

Constitution of “Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Students’ Union”

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SIGNATORIES:

I. NAME

A. The official name of this recognized campus group is “Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Students’ Union”

B. The acronym or abbreviation of this group is: NMCSU

II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

A. To better engage with the departmental community on behalf of the student body

B. To organize and facilitate events such as socials, academic seminars, and movie nights, etc... that promote community values and act as networking gatherings

C. To promote interaction among the staff, faculty, graduate and undergraduate students in the department

D. To act as an intermediary between the undergraduate student body and the department

1. *Responsible for relaying student concerns to the Department Chair and the Undergraduate Coordinator*

2. *Represent the undergraduate body on the Undergraduate Academic Council*

E. To represent its members on the Council of the Arts and Science Students’ Union (ASSU)

III. MEMBERSHIP

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

B. 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 and non-ASSU members. However, these members do not hold the aforementioned rights. Members that are not registered must register with a designated executive by submitting their full name and a valid email address.

C. There will be no membership fee.

D. For recognition by the University of Toronto Students’ Union (UTSU), the group 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.

E. If a union member misses three meetings in a term without a reason, and fails to communicate with the larger union about these absences, they can be removed from the union.

IV. EXECUTIVE LIST AND DUTIES

A. The executive council shall be comprised of six (6) elected officers. These include a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who will be elected in March of every year, and a First Year Representative and Events Coordinator, who will be elected in the following September.

B. The executive council shall also include four (4) appointed positions. These positions will not have voting rights during committee meetings. These include: the External Representative, the Ancient Stream Representative, the Medieval Stream Representative, and the Modern Stream Representative. It is the prerogative of the President to determine whether or not any/all of these positions should exist in any given year

C. The position of Journal Editor-in-Chief shall be appointed during each election cycle by the presiding council. The Editor-in-Chief will be subject to the same rules and regulations as other elected members. Should none of the applicants fit the required specifications, the council may appoint a deputy-Editor-in-Chief who shall report directly to the Editor-in-Chief.

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- D. In the case of a vacancy occurring on the council, a by-election shall be held at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM). In the intervening time, or if the position is not filled by means of the by-election, either President or Vice President may allocate the duties of that position to the members of the council.
- E. Election and by-election meetings must be advertised at least two weeks in advance of the AGM.
- F. Each elected member of the council shall have one vote and decisions of the council shall be made on the affirmative vote of the majority of members present and voting.
- G. The council shall report on its activities and the activities of the student union at each meeting of the student union upon the request of any member.
- H. The duties of the various elected members of the council shall be as follows:
1. *The President shall:*
 - i. Oversee the operations, management and success of the group
 - ii. Set the agenda for the year in consultation with the Vice President
 - iii. Act as liaison between the NMCSU, the NMC Department, and the NMCGSA
 - iv. Hold signing officer authority along with the Treasurer and Vice President for financial purposes and create the budget
 - v. Preside over board meetings as well as general meetings
 - vi. Ensure transition of office to the future council members
 2. *The Vice President shall:*
 - i. Oversee the operations, management and success of the group
 - ii. Set the agenda for the year in consultation with the President
 - iii. Act as liaison between the NMCSU, the ASSU, the UTSU, from the Office of Student Life, and other student organizations.
 - iv. Hold signing officer authority along with the Treasurer and the President for financial purposes and create the budget
 - v. Preside over board meetings as well as general meetings
 - vi. Ensure transition of office to the future council members
 - vii. Attend ASSU meetings and appoint members to fill seats at ASSU meetings, as required.
 3. *The Secretary shall:*
 - i. Attend all meetings and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Make a list of all registered members
 - iii. Record notes and motions for meetings
 - iv. Notify all members of meetings
 - v. Regularly remind committee members of outstanding duties
 4. *The Treasurer shall:*
 - i. Attend all meetings and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Record all financial transactions of the group and maintain a written record
 - iii. Hold signing officer authority over the NMCSU bank account along with the President and Vice President
 - iv. Maintain a budget of income and expenses along with receipts
 - v. Collect receipts and submit them to ASSU with an expenditure breakdown
 - vi. Update members on financial position of the group
 - vii. Prepare an annual budget for the group as well as budgets for specific events
 5. *The First Year Representative shall:*
 - i. Attend all meetings and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Act as a liaison between first year students in NMC courses and NMCSU
 - iii. Promote first year student engagement

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6. *The Events Director shall:*
 - i. Attend all meetings and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Oversee and facilitate the organization of events and seminars
 - iii. Ensure that all activities of the club meet regulations and policies of the University of Toronto
 - iv. Be responsible for any room booking, external reservation, or catering order as required for the event.
- I. The duties of the various, non-voting, appointed members of the council shall be as follows:
 1. *The External Representative shall:*
 - i. Attend all meetings, maintain a line of contact with the Events Coordinator, and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Manage the email account and all social media outlets
 - a. Should the External Representative be unable to complete their responsibilities due to lack of information, they must defer their response to either the President or Vice President.
 - b. The social media presence must regularly advertise and promote the NMCSU community.
 2. *The Journal Editor-in-Chief (or Co-Editors-in-Chief) shall:*
 - i. Attend meetings as deemed necessary, and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Serve as the publication’s primary leader, responsible for all operations and policies of the annual undergraduate journal.
 - iii. Maintain responsibility for organizing editorial staff and journal submissions.
 - iv. Be held accountable for delegating tasks to editorial staff members.
 3. *The Deputy-Editor-in-Chief of the Journal (if present) shall:*
 - i. Attend meetings as deemed necessary, and be a contributing team member
 - ii. Serve as the publication’s secondary leader, responsible for delegated operations and policies of the annual undergraduate journal.
 4. *The Three (3) Stream Representatives (Ancient, Medieval, and Modern) shall:*
 - i. Attend meetings as required by the council and/or the demands of departmental Undergraduate Coordinator.
 - ii. Strive to engage and support undergraduate students in their respective streams, on an academic level.
 - iii. Be responsible for the relaying of undergraduate concerns and comments to the appropriate faculty member.

