

# 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 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 and support the study of international relations (IR) as an academic discipline, and represent the students affiliated with the international relations program.
- (3) The Society wishes to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

#### *Objectives of the Society*

- (4) 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*

- (5) The Society must regularly liaise with the IR Program Director, the IR Program Administrative Assistant, and the IR Program Alumni Association, and will serve as a conduit of advocacy and communication between those who administer the program, those who study within it, and those who support it.

#### *Discrimination*

- (6) No member of the Union and any bodies operating under its purview, individually or collectively, in personal or professional capacity, shall discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, citizenship status, marital status, family status, class, political beliefs, medical or health conditions, disability, positive Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) test, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), pardoned conviction, or any protected class as prescribed by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

### **PART III – General Composition**

#### *Voting rights*

- (7) Any individual who wishes to vote, nominate candidates, propose constitutional amendments, or run for positions in the Society's elections, must be a student of the International Relations Major or Specialist Program.

#### *Engagement with stakeholders*

- (8) The Society shall acknowledge a special relationship with stakeholders in related and adjacent programs, such as 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*

- (9) 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*

- (10) 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) Vice President, Student Engagement (1)

### *Powers of appointment*

- (11) The Executive will be required to make the following appointments:
  - (a) Equity and Diversity Director (can be existing member of the Executive)
  - (b) Senior Mentors (2)
  - (c) Communications Executive(s)
  - (d) First-year representative (1)
  - (e) Second-year representatives (2)
  - (f) Attache Editors-in-Chief (2)
  
- (12) 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.

### *The Attache Journal*

- (13) The Attache Journal will operate as an independent, but affiliated organization.
  - (a) The Society will retain oversight over the journal's operations.
  - (b) The Society will bear responsibility for any financial costs incurred in the operation of the journal.
  - (c) The Society's Co-Presidents will support the appointed Editors in Chief in appointing an independent editorial masthead.
  - (d) The Society's Co-Presidents will be responsible for ensuring that the organization is operating in compliance with the Society's policies.
  - (e) The Editors in Chief will be responsible for formulating a publicly available policy for editorial review, in compliance with the Society's policies and goals. They are responsible for ensuring all editorial decisions comply with this policy.
  - (f) The Editors in Chief are responsible for directing and facilitating all other day-to-day functions of the journal.

- (g) The Society retains the right to intervene in case of extreme circumstances where the journal is found to be in violation of the Society's goals and policies.

### *Individual roles*

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

### *Executive terms*

- (15) The mandate of a member of the executive, excepting any election-conducting or transitional responsibilities, shall expire at the Spring Elections held no later than the end of exam period. 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*

- (16) Elections shall be held prior to the end of the Winter-Spring academic term for those positions for which election is necessary – co-presidents and vice-presidents.
- (17) Candidates for the executive are not permitted to run on a shared platform for any position, except the Co-President positions. Shared platforms are commonly referred to as a “slate”.
- (18) While shared platforms are not permitted, any International Relations Student, including candidates for the executive, are permitted to make endorsements for candidates. This precludes material that makes clear a joint effort or intent to advertise the candidate or candidates as part of a “slate”.

- (19) Candidates for Co-President must run on a joint platform. The two candidates should collectively advertise their shared vision for the Society as their platform. While candidates for Co-President may endorse VP candidates, they may not run with VP candidates as a “slate”.

#### *Assemblies of the membership*

- (20) The society shall hold one Annual General Meeting (AGM) per academic year where members may raise constitutional concerns, and in which the Executive may present a review of the state of the Society.

#### *Electoral procedures*

- (21) Elections 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. Voting shall be conducted through UofT’s Simply Voting Program (or the stated equivalent).

#### *Transparency*

- (22) Elections must be free, fair, and transparent to the membership of the IR Society. To accomplish these aims, the Executive, through super-majority consensus, 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, and resolve election disputes. 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.

- (a) In the rare event of a tie, wherein two or more candidates receive the same number of votes, a run-off election will be held between those candidates in a timely fashion, no later than the start of the fall semester.

