

# [DRAFT] Constitution of the Computer Science Graduate Guild University of Toronto

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## Article I: Name

The organization shall be known as the *Computer Science Graduate Guild (CSGG)* (“the Guild”). Materials and references may still use the Guild’s former (and longer) name *Computer Science Graduate Students’ Benevolent Society (CSGSBS)* and its variants; however, a gradual deprecation is encouraged.

## Article II: Objectives

1. To act as a course union for the graduate students of the [Department of Computer Science \(DCS\)](#) (“the Department”) at the [University of Toronto](#) (“the University”), within the [University of Toronto Graduate Students’ Union \(UTGSU or GSU\)](#) (“the Union”).
2. To improve the working, academic, and social environment of graduate students in the Department.
3. To represent our members in University processes, such as Department committees and union meetings.
4. To inform, discuss, and act upon issues of importance to our members.
5. To coordinate events of interest to our members.

## Article III: Membership

Membership in the Guild is granted to full-time and part-time graduate students in the Department at the University enrolled in the following degree programs, irrespective of campus affiliation or funding status.

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Computer Science
- Master of Science (MSc) in Computer Science
- [Master of Science in Applied Computing \(MScAC\)](#) (all concentrations)

We will herein use the terms *Guild/CSGG member* and *CS graduate student* interchangeably.

## Article IV: Leadership

The governing body of the Guild shall be known as the CSGG Council (“the Council”). It is composed of executive officers and representatives to Department committees as described below.

## Section 1: Executive Officers

*Executive Officers* (“officers”) are members of the Council empowered to represent and pass resolutions to the benefit of all Guild members. Officers shall be familiar with the Constitution, act impartially of their personal interests, and ensure a smooth transition to their successors. Additionally, Officers shall serve as described in [V.2](#).

A duly-elected officer is one who was elected or acclaimed in their own right, as opposed to being appointed in an interim capacity. Unless otherwise stated, offices may be held by only one member, but members may hold multiple offices. Seniority follows in the order listed below.

### 1.1: President

A *President* shall preside over the Council, ensure smooth operation of the Guild, and act as the spokesperson and represent of the Guild to the Department. Duties include,

1. Delegating and overseeing the Council and representatives on Department committees ([IV.2](#));
2. Chairing (or delegating) Council meetings ([V.5](#)).
3. Appointing or staffing members to fill vacant roles where an election would not be appropriate;
4. Collaborating with the Treasurer ([IV.1.3](#)) in managing the financial affairs of the Guild ([V.6](#));
5. Collaborating with Administrators ([IV.1.6](#)) in communicating constitutional/procedural matters;
6. Organizing general meetings and electronic votes; and
7. Delivering a President’s Report to the membership in April, May, or June.

The President shall hold signing authority of financial accounts and expenses. The President may not simultaneously hold either of the offices of Vice-President or Treasurer.

### 1.2: Vice-President

A *Vice-President (VP)* shall assist the President. In the absence (but not vacancy) of the President, the VP shall act in their stead. In case of vacancy of the Presidency, the VP succeeds as in [IV.3.4](#). The VP may not simultaneously hold of the office of President.

### 1.3: Treasurer

The *Treasurer* shall modulate the financial business of the Guild, maintaining long-term financial stability and ensuring reasonable spending. Duties include,

1. Reviewing and approving budget and reimbursement requests from fellow officers and Guild members;
2. Drafting an annual budget ([V.6](#)) based on input from the Council and general membership;
3. Presenting a financial statement (even if brief) to each Council meeting; and
4. Coordinating with the Department and Ambassador ([IV.1.4](#)) regarding funding and grants.

The Treasurer shall hold signing authority of financial accounts and expenses. The Treasurer may not simultaneously hold the office of President.