V. TERMINATION OF COUNCIL AND GENERAL MEMBERS

A. Any elected council member (the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Events Coordinator, and/or the First-Year Representative) 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, such as but not limited to fraud, embezzlement, tyranny or incompetency may be given notice of removal. The indicted member shall have the right to defend their actions. A two-thirds (66%) majority vote of the present-and-voting council members in favour of removal is required. The member retains the right to an appeal before the general membership in an ad hoc AGM, and the majority vote of this meeting’s constituency will serve as the final determining vote on the matter.

B. Any appointed council member (The External Representative, the Journal Editor-in-Chief, the deputy-Journal-Editor-in-Chief, the Ancient Stream Representative, the

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Medieval Stream Representative, and/or the Modern Stream Representative), who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the club and its members such as but not limited to, non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest, fraud, embezzlement, tyranny or incompetency may be given notice of removal. The indicted member shall have the right to defend their actions. A two-thirds (66%) majority vote of the present-and-voting council members in favour of removal is required. This vote on the part of the council is the final determining vote regarding the indicted council member’s dismissal. There shall be no further appeals to the council or general NMCSU constituency. Any individual who has harassed, distressed, or financially harmed the Union or its members shall be ineligible to run for office again.

- C. The terms ‘tyranny’ and ‘incompetency’ are defined as followed:
1. *Tyranny: the independent action of any council member on the behalf of the entire council without formal vote.*
 2. *Incompetency: Any action or inaction that is detrimental to the cohesive performance of the NMCSU; Including but not limited to:*
 - i. Failure to perform the aforementioned assigned duties under this constitution.
 - ii. *Performing said duties to a standard so low as to inhibit the functionality of the committee, as determined by a two-thirds (66%) majority vote of the council, excluding the indicted member.*

VI. ELECTIONS

- A. The executive council shall strike the Elections Committee and appoint one (1) Scrutinizer from the general membership of the department to conduct and hold elections before the last day of classes. The Scrutinizer shall be unbiased in the results of the election and shall be required to disclose any and all conflicts of interest in the election.
- B. The Scrutinizer 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.
- C. Those wishing to run for the position of President must have sat on the executive board for at least one year, and had no prior dismissal from the union. In the event that there is no available candidate with said qualifications, the previous President can approve potential candidates on a case-by-case basis.. In instances where such a person is not available, candidates running should be part of the group for at least one month prior to the nomination period.
- D. The Scrutinizer shall select three (3) 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.
- E. Elections will be held online through a Google Form that the Scrutinizer will moderate. Council members who are running for a position on the executive council shall not look at this form while elections are ongoing.
- F. In preparation for a tie, the Scrutinizer 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 Scrutinizer shall break the seal and count the ballot in order to break the tie.
- G. After the election is over, the Scrutinizer will count the online ballots. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the position. The Scrutinizer shall submit a report of the results of the elections to the Executive Committee and general members.
- H. Registered U of T members may not vote by proxy. Non-U of T members may not nominate or vote in elections. Only ASSU 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.

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

VII. FINANCES

A. 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 Council will vote on expenditures of over \$100.00 by majority vote at any council meeting.

B. The council 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 an 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. The group is allowed to charge for goods/merchandise allowing for a profit in order to cover official group expenditure. All matters pertaining to the pricing of merchandise shall be voted upon by the council using a simple (50%+1) majority.

VIII. MEETINGS

A. Annual General Meetings (AGMs):

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

2. *The Executive Council 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 (66%) majority of registered members in attendance for a vote to be cast. The motion with the most votes will be passed.*

B. Executive Meetings:

1. *The executive council shall meet on a weekly basis whose date and times are to be set by the combined efforts of the President and Vice President. The quorum of executive meetings shall be 50%+1 of present-and-voting council members.*

2. *All Executive Council Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules for Parliamentary Procedure. The degree to which the parliamentary procedure is followed is the prerogative of the President and Vice President, though it should be determined prior to the first council meeting in September.*

IX. AMENDMENTS

A. Any registered ASSU member may propose and vote on amendments to this constitution. The Executive Council will administer the process of having amendments discussed at general meetings.

B. Constitutional amendments shall require a 2/3 (66%) majority to be passed at Annual General Meetings by members in attendance.

C. The Executive Council shall formally adopt the new constitution and submit the revised constitution to the respective University offices (i.e. Arts and Science Students’ Union, The Office of Student Life, The University of Toronto Students’ Union, etc.) within two (2) weeks of its approval by general members.