



MSU CONSTITUTION

I NAME AND DEFINITION

The following is the Constitution of the McMaster Students Union/Syndicat des Étudiants de McMaster, the organization representing the undergraduate students of McMaster University. In practice, the organization shall be known as the McMaster Students Union or the MSU. In all instances, this document forms a binding terms of reference for all its operations, activities, and policies, except where this document may be superceded by the letters patent and such bylaws passed by the McMaster Students Union Incorporated/Syndicat des Étudiants de McMaster Incorporé under the terms of the Corporations Act of Ontario.

II PURPOSE

The purpose of the MSU is to draw into a true society all students at McMaster University. In pursuit of this, it will foster activities and events which will enhance the University experience of its members and contribute to the life of the University as a whole. Further, it will seek to facilitate communication between the student body, the University, and other organizations and will organize and regulate student self-government.

III MEMBERSHIP

- A. All full time undergraduate students shall be members.
- B. Honorary membership may be granted to individuals by the Student Representative Assembly (SRA); these honorary members shall not have voting rights at any meeting of an MSU governing body.

IV ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

A. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Membership of the General Assembly shall include A. of Article III.
2. A meeting of the General Assembly shall be called by the Secretary of the MSU within thirty (30) days on resolution of the SRA; or in receipt of a petition of two percent (2%) of the MSU membership; or at the call of the President.
3. All resolutions passed at a meeting of the General Assembly are binding on the SRA.
4. Three percent (3%) of the membership of the MSU, or two hundred and fifty (250) members, whichever is higher will constitute quorum for a meeting of the General Assembly, provided that public notice of the meeting is given ten (10) school days in advance. Failing ten (10) school days public notice, ten percent (10%) of the membership of the MSU will constitute quorum.
5. At least one (1) General Assembly meeting of the MSU shall be held per academic year.

Approved Jan 17/64

Revised Dec 9/64, Dec 1/65, Feb 5/69, 1969/70, Feb 22/77, Feb 21/79, Feb 12/97, Feb 4/11, Jan 29/15

B. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY (SRA)

1. Membership

- a) There shall be a Student Representative Assembly (SRA) composed of the following elected members of the MSU:
 - i. The President and Vice-Presidents of the MSU.
 - ii. The academic division representatives.
- b) The number of academic division representatives on the SRA shall be limited to the following conditions:
 - i. Each academic division on the SRA shall automatically have one (1) representative, and additional representatives shall be allocated among the academic divisions as set out in a bylaw approved by the SRA.
 - ii. There shall be not less than fifteen (15) and not more than twenty-five (25) additional representatives.
- c) All academic divisions on the SRA, as well as the procedures for adding or removing academic divisions on the SRA, shall be defined in a bylaw approved by the SRA.
- d) Any vacancy occurring in the SRA shall be filled from the relevant division through a by-election to be initiated within fifteen (15) school days of the seat being declared vacant, pursuant to a by-election schedule set out in a bylaw approved by the SRA.
- e) Upon receipt of the written resignation of a Vice-President, the SRA shall fill the vacancy from the membership of the MSU at its next meeting no sooner than one week after notice has been published in *The Silhouette*.

2. Duties

The SRA shall:

- a) Be the policy making body of the MSU.
- b) Appoint all Standing Committees.
- c) Appoint such special committees, as it deems necessary.
- d) Elect annually from the membership of the MSU, the Vice-Presidents of the MSU.
- e) Elect annually from the membership of the MSU by two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the SRA members present, the Speaker of the MSU.
- f) Appoint the Secretary of the MSU on an annual basis.
- g) Place restrictions on the functions of the Executive Board during the summer period.

3. Voting

The Speaker and Secretary of the MSU shall have no vote at SRA meetings.

4. Meetings

- a) The SRA shall meet within ten (10) days at the call of the Vice-President (Administration); or on petition to the Vice-President (Administration) of not less than 1% of the MSU membership; or on petition to the Vice-President (Administration) by not less than ten (10) members of the SRA.
- b) A meeting may be moved to closed session on resolution of the SRA.
- c) Fifty percent (50%) of the voting members of the SRA shall constitute quorum at all times for SRA meetings.

