

Constitution of the McGill University Religious Studies Undergraduate Society

Part 1: Establishment

Article 1 – Establishment

1.1 The Society shall be known as McGill University Religious Studies Undergraduate Society (RSUS).

Article 2 – Affiliation

2.1 The RSUS operates under the auspices of the Arts Undergraduate Society of McGill University (AUS) as stipulated in the AUS constitution.

2.2 The RSUS is affiliated with the School of Religious Studies of McGill University (SRS) and includes student representatives to the department.

2.3 The RSUS works with the Theological Undergraduate Students' Association (TUSA) in partnership, not under its auspices nor in affiliation, in order to maintain friendly and open relations.

Article 3 – Membership

3.1 Membership of the RSUS includes all students enrolled in a major, minor, or honours or Bachelors of Theology (B.Th.) program of Religious Studies in the Faculty of Arts (FA) at McGill University. Said students are encouraged to become actively involved in the RSUS.

3.1.1 The RSUS shall be headed by an Executive (as detailed in Article 6). The executive shall be either elected or appointed from the RSUS constituents. (as detailed in Article 10).

3.1.2 The members not on the Executive shall be known as the General Body.

Article 4 – Mandate

The Purpose of the RSUS Executive is:

4.1 To represent the interests of member students of the SRS and at the FA as follows:

4.1.1 Representing the students on the Religious Studies Faculty of Arts Committee.

4.1.2 Acting as liaison between the students and the faculty, receiving, and where considered appropriate by its Executive council, transmitting to faculty suggestions, criticisms, and concerns from students with respect to the Religious Studies programs.

- 4.1.3 Working to ensure that the students are at the centre of program development.
- 4.1.4 Making suggestions to improve programs and to create an overall positive student experience within the SRS.

4.2. To represent member students at the AUS as follows:

- 4.2.1 Disseminating relevant information from the AUS to member students.
- 4.2.2 Informing the AUS about relevant RSUS suggestions, criticisms, concerns, and events.
- 4.2.3 Acting as liaison between the RSUS Executive and the AUS executive as the need arises.

4.3 To actively enhance student life on campus and facilitate a sense of community within the RSUS by organizing events and activities.

Article 5 – Finances

5.1 The RSUS must adhere to the AUS financial laws and by-laws.

- 5.1.1 The RSUS will receive funding from the AUS based on the number of students enrolled in the SRS, according to the AUS financial by-laws.

5.2 The RSUS may undertake fundraising activities, apply for grants or request funds when the need arises.

5.3 The TUSA may, at its own discretion, set a sum of money each academic year to be provided to the RSUS with the purpose of undertaking joint projects, events, fundraisers, or activities in conjunction with the TUSA, including collaboration on organization, finances, and execution.

5.4 The RSUS expenditures are to be decided upon collectively by the Executive and to be handled formally by the Vice President Finance (VP Finance). In the event that there is no VP Finance the responsibility resides with the President to undertake this task or to delegate it.

Part II: Composition

Article 6 – Composition

6.1 The RSUS shall consist of the following bodies:

- 6.1.1 The Executive (as detailed in Article 6.2)
- 6.1.2 the General Body (as detailed in Article 3)

6.2 The Executive shall consist of the following members appointed by members at the end of the school year:

- President
- Vice President Finance (VP Finance)
- Vice President Communication (VP Communication)
- Vice President External (VP External)
- Vice President Internal (VP Internal)
- Vice President Events (VP Events)

6.2.1 The Executive may also include the following appointed member:

- First Year representative (First Year Rep)

Article 7 – Duties of the Executive

7.1 To adhere to the mandate of the RSUS (as detailed in Article 4).

7.2 To encourage involvement in the RSUS by members.

7.3 To appoint one student representative:

7.3.1 To sit on the Religious Studies Faculty of Arts Committee (School of Religious Studies Council) in the event that the VP Internal is unable to fulfill that position.

7.3.2 To sit on the AUS Council in the event that the VP External is unable to fulfill that position.

7.3.3 To sit on the School of Religious Studies Bachelor of Arts (BA) Committee in the event that the VP Internal is unable to fulfill that position.

7.4 To organize events, activities, and disseminate all pertinent information in their Religious Studies classes, other Religious Studies classes and any other classes they deem appropriate.

