



DEPARTMENTAL  
STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## Constitution

Ratified by LHAE students on February 10, 2023

## **Article 1: Definitions**

- 1.1 The association is known as the “Leadership, Higher, and Adult Education Department Students’ Association”, hereinafter referred to as the “LHAE DSA”.
- 1.2 All LHAE students (part-time, flex-time, or full-time) are hereinafter referred to collectively as “members”.
- 1.3 The President, VP Academic, VP Finance, VP Internal, and VP Communications are hereinafter referred to collectively as the “Executive Committee” or “the Executive”.
- 1.4 A General Members’ Meeting (GMM) is a meeting of the entire student membership at LHAE.
- 1.5 “Conflict of Interest” implies promotion of activities that directly benefit or indirectly benefit the individual and their interests. For example, any kind of direct involvement, interest, or support that promotes a business to the benefit of the individual can be considered a violation and a “conflict of interest”.
- 1.6 A “term” is defined as the term of office of LHAE DSA elected roles, which goes for one (1) year from May 1 to April 30.

## **Article 2: Statement of Philosophy**

- 2.1 The LHAE DSA is committed to:
  - a. representing and advocating for LHAE students;
  - b. ensuring and promoting active participation for all members in the decision-making processes on all issues that affect members on an individual, foci, program, and departmental level;
  - c. innating, sponsoring, and promoting academic and cultural life of members, while upholding values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and access;
  - d. supporting members through utilizing available resources to create programming that reflects personal and professional development.
- 2.2 The objectives of the LHAE DSA shall be:
  - a. To promote and maintain communication between members and LHAE administration, as well as other relevant organizations and stakeholders.
  - b. To represent members on all matters that may be of interest to them.

- c. To initiate, sponsor, coordinate, and promote academic, professional, and personal/social events in the interests of members.
- d. To advocate for equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in respect to departmental life.

### **Article 3: Constitution**

#### 3.1 Amendments to the Constitution

- 3.1.1 Amendments to the LHAE DSA Constitution require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all members present at a GMM.

#### 3.2 Publication of the Constitution

- 3.2.1 It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that members are made aware of the contents of the constitution. The Executive will be responsible to ensure the most recent version of the Constitution is made publicly available on the LHAE DSA website.

### **Article 4: Membership**

- 4.1. The membership of the LHAE DSA comprises all individuals in the University of Toronto Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education who have registered as graduate full-time, part-time, or flex-time students.
- 4.2 All members shall have access to attend and participate in events, services, and GMMs of the LHAE DSA.
- 4.3 Only members may:
  - a. Vote in elections and GMMs of the LHAE DSA;
  - b. Sign petitions of the LHAE DSA;
  - c. Nominate a candidate for elections or to positions for any committees;
  - d. Run for an elected position within the LHAE DSA.

### **Article 5: Executive Committee**

- 5.1 The LHAE DSA Executive Committee consists of the following positions:
  - a. President;

- b. Vice-President Academic;
- c. Vice-President Finance;
- d. Vice-President Internal; and
- e. Vice-President Communications.

5.2 The qualifications and duties of the Executive Committee are as follows:

5.2.1 The President shall:

- a. Facilitate, chair, and coordinate meetings of the Executive Committee;
- b. Facilitate, chair, and coordinate GMMs or select a designate to do so;
- c. As chair, the President or their designate shall adjourn a meeting when it is impossible to maintain or restore order.
- d. Act as an ex-officio member of every committee and only be able to exercise the right to vote to resolve a tie.
- e. Serve as a signing officer of the LHAE DSA.
- f. Serve as the spokesperson and representative of the LHAE DSA.
- g. Represent the LHAE DSA at relevant bodies of the UTGSU.
- h. Monitor the day-to-day operations of the LHAE DSA.
- i. Liaise with the Vice-President Finance on issues related to finance.
- j. Along with the Vice-President Finance co-sign all cheques.
- k. Work and support executive members as needed.
- l. Train and advise the incoming President.

5.2.2 Vice-President Academic

- a. Advocate for the academic interests of members;
- b. Support members in academic development in areas including but not limited to:

- i. Research conference preparation;
- ii. Communicating research conference and academic publication opportunities;
- iii. Academic skill development;
- c. Shall take over the duties of interim-President if the President can no longer fulfill their duties.
- d. In the event that the President position is vacant no member runs for President during the by-election, the Vice President Academic will take on the duties of the President until the end of the term.
- e. Shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
- f. Work with and support executive members as needed.
- g. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Academic.