C. OFFICERS

1. The President shall:
 - a) Be the Chief Executive Officer and principal spokesperson of the MSU.
 - b) Be an official observer of all committees appointed by the SRA.

2. The Vice-President (Administration) shall:
 - a) Be the Chief Administrative Officer.
 - b) Be the Deputy Speaker of the SRA and shall call all its meetings.
 - c) In the absence of the President, perform the duties of the President.
 - d) Be an official observer of all committees appointed by the SRA.
 - e)
 - i) In the case of the resignation of the President prior to the commencement of the second half of the President's term, the Vice-President (Administration) shall be interim President until an election for a new President is held.
 - ii) In the case of the resignation of the President after the commencement of the second half of the President's term, the Vice-President (Administration) shall become President for the remainder of the President's term of office. In this eventuality, the Vice-President (Administration) must resign as Vice-President (Administration).

3. The Vice-President (Finance) shall:
 - a) Be the Chief Financial Officer;
 - b) Under the direction of the SRA shall:
 - i) Cause to be kept its books of account;
 - ii) Arrange for the custody and disbursement of funds of the MSU.
 - c) Submit at least annually to the MSU, statements audited by an accountant registered under the Public Accountancy Act of Ontario.
 - d) Be an official observer of all committees appointed by the SRA.

4. The Vice-President (Education) shall:
 - a) Under the direction of the SRA, advocate at-large for the academic interests of the MSU membership.
 - b) Be an official observer of all committees appointed by the SRA.

5. The Speaker shall:
 - a) Uphold and interpret the Constitution and bylaws;
 - b) Preside at all meetings of the SRA and General Assembly.

6. The Secretary shall:
 - a) Be the custodian of the records;
 - b) Keep the minutes of the meetings of the SRA, General Assembly, and committees of the MSU as directed from time to time.

D. STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SRA

1. There shall be at least one (1) Standing Committee dealing with each of the following areas: external affairs, finances, internal governance, services, and university affairs.
2. The SRA shall elect annually the SRA and MSU members at large to these committees.

E. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE SRA

1. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, who shall chair the meetings, the Vice-President (Administration), Vice-President (Finance), Vice-President (Education), and up to five (5) other members of the SRA.
2. Duties
 - a) To administer the day to day operations of the MSU.
 - b) To act as an advisory board to the SRA on the effects of SRA policy decisions on the day-to-day operations of the MSU.
 - c) To prepare the MSU budgets for final recommendations to the SRA.
 - d) To expend and re-allocate funds within any MSU budget category.
 - e) To perform the functions of the SRA during the summer subject to any restrictions placed on it by the SRA.
 - f) In the case of an emergency situation where the SRA is unable to meet, the Executive Board may make an interim decision, although any policy decisions shall be subject to ratification at the next SRA meeting.
 - g) To strike a committee when required for the purpose of appointing subordinate officers to assist in administering the policies of the MSU. These officers to be ratified by the SRA.
 - h) Shall be accountable for all its actions to the SRA.
 - i) To ensure the development and review of the long-term objectives of the MSU.

V ANNUAL ELECTIONS

- A. The President shall be elected by and from the full MSU membership annually and shall hold office from May 1 for twelve (12) months.
- B. The academic division representatives of the SRA shall be elected by and from their relevant constituencies annually and shall hold office from April 1 for twelve (12) months.
- C. The relevant constituency for an academic division representative shall be the MSU members registered in the respective academic division.

VI BYLAWS

- A. Bylaws may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the entire SRA, including vacancies, pending ten (10) days prior written notice of the specific bylaw change to the SRA.
- B. All interpretations of the Constitution made must be in accordance with the bylaws in force at the time the interpretation is made.

