



McMaster Science Society Constitution
McMaster University
Faculty of Science

Ratified 1997
Last Revised January 2019

MCMASTER SCIENCE SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

This document contains the Constitution of the McMaster Science Society (MSS), a student-run society made up of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Science at McMaster University. This document is binding on the MSS and supersedes all previous constitutions, bylaws, policies, or related documents.

The McMaster Science Society (MSS) was ratified in the Fall of 1997 to enhance the undergraduate experience of full-time students in the Faculty of Science at McMaster University. The MSS has grown and will continue in a variety of facets to better serve and represent its membership with these initial founding goals in mind.

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ARTICLE 1 — NAME AND DEFINITION

- 1.1. The organization shall be referred to as the McMaster Science Society, abbreviated as MSS.
 - 1.1.1. All instances of this document are binding terms of reference for MSS operations and policies.

ARTICLE 2 — PURPOSE

- 2.1. The purpose of the McMaster Science Society is to enhance the university experience of its General Membership. Such conduct includes:
 - 2.1.1. Planning programming which provides an inclusive, holistic and diverse experience for all MSS General Members;
 - 2.1.2. Communicating matters of importance to University Administration on behalf of the General Membership;
 - 2.1.3. Informing General Members of all relevant issues and events as well as communicating to the McMaster University community at large;
 - 2.1.4. Fostering communication between General Members, Faculty Members, McMaster University, the McMaster Students Union, and other organizations;
 - 2.1.5. Easing their transition into and out of the McMaster University community.

ARTICLE 3 — DEFINITIONS

“Academic Term” shall refer to each four-month term during the Academic Year (September to December, and January to April)

“Academic Year” shall refer to the period of time between September and April of the consecutive year

“Core Executive Member” shall refer to elected positions that retain voting rights

“Ex-Officio Member” shall refer to a student representative at McMaster University who represents the MSS’ General Members

“Executive Member” shall refer to both Core and Peripheral Executive Members presiding on the MSS

“Faculty” shall refer to the Faculty of Science

“General Assembly” shall refer to a meeting of General Members of the MSS

“General Member” shall refer to a student enrolled in the Faculty, who has paid their membership fees in full and meets the conditions listed in Article 4 — Membership

“Notice of Motion” shall refer to the act of informing voting members (either Core Executive or General Members depending on whether it is a Bylaw/Policy or the Constitution) of the proposal or motion to vote on changes to documentation

“Peripheral Executive Member” shall refer to positions on the MSS that are hired by the Core Executive with the exception of Welcome Week Planners

“Student” shall refer to a “a person who is registered in a course of study approved by the Senate”, as described in the McMaster University Act

ARTICLE 4 — MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1. General Membership in the MSS shall be granted to undergraduate students who:
 - 4.1.1. Are enrolled as a full-time student with eighteen (18) or more academic units per Academic Year
 - 4.1.2. Have paid their MSS fees in full
- 4.2. Individuals with General Membership are entitled to voting rights in MSS Elections and at General Assemblies, and are eligible to be elected or appointed to the MSS Executive.

ARTICLE 5 — STRUCTURE OF THE EXECUTIVE

- 5.1. The MSS Executive shall consist of voting and non-voting members. The responsibilities and authorities of all Executive members are outlined in the Executive Duties and Operations Policy. The MSS Executive is

responsible for upholding the constitution, and all bylaws, policies, rules, and duties.

5.2. Voting members, here forth referred to as the Core Executive are elected at large by the MSS General Membership. One-half of voting members will constitute as quorum. The Core Executive consists of the following positions, held by one individual, unless where stated:

5.2.1. President

5.2.2. Vice-President Internal

5.2.3. Vice-President Finance

5.2.4. Vice-President Academic

5.2.5. Vice-President Communications

5.2.6. Vice-President External

5.2.7. Vice-President Student Affairs

5.2.8. Year Representatives (5)

5.2.8.1. Each Year Representative shall represent a different academic year such that academic years one through four are represented. There will be two (2) elected First Year Representatives.

5.3. In the event that an executive meeting has not met quorum, the President reserves a right to force a single decision, without taking it to a vote.

5.3.1. The President can enact this clause one (1) time over the course of the academic year for which they have been elected.

5.3.2. If this clause is enacted, the President must disclose their decision to use the clause as well as the result to the Faculty at large within 24 hours.