#### 5.2.3 Vice-President Finance

- a. Serve as the Financial Officer of the LHAE DSA.
- b. Along with the President co-sign all cheques.
- c. Is responsible for monitoring the financial status of the LHAE DSA.
- d. Is responsible for managing yearly head grants received from the UTSGU according to their by-laws, policies, and regulations.
- e. Seek and secure funding opportunities for the LHAE DSA.
- f. Review, process, and approve any invoices or grant applications along with the President.
- g. Prepare and manage the operating budget under the purview of the President.
- h. Prepare and present the finance status of the LHAE DSA at Executive Committee Meetings and GMMs.
- i. Shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.

- j. Work with and support executive members as needed.
- k. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Finance.

#### 5.2.4 Vice-President Internal

- a. Maintain all records of LHAE DSA policies, procedures, and other documents necessary for transition.
- b. Responsible for observing that activities of the LHAE DSA are not exclusionary or discriminatory in nature.
- c. Represent the LHAE DSA regarding equity matters and remain dedicated to the awareness and elimination of discrimination.
- d. Support the activities and services of the LHAE DSA.
- e. If the President is unable to chair the responsibility will fall to the Vice-President Internal.
- f. Shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
- g. Work with and support executive members as needed.
- h. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Internal.

#### 5.2.5 Vice-President Communications

- a. Oversee the development and execution of a marketing and communications plan.
- b. Maintain and develop the LHAE DSA website and other social media platforms.
- c. Create marketing and communications materials.
- d. Shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee and associated meanings except in the event of a conflict of interest.
- e. Work with and support executive members as needed.
- f. Train and advise the incoming Vice-President Communications.

#### 5.3 The Executive Committee

- 5.3.1 May redistribute the above areas of responsibilities among themselves if they so desire or as they see necessary.
- 5.3.2 Are responsible for obtaining anti-oppression and equity training.
- 5.3.3 Executives shall attend Executive Meetings, GMMs, and other relevant meetings
- 5.3.4 Executives may hold office and seek election for the following year.
- 5.3.5 During the election period, an Executive can seek election for the following year. However, they cannot be present at meetings pertaining to elections or any other topics where a conflict of interest would arise unless otherwise specified in this document.
- 5.3.6 If an Executive graduates before the end of their term (April 30), the Executive is not removed from office, and is able to continue their duties as outlined.
- 5.3.7 If an Executive cannot complete the term, the Executive Committee will call for a by-election, and the newly appointed member shall hold office for the remainder of the term.
- 5.3.8 It is the responsibility of the Executive to ensure that all materials necessary for successful transition is achieved (transfer of banking information, documents, key, etc.).

#### **Article 6: General Member Meetings (GMMs)**

- 6.1 GMMs shall be held at least once annually.
- 6.2 GMMs can be called by the Executive Committee.
- 6.3 A special GMM can be called upon the receipt of a petition signed by at least five (5) Members, whereupon the Executive Committee must hold the requested special GMM no later than thirty (30) days from the receipt of the petition.
- 6.4 GMMs are open to all members.
- 6.5 There is no minimum quorum needed.
- 6.6 GMMs shall operate according to *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except for any differences that are outlined in this constitution..
- 6.7 Members will be provided with an agenda at least two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting.
- 6.8 Non-members may not attend GMMs unless invited as an external speaker by the

Executive Committee and/or through a unanimous vote by the members in attendance.

- 6.9 Non-members who attend a GMM do not have voting rights.
- 6.10 Non-members who attend a GMM do not have speaking rights unless granted by a unanimous vote of members in attendance.
- 6.11 A majority vote at a GMM is required for the LHAE DSA to join or leave any external organization.
- 6.12 At each GMM, members shall vote to approve an annual financial statement and budget presented by the Executive Committee.
- 6.11 Each GMM shall be recorded and made publicly available online.
- 6.12 The LHAE DSA Executive shall ensure that minutes of each GMM are completed by the time to send out the agenda for the subsequent regular GMM, and that these minutes be sent out to members with the agenda of said subsequent regular GMM.
- 6.13 The LHAE DSA Executive shall ensure that GMM minutes that have been approved at a subsequent GMM are made publicly available on the LHAE DSA website.

## **Article 7: Elections**

- 7.1 Responsibilities of the Executive Committee
  - 7.1.1 The Executive Committee shall be responsible to initiate a search for and select a Chief Returning Officer, and if necessary, a Deputy Returning Officer, by February, with the process concluding no later than March 1st.
  - 7.1.2 The position of Chief Returning Officer must be advertised to members by the Executive.
  - 7.1.3 If no applications for the position are received by the deadline advertised, or no applicant meets the criteria for the position, the LHAE DSA may appoint a member as Chief Returning Officer if they meet all other criteria for the position.
  - 7.1.4 The criteria for the position of Chief Returning Officer shall include the following.
    - a. The Chief Returning Officer may not run for an executive position during the year in which they are organizing elections.
    - b. The Chief Returning Officer must be a registered LHAE student.
    - c. The Chief Returning Officer must have good organizational, interpersonal,



communication, and problem-solving skills

- d. Experience with student government elections in a post-secondary environment is considered an asset
- e. The Chief Returning Officer must maintain objectivity to ensure fair elections

## 7.2 Responsibilities of Election Officers

### 7.2.1 The Chief Returning Officer will:

- a. Be responsible to the LHAE DSA in the administration of the policies and procedures for the elections.
- b. Ensure that all candidates comply with the policies and procedures established in this document and election dates.
- c. Cannot publicly support any candidate.