7.5 The President shall:

7.5.1 Act as primary spokesperson for the RSUS, in accordance with agreed policy, should the need arise.

7.5.2 Be responsible for ensuring that the responsibilities of the Executive are met.

7.5.3 Be responsible for making sure that the Executive functions and operates as a cohesive unit.

7.5.4 Be responsible for organizing meeting dates and times, in consultation with the Executive.

7.5.5 Be responsible to chair meetings, or to delegate the chair.

7.5.6 Assist other Executive members in understanding their duties and in fulfilling them if the need arises.

7.5.7 Consult with the Executive on all matters affecting the RSUS whenever warranted.

7.5.8. Attend Presidential Roundtables (DART Meetings).

7.6 The VP Finance shall:

7.6.1 Be responsible for organizing and maintaining the RSUS's financial affairs.

7.6.2 Be responsible for drafting a budget upon receiving knowledge of available funds from the AUS VP Finance and updating that budget when the need arises.

7.6.3 Be responsible for tracking all RSUS incoming funds and expenditures.

7.6.4 Be responsible for working with the AUS VP Finance on all appropriate matters.

7.6.5 Be responsible for refunding all eligible receipts.

7.6.6 Keep the RSUS Executive informed of its financial situation.

7.6.7 Work with the other Executive members to the best of their ability in order to fulfill the RSUS mandate.

7.7 The VP Communication shall:

7.7.1 Be responsible for advertising all events, activities, and other important RSUS related information in the Birks building (or other buildings as appropriate) and around campus.

7.7.2 Be responsible for utilizing the Religious Studies e-mail listserv for advertising RSUS initiatives.

7.7.3 Prepare and deliver personal invitations to faculty and any other possible esteemed guests for RSUS events.

7.7.4 Prepare and deliver personal 'Thank You' cards when the need arises.

7.7.5 Work with the other Executive members to the best of their ability in order to fulfill the RSUS mandate.

7.7.6 Send out a file of the new Constitution to the Association's membership in the week following a General Assembly should the Constitution have been amended at such a General Assembly.

7.8 The VP External shall:

7.8.1 Act as the RSUS representative to the AUS Council or, if unable to do so, ensure that another executive fills this position.

7.8.2 Represent the RSUS General Body to the AUS Council and voice their questions and concerns.

7.8.3 Work as the liaison between the AUS and the RSUS, relaying and announcing all pertinent information from one body to the other.

7.8.4 Be responsible to fulfill the Arts Councillor committee requirement.

7.8.5 Work as the liaison between the TUSA and the RSUS, relaying and announcing all pertinent information from one body to the other.

7.8.6 Work with the other Executive members to the best of their ability in order to fulfill the RSUS mandate.

7.9 The VP Internal shall:

7.9.1 Ensure that the RSUS has committed to undertake Article 4.3 of the RSUS Constitution.

7.9.2 Work with the other Executive members to the best of their ability in order to fulfill the RSUS mandate.

7.9.3 Act as the student representative to the School of Religious Studies BA Committee or, if unable to do so, ensure that another executive fills this position.

7.9.4 Act as the student representative to the Religious Studies Faculty of Arts Committee (School of Religious Studies Council) or, if unable to do so, ensure that another executive fills this position.

~~7.9.3.1 Representation of B.Th. students at the B.Th. Committee shall be the responsibility of the Theology Undergraduate Students Association (TUSA).~~

7.10 The VP Events shall:

7.10.1 Be responsible for coordinating all RSUS events.

7.10.2 Be responsible for all necessary bookings (Rooms, Tables, Venues and etc.) regarding events.

7.10.3 Be responsible for collaborating with RSUS VP Communication regarding any advertising for all RSUS Events.

7.10.4 Be the liaison for all inter-departmental event collaborations.

7.10.5 Be responsible for organizing at minimum one wine and cheese per semester.

7.11 The First Year Rep shall:

7.11.1 Ensure that RSUS commits to engaging new members.

7.11.2 Foster the relationship between the Executive and new RSUS members.

7.11.3 Ensure that all communications reach new RSUS members.

7.11.4 Work with the other Executive members to the best of their ability in order to fulfill the RSUS mandate.

7.12 The RSUS representative to the AUS must attend all general AUS meetings.

7.13 No member of the Executive may concurrently hold more than one position of the Executive.

7.14 All Executive members must attend all meetings. Two unexplained absences from meetings will result in forfeiture of an Executive member's position.

Part III: Conduct

Article 8 – Governance and Resignations

8.1 The RSUS must adhere to all AUS laws and by-laws regarding resignation.

8.2 Resignation must be written or verbally submitted to the President of the RSUS. The President must then inform the other Executive members within one week.

8.3 A member of the Executive may make a motion requesting the resignation of the member of the Executive. If the motion comes to a vote, the Executive member in question must comply with the outcome of the vote.

