

York University Graduate Students in Education Constitution (2021)

The Purpose of this Constitution is:

- a. To provide a general philosophy and rationale for the York University Graduate Students in Education student association.
- b. To provide a general orientation for the membership.
- c. To lend stability and continuity to the York University Graduate Students in Education student association.
- d. To provide an understanding of the operations, practices and procedures carried on within the various parts of the York University Graduate Students in Education student association.

Article 1: Name and Compliance

- a) This organization shall be known as YU Graduate Students in Education (YGSE), the name under which it is officially registered with Student Clubs and Leadership Development. It will hereinafter be referred to as YGSE.
- b) The YGSE is the Faculty of Education Graduate Student Association (GSA).
- c) The Faculty of Education GSA operates at York University, subject to York University and York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA) policies and procedures.

Article 2: Interpretation

The Co-Chairs shall make all determinations and interpretations with due regard to accepted rules of procedure in Robert's Rules of Order.

Article 3: Preamble

The York University Graduate Students in Education – hereafter referred to as the YGSE – represents and advocates for the collective interests of Faculty of Education graduate students in all matters of departmental policy and action at York University. The YGSE seeks to build community among the graduate students, faculty, and larger university, with consideration for diverse experiences and interests. Above all, the YGSE works to optimize the environment within which graduate students develop, both professionally and personally.

Article 4: Membership

The members of the YGSE are Faculty of Education graduate students. Current enrollment in the graduate program is sufficient for membership. No general membership dues will be collected from members, although members may be expected to pay nominal fees for specific events.

Article 5: Meetings

- a. The YGSE shall have a minimum of 4 meetings per year (2

- b. in each of Fall and Winter Terms), on the first Wednesday of October, December, February, and April, unless voted otherwise by a majority of the elected officers.
- c. Meetings are open to all member of YGSE (i.e., all graduate students in the Faculty of Education) and information on meetings must be communicated to members (dates, locations, Zoom links). The Co-Chairs shall notify YGSE members of the time and location of the meeting no less than 7 days in advance.
- d. The Co-Chairs shall be the chair(s) of all general meetings, and shall, to the best of their ability, conduct the meeting in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
 - a. It is the Co-Chair's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the YGSE Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order.
- e. The agenda for general meetings shall be set by the Co-Chairs according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- f. Any votes will take place by show of hands (or equivalent) and all officers shall have speaking privileges.
- g. The YGSE reserves the right to decide, by a majority vote or the decision of the chair/ co-chairs, to put any vote to the entire YGSE. In these cases, the issue will be presented via written or electronic memo to all members, and members will be given a pre-specified period of time in which to cast their ballots (in whatever form is appropriate: paper, electronic, or otherwise).
- h. In the case of a tied vote one Co-Chair (determined by coin toss) will have the tie-breaking vote.
- i. The Co-Chairs, may call a special meeting, as outlined by Robert's Rules of Order and with sufficient notification.

Article 6: Quorum

A quorum of membership, for all purposes, shall be reached when 7 officers or associates are present.

Article 7: Elections and Eligibility

- a) The YGSE will hold annual elections for Co-Chairs once a year. The Election will occur in March and the Co-Chairs' position will be held from September (following the Election) until August. This election is run by the current Chief Returning Officer.
- b) The YGSE will hold annual elections for all executive (except Co-Chair) and associate positions once a year. The Election will occur in September and the positions will be held from September until August. This election is run by the incoming co-chairs who will take on the duties of the Chief Returning Officer outlined below.
- c) Notice of elections will be communicated via email, social media, and website.
- d) The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) must be a graduate student in the Faculty of Education and may not be a member of the Executive of the YGSE. They shall be responsible for:
 - i) Applications, nominations, and campaigns
 - ii) The election process (voting and counting of votes)
 - iii) Dealing with any challenges to the elections or election procedures or results
- e) The CRO shall preside over the election and shall count all votes.
 - i) The CRO verifies the nominations for eligibility

