

## **Constitution of Media & Design Innovation PhD Graduate Students' Union** **(o/a Media & Design Innovation Graduate Scholars Association)**

### **I. Objectives of the Organization**

The objective of the Media & Design Innovation PhD Graduate Students' Union is to promote the interests of the graduate students in the Media & Design Innovation PhD graduate program. Our aim is to strengthen the voice of our students, to form a line of communication between students and faculty, and to sponsor a sense of unity among students.

### **II. Relationship to TMGSU**

TMGSU will not normally interfere in the activities and operations of the organization. It does, however, have the power to investigate complaints made by any member of the organization concerning alleged violations of this constitution and audit the expenses.

### **III. Membership**

**Course Union:** Membership is automatically extended to all students registered within the Media & Design Innovation PhD graduate program.

### **IV. Structure**

An executive team will be elected annually who will be responsible to the membership of the organization. The team will include a **President**, a **Vice President of Finance**, and a **Vice President of Events**. Each member of the executive team will have one vote when it comes to decisions on union matters, including, but not limited to, amendments to the constitution and proposals to impeach. An individual will not hold more than one executive team position at any time. All Executives must be students registered within the Media & Design Innovation PhD graduate program.

### **V. Meetings**

- Executive Meetings will be held at least two times per semester. Meeting times must be decided and voted on by Executive members.
- A majority of the executive will form quorum.
- Meeting minutes will be recorded by a member of the executive and stored in a Google Drive. The responsibility of recording minutes will rotate through the executives each meeting.
- Executive meetings are open to all members of the organization, but general members may not vote. Proxy votes will be allowed at meetings as long as the proxy vote is corroborated in writing.
- General Members Meetings will be held at least once a semester.

- Two weeks notice will be given for a General Members Meeting in the form of a department-wide email. The event may additionally be promoted via social media (ie. Instagram, Facebook, etc.), class or seminar announcements, word-of-mouth, and/or posters.
- There is no set quorum for General Members Meetings, however, high attendance should be encouraged.

#### **VI. Roles of President**

- The executive is responsible for planning activities and projects, and ensuring that TMGSU and TMU policies are adhered to.
- Shall chair all meetings
- Is responsible to TMGSU and members of the organization for all monies allocated to the organization by TMGSU
- Is responsible to TMGSU and members of the organization for all other monies, i.e., fund raising, donations and sponsorship revenues
- Will act as a liaison between TMGSU and the organization, and is responsible to the members of the organization, and is responsible for advising the Campus Groups Administrator of any changes in the executive or signing officers
- Will act as a signing officer
- The individual must be a graduate student in the Media & Design Innovation PhD graduate program for the duration of their term in this role.

#### **VII. Vice President of Finance**

- Shall chair all meetings in the absence of the President
- Will manage all cheque requisition, receipts and refund distributions
- Will manage the budget and maintain financial records
- Will manage fundraising initiatives
- Will act as a signing officer
- The individual must be a graduate student in the Media & Design Innovation PhD graduate program for the duration of their term in this role.

#### **VIII. Vice President of Events**

- Will be responsible for booking rooms and organizing food for events
- Will generally manage the running of events
- Will be responsible for finding scholarship opportunities that may be of interest to the general membership
- Will be responsible for finding and promoting programs and opportunities to address Mental Health needs of graduate students
- Will be responsible for finding volunteer and career opportunities that may be of interest to the general membership

- Will organize fundraising initiatives
- Will manage the email account and social media accounts
- Will send emails on behalf of the Media & Design Innovation PhD Graduate Students' Union to notify the general membership and advertise events
- Will act as a signing officer
- The individual must be a graduate student in the Media & Design Innovation PhD graduate program for the duration of their term in this role

#### **IX. Executive Vacancy**

Should any executive position become vacant for any reason the remaining executives may, by majority vote, appoint someone from within the general membership or executive team to fill the vacancy. If the role of President is vacated the role must be filled by a member of the executive team in accordance with the rules of nominating a president. The executive team is not under any obligation to notify the general membership of the vacancy, but they must inform them of the change in personnel. For the period of time between the initial vacating of the executive role and the filling of the position, the President will take on any obligations belonging to that executive position.