### 7.2.2 If required, a Deputy Returning Officer will be selected. The Deputy Returning Officer will:

- a. Be responsible to the LHAE DSA in the administration of policies and procedures.
- b. Assist the Returning Officer in the supervision of election policies and procedures.

7.3 In the very unlikely event that any Chief Returning Officer and/or Deputy Returning Officer who fails to carry out their duties and/or tries to unduly influence the results of an election may by a 2/3 majority vote of a regular or special GMM be recommended to engage in a restorative and transformative justice protocol as outlined in this document and/or be banned for two (2) years from serving in any LHAE DSA elected or appointed role or from running in and/or administering any future LHAE DSA elections.

## 7.4 Nominations

7.4.1 The Chief Returning Officer will be responsible for writing a call for nominations for LHAE DSA elected positions and a timeline of key election-related dates, which they shall communicate to all members by email in March.

7.4.2 Nominations will last for three (3) weeks, during which members may nominate themselves by emailing a CV and platform statement to a designated Chief Returning Officer email address specified in the call for candidacies.

7.4.3 Nominations will not be accepted for an individual who has held an Executive position for

three or more elected terms of office.

7.4.4 No later than forty-eight (48) hours after the call for candidacies concludes, an online ballot shall be sent out to all members by email that contains the candidates listed alphabetically by first name along with their CV and platform statement.

7.4.5 Voting shall take place for ten (10) days.

7.4.6 If there are more than two candidates for one position, there will be a ranked ballot for said position.

7.4.7 Votes shall be cast by secret ballot.

7.4.8 The Chief-Returning Officer shall announce the election results to all members by email and LHAE DSA social media no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the conclusion of voting.

7.4.9 If the Chief Returning Officer requires a university administrator to send emails to members on their behalf and if this administrator does not send the results out within forty-eight (48) hours after the conclusion of voting, the Chief Returning Officer shall be excused provided that they contacted said administrator no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the conclusion of voting.

7.5 Candidacy

7.5.1 All Candidates must be members during the election period and year that they intend to serve as an elected member of the LHAE DSA.

7.5.2 An individual cannot run for more than one elected position at a time.

7.6 Voting shall take place using the University of Toronto online voting software for student societies (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/simply-voting-elections-and-referenda-for-student-societies>), or, if this is not available, by another online survey platform such as Microsoft Forms.

7.7 Ballot Counting

7.7.1 The Chief Returning Officer is responsible to count all election ballots immediately following an election.

7.7.2 Candidates may assign a member as a proxy to observe the counting process by contacting the CRO with the name and email address of said proxy.

- 7.7.3 Proxies are not permitted to actively participate in the counting of ballots, including but not limited to accessing the backend of the online voting platform.
- 7.7.4 A ballot is considered spoiled if:
- a. Multiple candidates are selected for the same position;
  - b. There are no marks on the ballot;
- 7.7.5 In the event of a tie, another election must be held with the same candidates for said position no more than 30 days after the original election.
- 7.7.6 The candidate who receives the most votes for their position shall be declared elected no later than forty-eight (48) hours after ballots have been counted.
- 7.8 Appeals
- 7.8.1 A candidate may appeal the results of an election if they believe that they have either been wrongly disqualified or that the election process has been run unfairly or without regard to the procedures established in this document.
- 7.8.2 Any appeal must be made by email to the Chief Returning Officer and the Executive Committee no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the ballots have been counted. If an appeal has been made, the Chief Returning Officer must bring this to the Executive Committee within twenty-four (24) hours.
- 7.8.3 In making a decision to appeal, the Executive Committee shall allow the appellant to present their case either in person or in writing at an Executive Committee Meeting.
- 7.8.4 The Chief Returning Officer will provide any necessary information regarding the appeal to the Executives present at the meeting.
- 7.8.5. Based on the evidence provided, the Executive Committee will vote on whether to approve or deny the appeal.
- 7.8.6 If by a decision of the LHAE DSA, a new election is deemed necessary, then the following procedures must be taken:
- a. Another election shall be called;
  - b. The election must take place before the first LHAE DSA meeting in May, whereupon the Advisory Board shall maintain essential LHAE DSA operations until the new election is completed.