- ii) Once the CRO counts all votes, the results will be announced
 - iii) The person receiving the greatest number of votes shall be elected
 - iv) In the case of a tie the nominees may choose to share the position, splitting the duties and any honorarium between them as they see fit OR engage in a run-off election held following as closely as possible to the rules for the original election. If the nominees chose to share the position, any reference to that position in this constitution is to be read as including both individuals, save that the two individuals shall have only one vote with the voter determined by coin toss.
- f) Nominations
- i) Any graduate student in the Faculty of Education at York University may run for office.
 - ii) Such a person may nominate themselves for any position for which they are eligible via an email to the CRO, or through the use of an online application created and maintained by the CRO.
 - iii) The CRO will confirm eligibility.
 - iv) If there are positions with no nominees when the nomination period ends, the CRO may extend the nomination period for positions with no nominees up to the day before the election and announce the available positions to the membership.
- g) Voting shall take place via secret ballot. No proxy voting shall be allowed.
- i) The Voting Period shall be established by the CRO and shall be 48 hours in length.
 - ii) All graduate students in the Faculty of Education at York University are eligible to vote.
 - iii) All eligible voters receive one vote.
- h) Campaigning regulations
- i) Campaigning shall take place a week prior to the Election Date following the rules and requirements set out by the CRO.
 - ii) Any candidates seeking an uncontested position shall be acclaimed on the date that nominations close.
- i) In the event of a vacancy the following shall take place:
- i) Any interested and eligible member shall submit a written statement to the Co-Chairs at any time after the announcement of the Election results
 - ii) A by-election will take place during the first YGSE meeting taking place after the Elections.
 - iii) At the by-election, all members present will be allowed to vote.
 - iv) Where possible, campaigning shall be permitted for by-elections and shall follow the same procedures for a regular election.
 - v) All other election procedures shall be followed for a by-election

Article 8: Elected Council Members

- a) The YGSE council reserves the right to create non-permanent (non-constitutional) positions and committees that do not exceed the length of an elected term. These positions do not have voting rights.
- b) The Council Members of YGSE must attend >75% of regularly scheduled meetings.

- c) The executive members shall be the following:
 - i) Co-Chairs: A Master's Co-Chair and a PhD Co-Chair (2)
 - ii) Secretary (1)
 - iii) Treasurer (1)
 - iv) Community & Professional Development Coordinator (1)
- d) The associates of the organization shall be the following: Chief Returning Officer, Urban Indigenous Cohort Representative, Dadaab (Kenya) Cohort Representative, Graduate Lounge Manager, Graduate Conference Coordinator(s) (1-2), YUGSA Representatives (3), CUPE Representative(s) (1-2)
- e) Each member is responsible for providing a one-page summary of their activities to the co-chair by the end of May
- f) This will be provided to their replacement after the next election.
- g) Honorariums will not be paid to members who have not submitted their report.

Description of Positions

Co-Chairs (2 positions)

One co-chair must be a student in the Master's program in the Faculty of Education.

The other co-chair must be a PhD student in the Faculty of Education.

The co-chairs are responsible for:

- Serving as a liaison between the YGSE and the Graduate Program in Education Executive.
- Attending and sharing YGSE reports at the Graduate Executive meetings and Graduate Council Meetings.
- Regularly communicating by email with the Graduate Program Director and education graduate students (i.e., important announcements, YGSE meeting dates and meeting minutes).
 - These reports are to be done in a business like and professional manner.
- Responding in timely manner to education graduate students' YGSE related questions and concerns.
- Organizing and chairing YGSE meetings and ensuring that all graduate student representatives share reports.
 - To do this effectively the Co-Chairs will make every effort to learn the contents of the Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order.
- Speaking in MEd and PhD seminar classes about the YGSE and elections at the beginning of September
- Regularly communicating and working with YGSE graduate student representatives and sub-committees (e.g., Graduate Student Governance Committee; Finance Committee)
- Assisting the Graduate Conference Coordinator with planning and facilitating the Graduate Conference (and sharing opening remarks at the conference)
- Welcoming incoming MEd and PhD at summer orientation sessions (late July or August)
- Organizing a Welcome Social (on campus or digital) for all incoming and returning education graduate students in early/mid-September