#### **X. Elections**

The Media & Design Innovation PhD Graduate Students' Union is required to conduct a general election, open to all members, once every academic year. Executive members must be elected by the membership at large.

***Elections must take place by the last Friday in March.***

#### **XI. Election Procedures**

- a) An Election Officer will be elected by the executive team to plan and execute the election proceedings. The Election Officer must be willing to take on the role. If possible, the Election Officer should be a member of the executive team. Otherwise, a trusted general member must be nominated by a member of the executive and elected. The Election Officer will be responsible for setting up all notifications, as well as setting up and making available to all members an anonymous online voting system.
- b) All members will be notified (via a department-wide email containing instructions and the email of the Election Officer) three weeks before a pending election. The notification will clearly state the date(s) of the election, the deadlines for nominations and an outline of voting procedures. Nominations will be accepted by email from the point of the first notification for a period of no less than two weeks (up until one day before the election).
- c) In order to be nominated, a general member or member of the executive team must notify, by email, the Election Officer that they will be self-nominating for a position. Any general member or member of the executive team may self-nominate for any position in the executive team, with the exception of President. In order to submit a self-nomination for the position of President, the individual must have

served for one year on the executive team.

- d) The election will take place before the last Friday in March. The length of the election is at the discretion of the Executive Team. A second and third notification will be sent via department-wide email a week before and the date of the start of the election respectively. All members should be given access to the anonymous electronic voting system. All members are entitled to one vote. There is no minimum number of participants necessary to consider an election result valid.
- e) Any member may state a reasonable complaint or concern regarding the election process to the Executive Officer. The Executive Officer will be responsible for notifying the current executive team of this complaint. The current executive team will be responsible for informing all members that a complaint has been made, detailing the nature of the complaint and for providing a reasonable response to the complaint.
- f) The new Executive Team will take over on the July 1 following the election.

## **XII. Removal from Office**

Grounds for impeachment include any activities which break the University's Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct. Additionally, any actions taken on behalf of the union that work against the objectives of the union are considered grounds for removal. Willful mismanagement of union funds or fraudulent election activities are considered grounds for removal. Losing the status of graduate student in the Media & Design Innovation PhD program is considered grounds for removal.

For less serious matters, an executive member may be asked to step down voluntarily by the other members of the executive team. Should the executive step down, the procedures to fill an executive vacancy will commence. The executive may refuse to step down without consequence.

An impeachment vote may be called when at least 30% of the general membership signs a petition calling for a vote, or when at least 51% of the executive team agrees that an impeachment vote must be held.

The executive member will be impeached if 51% or more of the executive team votes in favor of impeachment.

## **XIII. Amendments**

An amendment to the constitution may be proposed by any member of the executive team. The amendment must be proposed in an executive meeting and the proposal must be recorded in writing in an agenda attributing the proposal to the speaker. A vote will be taken to either vote on the amendment in the same meeting or to establish a meeting at a later date to vote on the amendment. In order for an amendment to be accepted, the majority of the executive team must vote verbally in favor (by saying 'Yay') of the amendment when called upon. All verbal votes against the amendment may be made by saying 'Nay'.

If a member of the executive team is not or cannot be present at the meeting, they may vote

in writing by email by stating that: ‘In the case of \_\_\_\_amendment my vote is [Yay/Nay]’. Every member of the executive team is required to vote.

#### **XIV. Adoption of the Constitution**

The constitution must be approved by TMGSU.

A vote to approve the constitution may be called during any executive team meeting by any member of the executive team. At this time, the majority of the Executive team must vote in favor of it. The voting procedures are the same as for an amendment to the constitution. If the vote to approve the constitution fails, a call for amendments will be proposed immediately and amendment procedures will commence. Throughout these procedures, the constitution will be repeatedly submitted for a vote of approval. Union activities will stall until the constitution is successfully approved.