

CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SOCIETY

PREAMBLE

Proclaiming the International Relations Society, that shall act as the representative body for undergraduate students of the International Relations degree program at the University of Toronto, hosted also by the University of Trinity College and the Munk School of Global Affairs.

CHAPTER I: THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SOCIETY

PART I – Titular Recognition

Name

- (1) The organization shall in its official name be known as the University of Toronto International Relations Society, herein also referred to as “the Society.” Colloquial variants of the name may include the IRS, the IRSOC, or the IR Society.

PART II – Organizational Mandate

Purpose

- (2) The Society shall govern itself in accordance with the rules and expectations for campus groups described by the University of Toronto. It shall promote the study of international relations (IR) as an academic discipline, and represent the students affiliated with the international relations program.

Objectives of the Society

- (3) The Society shall endeavour to realize several core objectives, including, but not limited to:
 - a. the facilitation of deeper discussion, dialogue, and education with regards to foreign affairs scholarship on and around campus;
 - b. the provision of support, both social and academic, to its membership;

- c. the diversification of its outreach efforts in a bid to provide equal access to IR and opportunity within IR to all members of the University of Toronto community;
- d. the enrichment of student life by hosting events and developing programs for engagement;
- e. the enhancement of students' future academic and career potential, by developing modes for peer and professional networking, and by availing students of relevant advancement opportunities.

Responsibility to liaise

- (4) The Society must regularly liaise with the IR Program Director or the IR Program Administrator, and will serve as a conduit of advocacy and communication between those who administer the program and those who study within it.

PART III – General Composition

Membership habitus and voting rights

- (5) The membership of the Society shall be open to all students, staff, faculty, and alumni of the University of Toronto. Any individual who wishes to vote, nominate candidates, propose constitutional amendments, run for positions in the Society's elections, or otherwise exercise the rights and status of a full member, must be a full-time Faculty of Arts and Sciences student registered at St. George campus, or must be an Arts and Science Students' Union fee paying member.

Engagement with stakeholders

- (6) The Society shall acknowledge a special relationship with stakeholders in related and adjacent programs, most notably history, economics, regional-focus departments, and political science, in addition to those students enrolled purely in the international relations program. Where deemed possible, the Society should coordinate with other student groups or external partners to advance the welfare of IR students.

CHAPTER II: MATTERS OF GOVERNANCE

PART IV – Executive Structure

Executive body

(7) Responsibility shall be vested in an executive body, herein referred to as “the Executive”, that will remain accountable and transparent to the membership. This body will be tasked with the duty of carrying out the functions of the Society, maintaining the accounts of the Society, and upholding the constitutional legitimacy of the Society. The Executive may meet as and when necessary during their elected term, so long as they dutifully fulfill the mandate of their responsibilities to the membership and to the constitution.

Structure of the executive

(8) The Executive will be comprised of the following elected members, who shall in any case retain voting privileges:

- a. Co-Presidents (2);
- b. Vice-President, Finance (1);
- c. Vice-President, Administration (1);
- d. Vice-President, Communications (1);
- e. Vice-President, Mentorship (1);
- f. First-year representatives (2).

Powers of appointment

(9) The Executive retains the discretionary ability to appoint members to positions of responsibility and to delegate as need be in order to fulfill the Society’s directive commitments or principles of its policy. Such appointed positions might include Academic Programming Coordinators, Publications Editors, College Outreach Facilitators, Multimedia Coordinators, Directors of Strategy, and so on and so forth.

Individual roles

- (10) The roles and responsibilities for each member of the executive are pursuant to those stipulated in the appendices attached to this constitution.

Executive terms

- (11) The mandate of a member of the executive, excepting any election-conducting or transitional responsibilities, shall expire at the Spring Elections. Upon the transfer of all necessary accounts and powers to the incoming executive, previous members of the executive will completely abdicate all executive decision-making ability. It is expected that any former member of the executive will remain available in an advisory capacity to future executives of the Society.

PART V – Electoral Proceedings

Electing the executive

- (12) Elections shall be held by assembly prior to the end of the Winter-Spring academic term for those positions for which election is necessary—co-presidents and vice-presidents, elected in the order prescribed in Part IV (Art. 8)—with elections for first-year representatives held in the Autumn.

Assemblies of the membership

- (13) The society shall hold two general assemblies per academic year where members may raise concerns, and in which the Executive may present a review of the state of the Society. These assemblies, wherein elections shall occur, will include:
 - (a) Autumn elections to determine the first-year representatives, that shall be held during the first six weeks of the school year for which they are to serve;
 - (b) Spring elections for the co-presidents and vice-presidents in order to form the Executive for the following academic year.

Electoral procedures

- (14) Assemblies wherein elections are to occur shall be called and advertised a minimum of two weeks in advance, and must fully describe the positions to be filled and all other relevant information. Every reasonable effort must be made in order to reach and notify as much of the membership as possible, and to ensure the accessibility of the elections.

Transparency

- (15) Elections must be free, fair, and transparent to the membership of the IR Society. To accomplish these aims, the executive must appoint an external Chief Returning Officer (CRO) for each election, who will come from outside the Society, and who will oversee the election and properly count the ballots. They will independently verify the results of each election and announce the winners upon the conclusion of the voting process. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position in question.