- Organizing YGSE elections (with the CRO).
- Regularly communicating and working with YGSE Council Members.
- Organizing a CUPE 3903 information session for education graduate students in the fall term
- Assisting with the Faculty-Graduate Student Meet & Greet in the fall term
- Attending Faculty-Graduate Student Events
- Maintaining up to date YGSE files to be passed along to the incoming YGSE Co-Chairs.
- Submitting a final report to the YGSE, Education Graduate Program Director, and Graduate Council.

Secretary (1 position)

The secretary is responsible for:

- a) Taking minutes during each YGSE meeting and sending minutes to the executive and associate members
- b) Maintaining the YGSE website and posting to the YGSE social media accounts.

Treasurer (1 position)

The treasurer is responsible:

- a) For submitting the appropriate paperwork to the YUGSA in order to receive our OGF monies (twice a year).
- b) For drafting the YGSE's budget and presenting it to the executive, membership, and YUGSA.
- c) Keeping the YGSE informed of the current budget.
- d) Reporting the details of expenditures and income at each YGSE meeting.
- e) Keeping accurate financial records of all activities of the YGSE.

Community & Professional Development Coordinator (1 position)

The Community & Professional Development Coordinator is responsible for:

- a) Organizing and facilitating social events for the YGSE membership.
- b) Organizing and facilitating professional development events for the YGSE membership.

Chief Returning Officer (1 position)

The Chief Returning Officer may not hold any other executive position with YGSE. They are responsible for:

- a) Organizing the Co-Chair elections in March and any by-elections that occur.
- b) Receiving nominations and verifying eligibility.
- c) Tabulating votes and announcing election results.
- d) Other duties as per Article 7.

Urban Indigenous Cohort (UIC) Representative (1 position)

(The UIC Representative must be enrolled in the Urban Indigenous Education Masters of Education program.)

The Urban Indigenous Cohort Representative is responsible for:

- a) Serving as a liaison between the UIC and the YGSE

Dadaab (Kenya) Cohort Representative (1 position)

(The Dadaab (Kenya) Cohort Representative must be a graduate student in Dadaab enrolled in the Masters of Education program.)

- a) The representative is responsible for attending meetings, consulting with fellow cohort members, and serving as a liaison between the cohort and the YGSE

Graduate Lounge Manager (1 position)

The Graduate Lounge Manager is responsible for:

- a) Regularly checking the Graduate Student Lounge in Winters College and ensuring the space is well stocked with communal items (coffee, tea, sugar, etc.).
- b) Work closely with the Treasurer in order to maintain items.
- c) Reports any issues to the Co-Chairs.

Graduate Conference Coordinator(s) (up to 2 elected positions)

The Graduate Conference Coordinator is responsible for:

- a) Planning and facilitating the Education Graduate Conference.

York University Graduate Student Association (YUGSA) Representative (3 positions)

The YUGSA Representatives are responsible for:

- a) Attending monthly YUGSA meetings.
 - i) Representatives must attend the first YUGSA Meeting & Orientation.
 - ii) Representatives must attend the mandatory anti-oppression training.
 - iii) Representatives must attend at least three meetings during their term as YUGSA representative.
- b) Sharing education graduate student concerns with YUGSA.
- c) Providing a report to YGSE on issues relevant to education graduate students after each YUGSA meeting.
- d) Sharing YUGSA reports with YGSE.

CUPE 3903 Steward (up to 2 elected positions)

(The CUPE 3903 Steward must be a member of Unit 1 of CUPE 3903.)