### **PART VI – Replacement Mechanisms**

### *Replacing a member of the executive*

- (23) 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.
- (24) The Co-Presidents, after consultation with the voting members of the executive, retain the discretion to remove any appointed members of the Union, and of any affiliated organizations within its purview, for behaviour deemed contrary to the goals and policies of the Society, and/or for failure to perform responsibilities stipulated under their mandate.

## **PART VII – Constitutional Reform**

### *Amending the constitution*

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

### *Adoption of changes*

- (26) The executive committee shall formally adopt the new amendments and submit the revised constitution to the respective University office, the Arts and Science Student Union within two weeks of its approval by the general membership:
- (27) *The roles and responsibilities of executives are outlined in the appendix of the constitution below.*

## **APPENDIX – 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.
- Facilitate any necessary liaison between the Society and external stakeholders, such as the International Relations Programme, Trinity College Meeting, and the Arts and Science Students' Union;
- Shall ensure a 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;



- Prepare semesterly budgets, and arrange with other Executives funding packages in accordance with ASSU guidelines;
- Provide semesterly budget reports to the IR Community, detailing line items on the budget(s), expected expenses, actual expenses, and a written summary including areas of improvement;
- If Vice-President, Finance signing officer authority cannot be arranged, the Vice-President, Administration will serve as a proxy.

### **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:

- Manage and direct all of the Society's public communications;
- Manage and direct the Society's communications with the IR Program Administration;
- Ensure that the Society is always accessible and highly engaged with the community;
- Email event lists for the Society and other IR-related events;
- Create posters, pamphlets, and any other printed material for the Society;
- Maintain the Society presence on online social networking sites;

- Direct the maintenance of the Society's website;
- Oversee the functions of the Communications Executive and the IR Community Showcase, IR Speaker Series and other such initiatives;
- In collaboration with other members of the executive, hire one or more Communications Executive(s) to assist with Communications duties.

## **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. 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:

- Administering the IR Mentorship organization by hiring a team of Mentors;
- Facilitating Mentee registration and Mentee-Mentor pairing for the IR Mentorship organization;
- 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 IR Mentorship organization and the broader IR community;
- Organizing curricular, co-curricular and networking workshops for the benefit of the IR Mentorship organization and the broader IR community;
- Organizing information sessions for graduate and professional schools applications, as well as career support;
- Liaising and planning events with other similarly-oriented student groups at the University of Toronto.

## **6) Vice-President, Student Engagement**

The Vice-President of Student Engagement 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, Student Engagement shall:

- Responsible for increasing student engagement from all year-levels in IR with the Society's events and initiatives throughout the year, in coordination with the Vice President Mentorship and Vice President Communications;
- Responsible for regular feedback gathering on the Society, IR Program, and UofT experience;
- Advocating for students based on this feedback;
- Ensuring that Society initiatives are accessible to all members of the Program, in collaboration with Equity and Diversity Director.

## **7) First-Year Representative**

The First-Year Representative shall be appointed by the Executive in the Autumn of the year for which they are to serve. The responsibilities of the first year representative shall include the following:

- Promote the 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 Society.

## **8) Second-Year Representatives**

The Second-Year Representatives shall be appointed by the Executive. The responsibilities of the second year representatives shall include the following:

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

## **9) Equity and Diversity Director**

The Equity and Diversity Director (herein: "the Director") shall ensure that all activities conducted by, or related to, the Society are done in an inclusive, accessible and open environment wherein members or participants are free from discrimination in all its forms. The Director shall:

- Consult with the Executive on policies and strategies that provide the necessary resources, opportunities and content to make the Society more equitable;
- Be responsible for the creation and/or amendment of the Society's Equity Policy, Equity training for the executive and/or constitutional matters regarding equity, diversity, inclusion and so on and so forth;
- Be consulted on equity concerns pertaining to the Society's events and activities and it shall be within their mandate to exercise good judgement to resolve such issues;
- Strive to promote an environment wherein all members of the Executive, the Society and the community can participate freely without barriers, discrimination or otherwise inaccessible policies and behaviours.