PART VI – Replacement Mechanisms

Replacing a member of the executive

- (16) Should any member of the executive be deemed no longer able to fulfill their responsibilities, as stipulated by the appendices or the constitution, a new member may be appointed to the position by the rest of the Executive. A process of consultation shall then be pursued with the relevant stakeholders (including the IR Program Director, the IR Program Administrator, the Society's membership, and the current executive) in order to determine the best path moving forward, that respects the democratic wishes of the membership, the spirit of transparency, and the letter of the constitution.

PART VII – Constitutional Reform

Amending the constitution

- (17) Amendments may be proposed by any member of the society and can be adopted through a majority vote after at least three-weeks notice has been given to the members;

Adoption of changes

- (18) The executive committee shall formally adopt the new amendments and submit the revised constitution to the respective University offices (i.e. the Office of Student Life, the University of Toronto Students' Union, the Arts and Science Students' Union, etc.) within two weeks of its approval by the general membership, through the process described in Part VII (Art. 17).

To see the roles and responsibilities of executives as outlined in the appendix of the constitution, please download the PDF file below.

APPENDICES – Roles & Responsibilities of the Executive Members

1) Co-Presidents

The Co-Presidents shall be elected during the spring elections for the upcoming academic year and must run for re-election in order to serve again.

The Co-Presidents shall:

- Be ultimately responsible for all actions of the Society and its overall direction;
- Ensure compliance with the constitution of the Society;
- Chair meetings of the executive;
- Hold signing officer authority along with the Vice-President, Finance for financial purposes.
- Coordinate the selection of appointed members of the executive and officiate at spring and autumn elections;
- Facilitate any necessary liaison between the Society and external stakeholders, such as the International Relations Programme, Trinity College Meeting, University of Toronto Students' Union, U of T Office of Student Life, and the Arts and Science Students' Union;
- Shall ensure minimum number of seats are filled for all required Council Meetings of the Arts and Science Students' Union (ASSU).

2) Vice-President, Finance

The Vice-President of Finance shall be elected during the spring elections for the upcoming academic year and must run for re-election in order to serve again.

The Vice-President of Finance shall:

- Maintain the financial records of the Society;
- Ensure the financial transparency of the Society
- Apply for funding from various sources for the Society;
- Shall assist in ensuring the minimum number of seats are filled for all required Council Meetings of the Arts and Science Students' Union (ASSU);

- Hold signing officer authority along with the Co-Presidents for the club's bank account;
- Assist with the speaking, informational, and social events hosted by the IR Society.

3) Vice-President, Administration

The Vice-President of Administration shall be elected during the spring elections for the upcoming academic year and must run for re-election in order to serve again.

The Vice-President of Administration shall:

- Help coordinate the logistics of any Society initiatives or events;
- Maintain archives for the Society, including event logs, and semester-end reports;
- Prepare and distribute the agenda at executive meetings;
- Take minutes at executive meetings;
- Administer the Society's general email account, and the event RSVP account;
- Solicit speakers for professional development opportunities;
- Prepare duty rosters and task lists for events and their preparation.

4) Vice-President, Communications

The Vice-President of Communications shall be elected during the spring elections for the upcoming academic year and must run for re-election in order to serve again.

The Vice-President of Communications shall:

- Maintain an email list with members and interested individuals;
- Email event lists for the IR Society and other IR-related events;
- Create posters, pamphlets, and any other printed material for the Society;
- Maintain the Society's presence on online social networking sites;
- Direct the Society's Webmaster in the maintenance of the IR Society's website.

5) Vice-President, Mentorship

The Vice-President of Mentorship shall be elected during the spring elections for the upcoming academic year and must run for re-election in order to serve again. Due to the nature of this position and the responsibilities it entails, candidates are recommended to be either a major, specialist, or subject POST applicant in the international relations program.

The Vice-President of Mentorship shall bear in mind particularly those objectives outlined in Part II, (Art. 3) of the constitution.

That is, the Vice-President of Mentorship shall fulfill the following:

- Overseeing the club's activities at U of T recruitment events such as Fall Campus Day and March Break recruitment day;
- Organizing a presence for the club at Frosh Week events (including UTSU, Trinity, and other colleges);
- Coordinating with the Vice-President of Communications to prepare promotional material for club fairs;
- Organizing social activities for the benefit of the membership;
- Developing peer-mentoring initiatives
- Organizing academic workshops (including travel abroad and test preparation sessions) and compile a test bank for International Relations courses;
- Organizing career information sessions;
- Organizing graduate and professional school information sessions;
- Organizing workshops for graduate school applications and job interviews;
- Coordinating with other similar groups at the University of Toronto.

6) First-Year Representatives

The First-Year Representatives shall be elected in a meeting open to all members in the Autumn of the year for which they are to serve.

The responsibilities of the first year representatives shall include the following:

- Promote the IR Society's events in the first year IR courses;
- Promote the IR Programme among the first year students in the broader student body of the University of Toronto;
- Aid the executive and assist with all events hosted by the IR Society.