The CUPE3903 steward is responsible for:

- a) Acting as a liaison between CUPE3903 and education graduate students.
- b) Attending CUPE3903 meetings.

- c) Providing a report to YGSE on issues relevant to education graduate students after each CUPE3903 general and Steward's Council meeting.
- d) Sharing CUPE3903 reports with YGSE.
- e) Other duties as assigned by the Chief Steward of Unit 1, the Steward's Council, and/or the Bargaining Mobilization Committee.

Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Representative (1 position)

The FGS Representative is responsible for:

- a) Attending and participating in monthly FGS meetings.
- b) Voting on motions brought forward at FGS meetings.
- c) Providing a report to YGSE on issues relevant to education graduate students after each FGS meeting.
- d) Sharing FGS reports with YGSE.

Faculty of Education Committee Positions

a) Coordinating and Planning (C&P) Representative (1 position)

The C&P Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending Faculty of Education C&P meetings.
- ii) Bringing issues and concerns from education graduate students to C&P.

The student representative is a voting member of the C&P Committee.

b) Faculty Council Representative (1 position)

The Faculty Council Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending Faculty of Education Faculty Council Meetings

The student representative is a voting member of the Faculty Council

c) Anti-Black Racism Committee

The Anti-Black Racism Committee Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending and participating in faculty Anti-Black Racism Committee meetings.
- ii) Voting on motions brought forward at Anti-Black Racism Committee meetings.
- iii) Providing a report to YGSE on issues relevant to education graduate students after each Anti-Black Racism Committee meetings.
- iv) Sharing Anti-Black Racism Committee reports with YGSE.

d) Committee for Faculty Research, Awards and Grants (CFRAG) Representative (1 position)

The CFRAG Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending Faculty of Education CFRAG Committee meetings

The student representative is a voting member of the CFRAG Committee

e) Admissions Committee Representative (1 position for PhD Student)

The Admissions Committee Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending Faculty of Education Admission Committee meetings

f) Tenure and Promotions (T&P) Committee Representative (1 position for PhD Student)

The T&P Committee Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending Faculty of Education T&P Committee meetings

g) Hiring Committee Representative(s) (1 position)

The Hiring Committee Representative is responsible for:

- i) Attending Faculty of Education Hiring Committee meetings

Article 9: Replacing Officers and Representatives

- a) If a member serving in an elected position other than the Co-Chairs, resigns or is otherwise unable to fill their position the YGSE Council Members will appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of the term.
 - i) A member is deemed “unable to fill their position” through a two thirds approval of a motion to that point by a quorum of voting members at a regularly scheduled or specially called meeting.
 - ii) The replacement must be qualified to hold the position to which they are appointed.
- b) If a Co-Chair resigns or is otherwise unable to fill their term, a by-election will be held following all the guidelines and stipulations for a regular election.
 - i) A Co-Chair is deemed “unable to fill their position” through a two thirds approval of a motion to that point by a quorum of voting members at a regularly scheduled or specially called meeting.
 - ii) The replacement must be qualified to hold the position to which they are appointed.
- c) Replacement members for any position, appointed or elected, will serve only until the end of the original term of that position.
- d) Unfilled positions after the September election may be appointed to interested, qualified individuals by the YGSE Council.
- e) In the event of any vacant position (except Co-Chairs), Co-Chairs have discretionary power to appoint a qualified member as acting position holder until the next meeting or for up to four weeks, whichever is less.

Article 10: Finances

- a) The YGSE’s money will be primarily acquired through funds allocated to the YGSE by YUGSA and the Faculty of Education.
- b) Any expenditures of the YGSE must be in accordance with the YGSE’s annual budget, approved at the first meeting of the YGSE each year by a vote of Council Members.
- c) Only if the YGSE exceeds its budget or needs money for a special event may dues be collected.
 - i) This must be approved by a majority (50% +1) of the membership.
- d) All monies belonging to the YGSE shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for the YGSE.
 - i) All funds must be deposited within 31 days of collection.