5.4. Voting members of the MSS Executive have the right to vote on all official MSS decisions. These include, but are not limited to:

5.4.1. Financial Decisions

5.4.1.1. Finalization of the budget for the next Academic Term

- 5.4.1.2. MSS Sponsorship Opportunities
- 5.4.2. The inclusion or removal of peripheral roles onto the MSS Executive.
- 5.4.3. Recall of Core Executive positions
- 5.4.4. Striking Committees
- 5.4.5. Bylaw or Policy changes
- 5.4.6. Amendment proposals for the MSS Constitution
- 5.5. Non-voting members, here forth referred to as the Peripheral Executive are appointed by the MSS Core Executive through procedures outlined in the Hiring Policy.
 - 5.5.1. The MSS Core Executive may create or remove a periphery position at their discretion. This decision must be approved prior to the periphery hiring period.
 - 5.5.2. Peripheral Executive roles are outlined in the MSS Executive Duties and Operations Policy
- 5.6. Ex-Officio Members of the MSS executive are recognized as other science student representatives at McMaster University. Ex-Officio Members are recognized at MSS Executive and Program Society Meetings, but do not have the right to vote at MSS Executive Meetings. Ex-Officio Members consist of:
 - 5.6.1. President (or designate) of all MSS recognized program societies
 - 5.6.2. Student Representative Assembly (SRA) Science Caucus Members
 - 5.6.3. Undergraduate Student Senator for the Faculty of Science

ARTICLE 6 — ANNUAL ELECTIONS

- 6.1. All members of the MSS Core Executive must be elected no later than March 15, with the exceptions of the First Year Representatives.
 - 6.1.1. The positions for First Year Representatives are to be elected before September 31.

- 6.2. A person can be elected into the MSS Core Executive by a majority vote of the MSS General Members, or by their representing year in the case of Year Representatives. Two (2) percent of eligible electors will constitute quorum for the election.
- 6.3. If only one candidate is running for a position, a vote of no-confidence will be held for the candidate in question.
 - 6.3.1. The candidate must submit a platform for publishing on the MSS website to the Vice-President Internal no later than the polling date for that election cycle.
 - 6.3.1.1. If a platform is not submitted by the polling date of the election cycle, or the candidate does not receive a majority vote of confidence, the position will be become vacant.
- 6.4. If a member declines the position on the MSS Executive:
 - 6.4.1. The vacancy will be filled by the runner up of the position if it is within twenty-one (21) days of the election.
 - 6.4.2. After twenty-one (21) days a vacant position must be filled by a By-Election, held no later than ten (10) days after the vacancy declaration, except for the Presidential position.

ARTICLE 7 — COMMITTEES OF THE MSS

- 7.1. The MSS shall consist of various committees, which work to enhance the General Membership experience at McMaster. The structure and mandate of each committee shall be determined by MSS Executive member responsible, and requires approval by a majority vote of the MSS Core Executive.
- 7.2. Standing Committees of the MSS shall meet regularly to maintain a service or pillar of the MSS.
- 7.3. The MSS Core Executive may strike Ad Hoc Committees to discuss matter, which may fall outside the jurisdiction of the Standing Committees.
 - 7.3.1. Ad Hoc Committees are to be expired at the end of the Academic Year.

7.3.2. The MSS may choose to restrike committees by a majority vote of the Core Executive.

ARTICLE 8 — RECALL AND VACANCIES

- 8.1. Members may be removed from positions on the MSS Executive for reasons that include:
 - 8.1.1. Breach of the MSS Constitution, Bylaw or Policy
 - 8.1.2. Use of the position held in contravention of the legitimate rights and interests of the MSS
- 8.2. A notice of recall of any Core Executive member must be supported by a petition presented to the President containing the support, signature, and student number of:
 - 8.2.1. 30% of the Core Executive members or;
 - 8.2.2. 1% of the General Membership
 - 8.2.3. In the event that the President is being recalled the petition must be presented to the Vice-President Internal
- 8.3. The President shall provide notice to the Core Executive Member being recalled within twelve (12) hours upon acceptance of the petition.
- 8.4. The Core Executive Member being recalled will be provided the opportunity to justify their actions or resign from their position within seventy-two (72) hours of the notice of recall.
- 8.5. The recall must be brought to a vote, where it shall be accepted upon a two-thirds majority vote of the Core Executive, rounded to the nearest whole number. The member being recalled shall not vote or count within the number of Core Executives.
- 8.6. Vacancies created by the recall motion for all positions shall be filled through a By-Election, which must be held no later than thirty (30) days following the initiation of the recall unless the vacancy takes place between July 15th to September 1st.
 - 8.6.1. If there is a vacancy in the President position, the Vice-President Internal shall be responsible for upholding the responsibilities of the

position until a new President is elected. A By-Election will be held following standard election rules and regulations, as outlined in Article 8.6.