- 7.8.7 The decision of the Executive Committee can be overturned by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a GMM no later than six (6) months after the Executive Committee's decision.
- 7.9 Vacancies
- 7.9.1 Should any member of the LHAE Executive resign or be removed, their position shall be considered vacant.
- 7.9.2 Where an elected position becomes vacant, the Executive Committee may call a by-election.
- 7.9.3 The Executive will allow for a two-week period during which time applications or nominations for the position may be received, current elected members are not eligible to run for office.
- 7.9.4 Within two weeks of the closure of nominations, a vote will be held. Such a vote will be by secret ballot, conducted online, and will be determined by a majority vote. This process will be the responsibility of the Vice-President Internal. If the Vice-President Internal role is vacant, these procedures will be under the responsibility of the President.
- 7.9.5 A candidate elected to fill a position on the Executive due to vacancy will hold that position for the remainder of the regular term of office.

#### **Article 8: Impeachment and Removal**

- 8.1 An elected representative may be impeached by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of a regular or special GMM.
- 8.2 An appointee may be removed from their position by a majority vote of the Executive Committee or a majority vote of a regular or special GMM.

#### **Article 9: Continuity**

- 9.1 There shall be an Advisory Board that provides organizational knowledge to help ensure continuity.
- 9.2 The Advisory Board shall comprise the previous cohort of LHAE DSA Executives, except for those that have resigned or have been impeached.
- 9.2.1 Advisory Board members may be current or former students.
- 9.3 Advisory Board members may attend LHAE DSA Executive meetings upon request of the current Executive Committee in an ex-officio capacity.

- 9.4 In the event that the entire Executive Committee resigns, the Advisory Board shall organize an election in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document.
- 9.5 The Advisory Board shall be the LHAE DSA's final appeal body that rules on disputes pertaining to the interpretation of the constitution.
  - 9.5.1 Advisory Board investigations can be initiated by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, a majority vote of a GMM, or a petition of at least thirty (30) signatures of members.
  - 9.5.2 All Advisory Board rulings shall be preserved and made publically accessible on the LHAE DSA website.
- 9.6 No external organization can interfere in LHAE DSA affairs unless the external organization receives written communication from the Advisory Board authorizing them to do so.
  - 9.6.1 The Advisory Board cannot make such an authorization unless it is requested by a majority of the Executive Committee or a petition of at least thirty (30) signatures of members.

#### **Article 10: Volunteers**

- 10.1 The Executive Committee can recruit members or other individuals as general volunteers to assist with organizational operations.
- 10.2 Each respective Executive Committee member can recruit their own volunteers who report directly to them.
- 10.3 Volunteers shall be categorized according to the following department structure:
  - a. The Office of the President, which shall be headed by the President include all general volunteers and volunteers who report to the President directly;
  - b. The Academic Department, which shall be headed by the Vice-President Academic;
  - c. The Finance Department, which shall be headed by the Vice-President Finance;
  - d. The Internal Affairs Department, which shall be headed by the Vice-President Internal; and
  - e. The Communications Department, which shall be headed by the Vice-President Communications.

- 10.4 A volunteer may be removed from their position at any time by a majority vote of the Executive Committee or a majority vote of a GMM.

#### **Article 11: Disciplinary/Conflict Protocol**

- 11.1 If there is an internal conflict between LHAE DSA members, the Executive Committee may decide to implement the following restorative and transformative justice protocol.
- 11.1.1 The Executive Committee shall suggest a mediator to all involved parties.
- 11.1.2 When all involved parties agree on a mediator, the Executive Committee shall ensure that a suitable time and place shall be determined for a healing circle.
- 11.1.3 At the healing circle, each involved party has an opportunity to voice their truth.
- 11.1.4 The mediator shall support coming to a collective resolution.
- 11.2 If there is a conflict between one or more LHAE DSA members and an external party, the Executive Committee may repeat the process outlined in 13.1 and invite the external party to participate in the healing circle process.

#### **Article 12: Anti Racism, Equity and Reconciliation**

- 12.1 All members of the LHAE DSA must commit to striving to work from an Anti-Racist, Anti-Opressive, Equity and Reconciliation framework. The LHAE DSA will continuously enact measures to ensure that all programming hosted by the association is free of harassment and discrimination.
- 12.2 Inherent power and privilege exist within our society and within the communities we belong to. Acknowledging these dynamics that exist within the various intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability will help ensure that this is a collective responsibility and make it clear that any form of discrimination will not be tolerated in any LHAE DSA spaces.
- 12.3 As members of the LHAE DSA, mutual respect, cooperation, and understanding are our goals. We will not condone or tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- 12.4 The LHAE DSA does not tolerate hate speech/sentiments/remarks rooted in but not limited to anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, sexist, racist, classist, ableist, homophobic, or transphobic sentiments. Our collective duty and obligation are to ensure that we are creating open, safe, and inclusive spaces where all are welcome to meaningfully

participate. Any behaviour that does not demonstrate an understanding of these principles will not be tolerated.