

According to the Policy on the Recognition of Campus Groups, each group must have a fair and democratic constitution.

For the full version of the policy, visit:
www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/camgroup.htm

The Constitution

As a leader of a campus group, you need to understand the importance of a constitution. A constitution is a central part of your group's operation. It outlines your group's mandate, membership rights, transparency, accountability and democratic principles.

The following lists the essential, recommended and optional components of a group constitution. Be sure to read and understand each category before you write your constitution. A constitution may be 2 pages or 20 pages, as long as it fulfills the requirements listed below.

Required Components:

The following outlines the list of required components in a group constitution:

- **Group Name:** What is the full official name of the campus group?
- **Purpose:** Are the objectives, purpose or mission of the group clearly stated?
- **Membership:** Is membership open to all U of T community members (students, staff, faculty and alumni)? Membership cannot be exclusive to any cohort of the community. Membership can be open to non-U of T members. However, only U of T members can run for election, nominate executives, and vote on constitutional amendments.
- **Executive List:** Are all executive positions listed? There should be a defined number. What are their roles, duties, responsibilities? Is signing officers authority assigned to at least two (2) of the executive? This article should not contain any proper names, contact or personal information.
- **Finances:** Are the basic financial procedures for the organizations outlined? Even if your group does not regularly handle money, you still need to create basic financial guidelines. Is the role of a financial officer (e.g., treasurer, financial director, etc.) described? Keep in mind that the Office of Student Life has the right to audit any recognized campus group at any time.
- **Meetings:** How will your group decide to have annual general meetings? Are the procedures and frequency of these general meetings described? Details regarding executive meetings are optional (see optional components section).
- **Elections:** Is there a description of the procedures for electing executive members? If there are appointments to executive positions, are the appointments ratified by the general membership (U of T members)? Is there a clause stating that a simple majority vote is required to elect a nominee or candidate to an executive position?
- **Amendments:** What is your group's process for handling constitutional amendments? Only the general membership (U of T members) has the right to approve constitutional amendments.



Recommended Components:

The following list provides recommended elements to a group constitution within respective parts:

- **Membership:** Is there a membership fee? How does your group process that fee? Is the procedure for terminating members, including executive members, described (e.g., impeachment, revoking membership, banning a member, etc.)? If so, there must also be an appeal process to the general membership (U of T members).
- **Finances:** Is there an opportunity for the general membership to be made aware of the financial health of the organization (typically presented at an annual general meeting)? Are the basic banking and cheque signing procedures outlined?

Optional Components:

The following list provides optional elements to a group constitution within respective categories:

- **Group name:** Include your group's abbreviation. No two groups can share the same name but they can share the same abbreviation.
- **Meetings:** Are the procedures and frequency for executive meetings outlined?
- **Elections:** Are there descriptions of the procedures for elections and referenda (typically taking place during the annual general meeting)?
- **Purpose:** If your group is using specific terms, are they defined under a section of "Definitions"?
- **Membership:** Is there a description of how your group will handle complaints or grievances internally? Does your constitution include how group members (general or executive) declare conflict of interests?
- **Meetings:** Are the official procedures on how your group will conduct meetings (i.e. rules of order) defined?
- **Executive List:** Does your group have a specific structure within its executive committee and sub-committees? Provide a diagram.

A constitution with these components will meet the requirements for recognition by the Office of Student Life.

Feel free to get in touch with the Campus Groups Officer in person at 21 Sussex Avenue, Room 514 or via email at groups.officer@utoronto.ca for advice and support on constitutional development or getting information on campus group resources.

Assistance in reviewing a constitution will only be provided once the constitution has been submitted through an application on Ulife.