- e) The Co-Chairs and Treasurer shall be the signing authorities for YGSE.
- f) The Treasurer shall assume responsibility for creating financial reports, with the approval of Executive Members as necessary and maintaining all financial records.
 - i) These records must be available for examination by any Executive member of the council at any time.
- g) In the event that YGSE folds any remaining funds will be donated to an organization to be determined by the Executive Members by unanimous vote.

Article 11: Ad Hoc Committees

- a) Ad hoc committees may be created at any time by the decision of the Co-Chairs or a majority vote of YGSE Council members.
- b) Appointments to the ad hoc committee will be the responsibility of the executive committee.
- c) Each ad hoc committee must select a contact person so that YGSE members and others can communicate efficiently with that committee.
- d) All ad hoc committees are responsible for maintaining records of their activities and for reporting pertinent information to members at the YGSE meetings.

Article 12: Amendments and Revisions to the Constitution

- a) Amendments must be proposed by Executive Members.
- b) Amendments must be sponsored by at least two members.
- c) Amendments shall be adopted by a 2/3 vote of the officers and associates present at the meeting.

Article 13: By-Laws

- a) By-laws must be proposed by Executive Members.
- b) By-laws must be sponsored by at least 2 members.
- c) By-laws shall be adopted by a majority vote of the officers and associates present at the meeting.
- d) A record of existing by-laws must be maintained either at the end of the constitution or in a document stored in such a way as to make it as accessible as the constitution.

Article 14: Conflict of Interest

- a) A Conflict of Interest exists when a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity exists.
- b) Personal benefit shall include benefits to family or friends of the individual, and not be restricted to financial benefits, but also include intangible benefits.
- c) Should a member find themselves in a conflict of interest they must notify a member of the Executive as soon as they recognize the conflict of interest.
- d) When a conflict of interest may affect the role of any member the Co-Chairs shall call a meeting wherein all details of the conflict of interest are disclosed to members and a vote takes place.
- e) The individual with the alleged conflict of interest may address members regarding the issue.
- f) A vote will then be held to decide

- i) Whether there exists a conflict of interest
- ii) Whether full disclosure is sufficient to alleviate the conflict
- g) If the majority decided that full disclosure is insufficient to alleviate the conflict the Co-chairs shall take any steps necessary to eliminate the conflict of interest.
- h) Failure to declare a conflict of interests shall be grounds for disciplinary action as per Article 15.

Article 15: Procedures Regarding Allegations of Wrongdoing and Disciplinary Action

- a) Any member of YGSE may submit allegations regarding the conduct of any other member in writing to the Secretary.
- b) In the event that the allegation is directed at the Secretary, the allegation shall be submitted to the Co-Chairs instead.
- c) The executive shall then have until the next scheduled YGSE meeting to investigate the allegations.
- d) The finding of the investigation will then be presented to the membership at the above-mentioned meeting.
- e) The accused shall be given an opportunity for defense.
- f) Any decisions will be made through a vote when 3/5 of executive members are present.
- g) In the event of a vote that wrongdoing has occurred the Secretary (or the Co-Chairs in the event that the allegation is directed at the Secretary) shall determine the method of discipline. Options may include censure, suspension, or impeachment.

Article 16: Special Conditions and Emergencies

- a) In cases where adherence to constitutional requirements is made impossible due to unforeseen circumstances, such as strikes or epidemics, the YGSE council will attempt to follow the constitution as closely as possible.
- b) If in-person meetings of YGSE are not possible the meetings will occur as scheduled using alternate means, such as Zoom. In this case the Co-Chairs are responsible for arranging for the service and ensuring contact information (such as Zoom links) are transmitted to all members.

Article 17: Review of Constitution

- a) All elected members of YGSE must be provided with a copy of the constitution 7 days before the first meeting.
- b) The first order of business at the first meeting after the election should be to review the constitution and for each council member to sign a document confirming their understanding.

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