

## **Constitution for the First Nations Students Association**

### **Article 1 – Name**

The club's official name will be "The First Nations Students Association" (F.N.S.A.). No other name will be used in the advertisement or representation of the club.

### **Article 2 – Club Mandate**

To provide and promote a sense of community within the University of Western Ontario and the City of London in partnership with the First Nations Services of the University of Western Ontario. The First Nations Students Association will serve the needs of Indigenous students in the specific areas of:

1. Cultural and Traditional Programming and Services
  - a) Special and annual events
  - b) Guest speakers
  - c) Learning circles and teaching lodges
  - d) Public awareness within the campus and the city of London
2. Student Services
  - a) Education and employment opportunities.
  - b) University programs and services, including post-graduate.
  - c) Sharing information within and between the First Nations Student Association and the University of Western Ontario.
  - d) Assist and provide First Nations cultural teachings
  - e) First Nations Students Association will advocate for First Nations students if they, as a member, request support
3. Raising awareness of Aboriginal post-secondary education issues in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.
  - a) To profile the diversity of all First Nations students on campus.

### **Article 3 – Membership**

1. Membership is open to everyone.
2. Only individuals with extensive knowledge of First Nations issues, culture, and people attending the University of Western Ontario are eligible to be elected as executive officers (President, Vice-President Communications, Vice-President Finance, and Cultural Coordinator).
3. Only University of Western Ontario students may hold voting privileges.
4. Association non-voting membership shall be allowed.
5. All members are equally representative of the First Nation Student Association.
6. The majority of voting executive members will be undergraduate students
7. No member, nor any relative of the member, may profit or receive any benefit in any dealings or actions taken on behalf of the club, unless that club member has previously

declared a conflict of interest at a club meeting. The only consideration that will be taken is at the FNESA's annual powwow – which requires the club to give an honorarium to dancers, drummers, emcee, arena director, and veterans involved with this cultural tradition

#### **Article 4 – Executive & Executive Responsibilities**

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following:
  - a) President
  - b) Vice-President Finance
  - c) Vice-President Events
  - d) Vice-President Communications
  - e) Cultural Coordinator
  - f) First Year Representative
  - g) Non-Native Representative
  - h) Member at Large (2)
2. There will be no less than three (3) executive members at any one time.
3. Collectively, the Executive Committee will ensure that the club's activities do not infringe USC's and the University's policies and procedures, and municipal, provincial, and federal laws

#### **Responsibilities of the Executive**

##### President

- Chairs all meetings of Executive Committee and Association members meetings.
- Will have signing authority for the club
- Must have extensive knowledge of Indigenous issues, culture, and people
- Spokesperson to Media
- Will appoint, with the help of the executive a back up spokesperson when and if the President cannot speak with the media.
- Coordinate and liaise with campus and off campus officials
- Will act as liaison with presidents of other organizations regarding formal inquiries.
- Is responsible for fundraising activities for the Association
- Has deciding vote for tied elections.
- Will have voting privileges for all executive motions.
- Will maintain log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement.

##### Vice-President Finance

- Will assume powers of the President in the event of his/her absence
- Will temporarily assume presidential duties until a bi-election occurs
- Must have extensive knowledge of Indigenous issues, culture, and people
- Will be responsible for all financial transactions of the club.
- Will keep accurate records for all financial transactions of the club.
- Will have signing authority for the club.

- Is responsible for fundraising activities for the association.
- Will create fundraising portfolio.
- Will create budget for USC and Association.
- Will have voting privileges for all executive motions.
- Will maintain log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement.
- Is responsible for fundraising activities for the Association

#### Vice-President Events

- Will assist the president in performance of his/her duties.
- Must have extensive knowledge of Indigenous issues, culture, and people
- Will have signing authority of club.
- Will help to create and put forth ideas for events
- Will work with Cultural Coordinator when developing and organizing on and off campus cultural events
- Will work with Cultural Coordinator when organizing seminars for different faculties
- Will work with First Year and Non-Native Representatives when developing their event
- Will have voting privileges
- Will maintain log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement
- Be responsible for submitting event proposals through EventsNet; and,
- Be responsible for adhering to all terms and conditions set forth by the Student Organizations Advisors.

#### Vice-President Communications

- Will look after an attendance book for all activities
- Will possess and guard membership list
- Coordinate and liaise with campus and off campus officials
- Will have signing authority of club.
- Will have voting privileges for all executive motions
- Will book rooms for meetings and events
- Will maintain a log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement
- Will record votes and minutes of all meetings
- Will give notice of all meetings
- Will possess and protect the Executive Code of Conduct
- Will take meeting minutes at executive meetings, minutes being closed to the general membership.
- Will produce and maintain First Nations Student Association website.
- Must submit all material for website to executive committee for approval.
- Will have voting privileges

### Cultural Coordinator

- Must have extensive knowledge of Indigenous issues, culture, and people
- Will develop and organizing on and off campus cultural events.
- Will assist and/or promote cultural enrichment.
- Will have voting privileges for all executive motions.
- Will organize seminars for different faculties.
- Will maintain log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement.

### First Year Representative

- Will represent opinions of first year students.
- Will be responsible for holding one first year event.
- Will have voting privileges.
- Will maintain log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement.

