also supply copies of meeting agendas and minutes for the AGSU archive. Committee members who are unable to attend a scheduled departmental committee meeting must inform the AGSU Executive immediately so that a substitute representative can be sent. Committee members must conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner during departmental meetings (e.g. no insulting remarks, yelling, etc.). Committee members will not jeopardize or violate student confidentiality.

Executive Election Guidelines

1. There are two (2) sets of elections held each year. The first is held before the Spring General Meeting (GM), in which the President(s), Social Coordinator(s), and Office Coordinator are elected. The second is held before the Fall GM, in which the remaining Executive Positions are elected. At least five weeks before the Spring GM, the President(s) will broadcast a call for Chief Returning Officer (CRO) and Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) self-nominations to the AGSU membership. The nomination period will last for one week. If more than one candidate is nominated for either position, the President(s) will hold an online election for that position, following the procedure detailed in paragraphs 3-4 of these guidelines. If only one nomination is received for each position, then the candidates are elected by acclamation. The CRO and DRO will conduct all Executive elections, including those of the Spring and Fall election periods, as detailed in paragraphs 2-5 of these guidelines.
2. The CRO and DRO broadcast a call for self-nominations to the AGSU Membership at least three weeks prior to the General Meeting. Members are entitled to submit brief candidate statements with their nominations. The nomination period lasts for one week, and may be extended for another week if vacancies remain. If there is only one nomination for an Executive Position, the nominee will be elected to the position by acclamation. The CRO and DRO

will announce acclamation results to the AGSU membership as soon as possible.

3. If there is more than one nominee for the position, then the CRO and DRO conduct an electronic election for the position. At least one week before the GM, the CRO and DRO circulate candidate information and the electronic, secret ballot to the AGSU membership. The voting period lasts for at least five working days. All AGSU members except the CRO and DRO are entitled to vote. Voting ends at least two hours before the GM. A majority vote, by secret ballot, is required for a nominee to claim that position. Votes will be counted by the CRO and DRO. Candidates have the right to appoint one scrutineer each to observe the counting of ballots.
4. In the event of a tie, a new election for the tied position(s) will be conducted, following the above procedure.
5. The CRO and DRO announce election results in a brief report broadcast to the AGSU membership.