VII REFERENDA

- A. A referendum of the general membership of the MSU may be called on a question of policy or any other matter.
- B. A petition signed by three percent (3%) of the MSU membership delivered to the Vice-President (Administration); or a resolution of the General Assembly; or a majority vote of the total members of the SRA shall initiate a referendum.
- C. All referenda called once the above conditions are met shall be administered by the Elections Committee.
- D. The minimum number of ballots in a referendum must be equal to ten percent (10%) of the membership of the MSU for the results of the referendum to be a binding resolution on the SRA.

VIII RECALL

- A. Grounds for recall shall be:
 - 1. Failure to make reasonable attempts to carry out the duties of office or obey the policies of the MSU as outlined in the Constitution, bylaws, or other official documents of the MSU.
 - 2. Using the position held in contravention of the legitimate rights and interests of the member's constituents.
- B. Recall of an officer appointed or ratified by the SRA, with the exception of those under Clauses C. and D. of this article, shall be automatic on a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the SRA on an appropriately worded resolution at two (2) consecutive SRA meetings.

All vacancies created by a recall motion shall be filled according to established MSU Procedures.

- C. Recall of Vice-President(s)
 - 1. A petition of thirty-three percent (33%) of the SRA delivered to the Speaker of the MSU shall initiate recall procedures.
 - 2. The Secretary of the MSU shall give at least ten (10) business days' notice of an SRA meeting for the purpose of recall by:
 - a) Sending written notification to all SRA members.
 - b) Posting it on the official MSU notice board.
 - 3. Recall shall be automatic upon two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the total membership of the SRA at two (2) consecutive SRA meetings.
 - 4. Vacancies created by recall motion shall be filled according to established MSU procedures.
- D. Recall of President or Academic Division Representative
 - 1. Initiation. A petition of three percent (3%) of relevant constituency delivered to the Speaker of the MSU shall initiate recall procedures.
 - 2. Notice. Upon validation of petition by the Chief Returning Officer of the MSU, the Secretary of the MSU shall give a least ten (10) school days' notice of a meeting or referendum of relevant constituents for the purposes of recall by:
 - a) Posting it on the official MSU notice board and publishing it in *The Silhouette*.
 - 3. Quorum

- a) The President and SRA may be recalled through a referendum of the relevant constituency.
 - b) The minimum number of ballots in a referendum must be equal to fifteen percent (15%) of the membership of the relevant constituency for the results of such referenda to be binding.
 - c) The quorum for a meeting of the General Assembly for the purpose of recall of the President, in place of a referendum shall be three percent (3%) of the MSU membership.
4. Recall shall be automatic upon two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote.
 5. Vacancies created by recall motion shall be filled according to established MSU procedures.
- E. Any person having been recalled may seek re-election.

IX AMENDMENTS

- A. Initiation. A proposed amendment, supported by a petition of three percent (3%) of the members of the MSU, or by petition of at least fifty percent (50%) of the members of the SRA delivered to the Vice-President (Administration).
- B. Notice. The Vice-President (Administration) and the Secretary shall give notice of a proposed amendment at least ten (10) school days prior to an SRA meeting by posting it on the official MSU notice board and publishing it in *The Silhouette*.
- C. Voting. The SRA shall debate the proposed amendment and present it with a recommendation to a meeting of the General Assembly. For this purpose, a referendum may take the place of a General Assembly meeting. The minimum number of ballots in such a referendum must be equal to ten percent (10%) of the general membership of the MSU.
- D. Adoption. The amendment is adopted if it receives a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of those present at a meeting of the General Assembly or of those voting in the referendum.
- E. Authority. If any amendment necessitates changes in the Constitution of any other organization affiliated with the MSU, such changes shall become automatic on its passing. Any such change in the Constitution will require a review of the bylaws to determine whether or not revisions are necessary. Such revisions will take place within sixty (60) days.

X ENABLING CLAUSE

This Constitution will take effect April 1, 1979, pending acceptance by the membership of the MSU. The bylaws will take effect April, 1979 pending acceptance under the previous Constitution by the SRA 1978/79.