### Non-Native Representative

- A Non-Native Representative will be that of someone who can represent the opinions and voices of non-Indigenous (non-First Nation, Non-Métis, and Non-Inuit) members of the FNSA
- Will represent opinions of Non-Native students.
- Will be responsible for holding one event for Non-Native members
- Will have voting privileges.
- Will maintain log of activities and duties performed throughout appointment for submission to elected official replacement.

### Member at Large (2):

- Will assist executive with executive duties
- Will be appointed or elected by the executive committee following clubs week I.
- Will report to whichever executive member that the Member at Large becomes designated to.
- Will not have voting privileges.

### **Article 5 – Meetings**

1. The Clubs Quorum for meetings shall be twenty (20) percent of the total membership.
2. At least three (3) general meetings shall be held during the academic year.
3. Members shall be informed about meetings at least seven days in advance through email, word of mouth, twitter, and/or facebook
4. There will be an itinerary for each general and executive meeting, which will be submitted one (1) day in advance of executive meetings and three (3) days in advance of general meetings

## **Article 6 –Elections**

1. All elections will abide by the policies set out in the Policy Resolution 4, Part 7.
2. The club's Chief Returning Officer (CRO) administers the club's elections process
3. A nomination period for potential candidates shall be at least one (1) week in length and will be open and available to all members at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled annual general meeting and close (1) day before campaigning begins
4. The clubs election procedures must be made available to all members when the call for nominations is made
5. Voting will be done separately for each executive position when there is a two or more people running for the same position
6. The CRO must initial each ballot prior to distributing the ballots to the membership in order to ensure that all ballots are valid
7. The CRO and the outgoing President are responsible for counting the votes. Where the CRO or President are running for re-election, the membership must appoint a replacement by a simple majority.
8. Each candidate must be permitted to appoint a scrutineer to oversee the counting of the votes
9. No member may act as an election official if he or she has accepted a nomination for an executive position
10. Once the new executive has been elected, the outgoing President must forward a list of the new executive members with their telephone numbers and email addresses to the USC Front Office within three (3) business days of the election taking place
11. President has deciding vote for tied elections.
12. Those running for President and Vice-President Finance are to submit written platforms no later than three days prior to the annual general meeting.
13. The club executive will bring the membership list in order to properly identify voting members.
14. Association will accept and acknowledge proxy votes.
15. Nominations will be cut off a week prior to Annual General Meetings and an All-Candidates Debate will occur the day following the end of nominations.

## **Article 7 – Amendments**

1. Amendments to the constitution must be won by a two-thirds majority vote of current members present.
2. All constitutional amendments must be presented to the membership, in writing, at least two weeks prior to meeting.
3. Amendments to the constitution must be approved by the USC Clubs Policy Committee which must be represented with a typed copy of the proposed amendments as well as typed minutes from the meeting when the amendment was ratified by the members of the Association.
4. Any amendments will not take effect until those amendments have been approved by the clubs policy committee

### **Article 8 – Member Removal**

1. This section must fall in accordance with the member removal provisions of Clubs Policy: General Club procedure (see subsections 2 – 9)
2. Any member of the club may be given notice of removal by the club President, where the member commits an act that is described as grounds for removal in Clubs Operating Policy: Member Removal Policy
3. An emergency executive meeting will be called within two (2) days of notice of removal in order to vote on proceeding with removal.
4. Executive must vote two-thirds in favour of removal
5. The member up for removal shall have the right to defend his/her actions as will the club
6. A two-thirds majority vote of the current members present in favour of removal is required
7. An emergency meeting will be held within one (1) to two (2) weeks in order to seek removal
8. The member will be removed from the club's membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the club
9. An executive will be removed in accordance with this section. Where an executive member has been removed only as an executive member, subsection (8) will not apply.

### **Article 9 – Refund Policy**

1. Any member of the club may apply for a refund within one (1) month of becoming a member, or within one (1) week of the club's first official event, if:
  - a. There has been a misinterpretation of the club's mandate and proposed activities as specified to the member when signing for membership
2. Any member of the club may apply for a refund after one (1) month of becoming a member, or after one (1) week of the clubs first official event for extenuating circumstance, which include:
  - a. Serious organizational issues with the executive members that lead to a lack of communication with the club's members or a lack of programming as promoted to potential members
  - b. Any circumstances that seriously hampers the member's ability to enjoy membership in the club.
3. Where the executive and the members cannot resolve a refund issue within ten (10) days after the club is first notified that the member is seeking a refund, the executive or the member may request assistance from the USC clubs coordinator:
  - a. The clubs coordinator will act as an arbitrator
  - b. The clubs coordinator will meet with a representative from the club and the member to hear each party's position
  - c. The clubs coordinator will make a decision based upon the information. The decision of the clubs coordinator will be final and binding

### **Article 10 – Conflict of Interest**

1. Each club member shall abide by the conflict of interest provision written in the clubs policy: general club procedures

**Article 11 – Agency Clause**

1. The First Nation Students Association of the University of Western Ontario is not an agent of the University Students Council and its views and actions do not represent those of the University Students Council.
2. The First Nations Students Association of the University of Western Ontario and its members are not permitted to sign contract on behalf of the club or the USC.

**Article 12 – External Affiliations**

1. The Club shall disclose any relationship with external organizations, in accordance with the external affiliations provisions of Clubs Policy: Clubs Operating Policy.