8.6.2. Responsibilities of the vacant position shall be distributed accordingly amongst the Core Executive.

8.6.3. Vacancies of any Core Executive position between July 15th and September 1st must be filled by a by-election before September 31st.

8.6.4. Should a current Core Executive member be elected to the President position, standard by-election procedures shall be followed for their vacant Core Executive position.

8.7. Any vacancy of a Core Executive role declared after January 14th will be filled in the upcoming Core Executive election. The responsibilities of the vacant position will be divided among the MSS Executive for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE 9 — GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9.1. At least one (1) General Assembly of the MSS shall be held per Academic Term

9.2. A General Assembly shall be called by:

9.2.1. A majority vote of the MSS Core Executive;

9.2.2. The written request of 1% of the MSS General Membership;

9.2.3. At the call of the MSS President

9.3. The President shall announce the date of a General Assembly a minimum of seven (7) days in advance.

9.4. The agenda for a General Assembly must be publicly available no less than three (3) days prior of the General Assembly.

9.5. Two-percent (2%) of the MSS General Membership shall constitute quorum for the MSS.

9.5.1. Decisions made at a General Assembly shall be binding on the MSS if a majority vote is reached.

- 9.5.2. If quorum is not met all votes are non-binding and will be considered as a recommendation to the MSS.
- 9.6. A General Assembly is not an acceptable method to pass fee changes. Fee changes are only initiated by a referendum (See Article 10).

ARTICLE 10 — REFERENDA

- 10.1. A referendum of the General Membership of the MSS may be called on any matter relevant to the Purpose of the MSS or role of the MSS Executive (See Article 2 and Article 5, respectively).
- 10.2. Fee changes that affect the General Membership may only be approved through referenda.
- 10.4. A referendum can be initiated by:
- 10.4.1. A petition signed by two-percent (2%) of the General Membership delivered to the President and Vice-President Internal;
 - 10.4.2. A resolution vote passed at a General Assembly;
 - 10.4.3. A majority vote of the total members of the Core Executive after being informed of the proposal by the person and/or parties involved.
- 10.5. A minimum of seven-percent (7%) of the General Membership's vote will constitute quorum for the referendum outcome to be binding on the MSS.
- 10.6. Voting on the referendum must take place during an election cycle. Voting will last for the duration of polling, and will take place online to maximize student accessibility.
- 10.7. Electronic ballots must be archived for two (2) years after the referendum.
- 10.8. General Members are permitted to form campaign teams to raise awareness and promote a side of the referendum.

ARTICLE 11 — BYLAWS AND POLICIES

- 11.1. Bylaws and Policies exist as an extension of the Constitution to govern the operations and conduct of the MSS and its Executive members.
- 11.2. Bylaws or Policies may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the Core Executive Members present at a meeting provided that one-half of the Core Executive Members are present at the meeting.
- 11.3. Notice of Motion to alter a Bylaw or Policy must be provided at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance to all members of the Executive.
- 11.4. All interpretations of the Bylaws and Policies must be made in accordance with the Constitution.

ARTICLE 12 — AMENDMENTS

- 12.1. The Constitution may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of the General Membership present at a quorate General Assembly (See Article 9)
 - 12.1.1. In the case of an abstention, it is considered to be a spoilt vote, and will not contribute to the final tally.
 - 12.1.1.1. In the case that abstentions exceed 50% of the total number of votes, the decision reached will be of no confidence, and the amendments will not be incorporated into the Constitution.
- 12.2. An amendment can be proposed if presented by:
 - 12.2.1. A petition of one-percent (1%) of the General Membership
 - 12.2.2. A majority vote of the Core Executive
- 12.3. Notice of Motion to alter the Constitution, along with the proposed amendments, must be presented to the General Membership at least three (3) days prior to a General Assembly