### 1.4: Ambassador to the Union

An *Ambassador to the Union* shall represent the interests of Guild members before the GSU. Duties include,

1. Attending GSU Council meetings and, if relevant, present Guild members’ issues;
2. When appropriate, soliciting feedback from the membership on the GSU Council’s activities;
3. Advising Guild members concerning GSU activities (e.g. the student health/drug plan); and
4. Carrying out the transfer of operating funds (i.e. the head grant) from the GSU to the Guild.

### **1.5: Workers' Union Delegate**

A *Workers' Union Delegate* shall represent the interests of Guild members before the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3902 (CUPE 3902) and regarding its Unit 1 jobs, including but not limited to teaching assistant, course instructor, and invigilator positions within and beyond the Department. Duties include,

1. Attending CUPE 3902 Steward Council meetings and, if relevant, present Guild members' issues;
2. Reporting to Guild members relevant information and activities of CUPE 3902 and Unit 1 jobs;
3. Advising Guild members in matters concerning Unit 1 jobs, bargaining, the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and grievance processes; and
4. If necessary, mediating with Unit 1 hiring coordinators on behalf of Guild members.
5. If the Delegate is not also the Steward for the Department, they (or their designate) must meet privately with the Steward at least once per academic term.

The Delegate must themselves be a member of CUPE 3902 Unit 1 but not necessarily a Steward.

### **1.6: Systems Administrators**

The Guild's [website](#), [Computer Science Laboratory \(CSLab\) accounts](#), mailing lists and other internet resources (such as [Google Drive](#)) shall be maintained by *Systems Administrators*. Information and communications should be timely and accurate. The number of Administrators is not to exceed two (2).

### **1.7: Social Coordinators**

*Social Coordinators* shall organize social activities, open and advertised to all Guild members. Coordinators may have specialized roles, such as Pubmaster or snack procurement. The Department may collaborate with CSGG to organize some events. The number of Coordinators is not to exceed six (6).

### **1.8: Liaison for Applied Computing Students**

A *Liaison for Applied Computing Students* shall represent the (unique) interests and concerns of Guild members enrolled in the MScAC degree (III). The Liaison must themselves be a member currently enrolled in or graduated from the MScAC degree (e.g. pursuing a PhD after MScAC).

## **Section 2: Representatives to Department Committees**

Where the Department deems appropriate, the Guild maintains student *representatives* to Department committees. These roles are privy to Council meetings but do not receive a vote in procedure. Department committee representatives are nominated by the President or VP and approved by a majority of the Council in a Council meeting or electronic vote. Appointments must be officially communicated to the Department in a timely manner.

### **2.1: Graduate Affairs Committee Representatives**

The Guild is entitled to two permanent seats on the Department's Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC). At least one seat must be held by a PhD or MSc student in the funded cohort. These representatives must report to the Council on a monthly basis.

## **Section 3: Resignation & Dismissal**

### **3.1: Resignation**

An officer or representative may resign their post at any time by notifying the senior-most officer in writing.

### 3.2: Impeachment of Officers

Officers may be impeached and removed from the Council for reasons including,

1. Repeatedly failing to fulfill duties or meet requirements of their post without leave or explanation;
2. Failing to respond to communications within a reasonable time-frame without leave or explanation;
3. Demonstrably acting in bad faith or abusing their office for personal reasons;
4. Serious mistreatment of Guild members; or
5. Otherwise bringing the Guild or Department into disrepute.

Any Guild member may recommend an officer (“the Subject”) for impeachment by notifying another officer in writing. Should one officer second this recommendation, the Council shall hold an inquiry with the Subject. The Council (including the Subject) shall then vote in a Council meeting or electronic vote.

1. If at least two-thirds (66%) of the present Council votes to impeach, the Subject is dismissed from their role and [IV.3.4](#) applies.
2. Otherwise, the acquitted Subject is deemed acquitted and immune from impeachment for 60 days.

### 3.3: Recall of Representatives

Department committee representatives may be recalled by a majority vote (50%) of the Council to refresh or diversify the Guild’s representation. Representatives can also be dismissed by a majority vote (50%) of the Council for any reasons described under [IV.3.2](#).