8.3.1 Grounds for such a motion are:

- i. failure to adhere to duties and/or failure to comply with the aims outlined in this constitution.
- ii. conducting business in the name of the RSUS without consent.
- iii. conducting business which undermines the integrity of the RSUS or which is in direct conflict with the aims of the RSUS.

8.4 Upon resignation of an Executive member, the RSUS may hold a by-election at the next meeting.

8.4.1 The Executive may deem a by-election unnecessary if the position becomes vacant nearing the end of the school year.

Article 9 – Meetings of the Executive

9.1 Meetings must be held at least once every two weeks.

9.1.1 At least one in every two meetings must be open to members of the General Body, known as General Meetings.

9.1.2 General Meetings must be announced by the VP Communications to the General Body at least one week in advance.

9.2 Meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order. The degree of formality shall be at the discretion of the Chair.

9.2.1 Motions put to votes must have a two-thirds majority to pass.

9.3 All members of the Executive have one vote. General Body members may participate in discussion, but do not have a vote, except in the case of voting to convene General Assemblies at General Meetings.

9.4 Quorum shall be set at the attendance of the President and three other Executive members.

9.4.1 Quorum for General Meetings shall be set at the attendance of at least seven members of the RSUS, with the attendance of the Executive as outlined in Article 9.4 and at least 2% of the General Body.

9.5 Executives of the TUSA have the right to observe meetings of the RSUS in the spirit of open communication and transparency.

9.5.1 TUSA Executives are not eligible to vote on any RSUS motions unless they are full members of the RSUS.

Article 10 – Elections

10.1 The RSUS must adhere to all AUS laws and by-laws regarding Departmental Elections.

10.1.1 In the event in which elections aren't the logical mode of selecting the next year's RSUS members, RSUS must make a formal request in order to hold interviews through the AUS. Applicable reasons for interviews over Departmental Elections include: having a small department, having small voter turnouts in previous elections, not enough money in the budget to justify an election.

10.2 If elections are to take place, they must be held within the last month and a half of the school year.

10.2.1 The position of First Year Rep shall be appointed by the Executive in the Fall of their term following a nomination and interview period. The First Year Rep must be in their first year, U0 or U1 depending on entry level, upon their nomination and will hold the position for the remainder of the academic year.

10.3 All RSUS members are entitled to one vote.

10.4 Advertising for nominations must be posted at least two weeks before the planned election.

10.4.1 Advertising for nominees must begin at least one week before elections.

10.4.2 All nominees must be RSUS members.

10.5 In the event of limited interested in filling executive positions, it becomes the responsibility of the President to ensure that the duties of the vacant office(s) are adequately met. This can be done through conducting an interview period for those interested in vacant positions, or delegating duties to other executive members.

10.5.1 Any member of the executive can, at any time, put forward a motion to hold a by-election for the vacant position.

Article 11 – General Assemblies

11.1 The General Assembly is the highest governing body of the RSUS.

11.2 All members of the RSUS have the right to speak, vote, and amend motions at General Assemblies.

11.3 General Assemblies have all of the powers of a General Meeting of the Association, with further powers to:

11.3.1 Adopt positions on issues relevant to the General Body of the RSUS;

11.3.2 Conduct votes to strike;

11.3.3 Amend the Constitution.

11.4 General Assemblies of the RSUS shall take place at least once per academic year (September to April), with the recommendation of holding a second General Assembly within the same academic year.

11.5 General Assemblies shall be convened by a simple majority vote at a General Meeting of the RSUS or at the discretion of the members of the Executive by a two-thirds majority vote.

11.5.1 The VP Communications shall announce the General Assembly before it is held along with an invitation for the General Body to submit motions.

11.5.2 The VP Communications shall make the preliminary agenda for the General Assembly available in advance to the General Body.

11.6 Quorum shall be set at the attendance of at least 5% of the General Body and five members of the Executive.

11.6.1 Quorum shall be set at the attendance of at least 15% of the General Body and all members of the Executive in order to conduct a vote to go on strike.

11.6.2 Should the General Assembly fail to meet quorum, it shall revert to a General Meeting.

11.7 General Assemblies shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order. The degree of formality shall be set at the discretion of the Chair.

11.7.1 Motions proposed from the floor of General Assemblies must have their addition to the agenda approved by a simple majority of those present.

11.8 At least one General Assembly per year must include:

11.8.1 A report on the finances of the RSUS;

11.8.2 A report on the Executive's plans and progress for the RSUS that year.