### 3.4: Vacancies & Succession

Handling vacancies in the offices of President or VP is straightforward:

1. If the office of President is vacant, the duly-elected VP becomes the President.
2. If the office of VP is vacant, the duly-elected President may appoint a VP with consent of Council.
3. If the offices of both the President and VP are vacant, the senior-most duly-elected officer acts as President in the interim and call a by-election for all vacant roles within 15 days.

If any other office is vacant, the President must within 15 days call a by-election according to [V.7](#). In the meantime, the President may choose to appoint an interim officer (who is also eligible for by-election).

1. If the by-election’s nomination period passes and the interim officer for some office is the only nominee, they become duly-elected to that office by acclamation.
2. If some office is without eligible nominees when the nomination period ends or is otherwise left vacant after a by-election, the President may appoint a new officer (considered duly-elected) with consent of the Council. The President may choose to leave the office vacant until the next general election.

## Article V: Operations & Procedures

### Section 1: Communications

Announcements and communications will be made through,

- The graduate students’ mailing list;
- The Department’s Slack workspace ([csuoft-grads.slack.com](https://csuoft-grads.slack.com)); and
- The Guild’s website ([www.cs.toronto.edu/csgsbs](http://www.cs.toronto.edu/csgsbs)) (event pages and major announcements);
- Optionally, the Guild’s Discord server ([discord.gg/qKWCNFvNBF](https://discord.gg/qKWCNFvNBF)).

It is the responsibility of the Council to keep the student body informed through all appropriate media.

### 1.1: Contacting the Officers

The official mailing address for the Guild is [csgsbs@cs.toronto.edu](mailto:csgsbs@cs.toronto.edu). Individual Officers may also be contacted through email, Slack or Discord, whichever is appropriate.

### 1.2: Additional Documents

The following information shall be on the website for members to view at any time.

- The Constitution in its active form.
- A list of current Officers and their positions (voting and non-voting) along with contact information.

## Section 2: Communal Spaces

The Guild shall operate an office in room **BA 2283** in the [Bahen Centre for Information Technology](#).

1. Unless excused by the Council, every Officer must serve at least one hour per week as the Guild's representative in BA 2283. A schedule must be made available on the website ([V.1](#)).
2. All members shall hold access to BA 2283 upon request to the Department.

Secondary communal spaces include the faculty/staff lounge in **BA 5248** and any room reserved for events.

## Section 3: General Membership Meetings

*General Membership Meetings (GMMs)* serve as a medium for comprehensive communications and an open forum for questions and feedback from the general membership. Officer elections and constitutional amendments may also take place in GMMs.

1. There must be at least one general meeting in each of the Fall and Winter terms.
2. The President or VP may call a GMM with at least 7-days notice.
3. No GMM may be held within 15 days of another.
4. Social Coordinators ([IV.1.7](#)) shall assist with organizing GMMs as necessary.

### 3.1: Setting

GMMs may be held in-person (recommended) or online. In the case of a in-person GMM,

1. The Council must, upon request, make the GMM hybrid-accessible through videoconferencing;
2. The GMM must take place between 9:00AM and 9:00PM in an accessible campus setting; and
3. The President, VP, or a Social Coordinator must reserve a space for the GMM.

### 3.2: Quorum

Quorum for general meetings shall be 15 or one-twentieth (5%) (whichever is higher) of current active membership of the Guild (graduate students who are not on leave). No official business may take place until quorum is established.

### 3.3: Agenda

The President or VP (whoever called the GMM) sets the agenda, which must begin with establishing quorum and informing members of the current version of the Constitution.

## Section 4: General Membership Votes

Voting on the budget, elections or any motions may take place during GMMs or via online voting.

1. All relevant materials must be made available to members (V.1) at least 7 days before the end of voting.
2. Online votes must be open for at least 7 days and represent at least one-tenth (10%) of the general membership.
3. Votes during a GMM with quorum established (V.3.2) may take place by show-of-hand or electronic vote.
4. Should a GMM not reach quorum, votes on the agenda shall be moved to online voting within 15 days.
5. Unless otherwise specified, votes are by simple majority (50%).

## Section 5: Council Meetings

The Council shall meet at least once per month to discuss upcoming events and ongoing priorities. The President or their designate (usually the VP) shall set the agenda and *chair* the meeting.

### 5.1: Attendance of General Members

Any Guild member may request to attend the next Council meeting. This request must be reviewed and approved by the chair; if it is to be rejected, the reviewer must provide a reason to the requestor and the Council.

### 5.2: Motions

Any member in attendance may present motions before the Council. Motions are voted on by Officers and are adopted with, unless otherwise specified (e.g. IV.3.2, IV.3.3), a simple majority (50%) (“consent of Council”).

## Section 6: Finances

The fiscal year shall begin in October of the current academic year to September of the next academic year. At the beginning of every academic year (September/October), the Treasurer shall prepare and present a budget to the general membership and be passed as described in V.4.

### 6.1: Spending Limits

By default, the annual spending limit that can be budgeted will be  $C - L - S$ , where,

1.  $C$  is the amount of cash available in all banking accounts;
2.  $L$  is the sum of any outstanding liabilities, including uncashed cheques; and
3.  $S$  is the amount spent in in the previous year.

If the limit is calculated as being less than the projected expenses for the year, the maximum spending that can be budgeted can then be the sum of:

- One-tenth (10%) of the initial funds from all accounts;
- Precisely known sources of incoming for the new year; and
- One and a twentieth (105%) of the previous year’s income from imprecisely known sources for the new year.

## Section 7: Elections

Every March, a general election shall be held at a date determined by the President on the advice of the Council. If required by IV.3.4, further by-elections may be held throughout the year to fill vacant positions. Information, including dates, must be communicated (V.1).

### **7.1: Nominations**

A nomination period of at least 7 days must be held before voting begins. Nominees must either be current members or become members within 45 days of the end of the voting period (e.g. an incoming graduate student). Previously impeached members (IV.3.2) require a majority approval (50%) of the Council to be nominated.

### **7.2: Campaigning**

After nominations, the Council must provide a medium for candidates to address the Guild membership either during a GMM or via email. Although typically unnecessary, the President may optionally hold a campaigning period before voting of no more than 7 days. Candidates may campaign in any “reasonable” manner in accordance with University and Department policies. Gross violations may result in disqualification by a two-thirds (66%) vote of Council.

### **7.3: Elections Voting**

Elections may take place in a GMM or online voting as described in V.4.

1. Ballots and other listings of candidates must be in alphabetical order by surname.
2. For contested positions (involving more than one candidate), voters may select one candidate or spoil their vote (i.e. select “none of the above”).
3. Uncontested positions (involving only one candidate) will come down to a “yes”/“no” vote.
4. Once polls have closed, vote shall be tallied by two current Officers and any volunteer scrutineers. Any candidate must recuse themselves from this process.
5. Results of the election must then be communicated as (V.1) within 7 days.

### **7.4: Transitions**

Members elected in the March election shall assume their office on May 1st. Those elected in a by-election assume their office 7 days after the election or as soon as their predecessor resigns, whichever is earlier. Outgoing Officers may begin the transition and onboarding of their successors immediately.

## **Section 8: Constitutional Amendments**

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by any Member to the Council. If at least half (50%) of the Council endorses the amendment, it may be presented to the general membership. All of V.4 applies, except that amendments must be approved by at least a two-thirds majority (66%).

### **8.1: Cosmetic Changes**

Changes that do not affect the semantics and substance of the Constitution do not require a vote of the general membership (thereby circumventing V.4). The Council may immediately make these amendments.

### **8.2: Version Control**

Changes must be date-stamped and logged through version control ([github.com/csgsbs/constitution](https://github.com/csgsbs/constitution)).

## **Section 9: Liability**

The Guild assumes no liability for (in)direct actions of the Department or individual members of the Guild.