



## CONSTITUTION

Amended: November 20th, 2019

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## PREAMBLE

Students in the Faculty of Arts in Ryerson University came together in the Summer and Fall of 2015 to finalize and plan a society to help connect and bring arts students together in a professional and academic manner. A group of students were able to gain enough support to fully launch a campaign to secure the Ryerson Liberal Arts Society. The Ryerson Liberal Arts Society is a student led group that was formed to promote community within the Faculty of Arts, to create an environment where arts students can thrive in their field of study as well to give them a voice in Ryerson University and the Greater Toronto Area.

## ARTICLE 1: THE SOCIETY

1.1 The association of students enrolled in Faculty of Arts undergraduate programs at Ryerson University shall be called the Ryerson Liberal Arts Society, hereafter referred to as “RLAS”.

1.2 The Board of Governors of Ryerson University shall hereafter be referred to as “Board of Governors”.

1.3 Ryerson University shall hereafter be referred to as the “University”.

1.4 The RLAS Board is all Executive and Directors of RLAS and shall hereafter be referred to individually as “Director” and collectively as “the Board of Directors”.

## ARTICLE 2: MEMBERSHIP

2.1 All students registered in full-time undergraduate programs within the Faculty of Arts as defined by the University shall become members of RLAS, hereafter referred to as the “membership”.

2.2 All members must have paid in full the compulsory membership fee as defined in Article 6.

2.3 Membership terminates upon the graduation, withdrawal, suspension or expulsion of a member from the Faculty of Arts.



## **ARTICLE 3: MANDATE**

3.1 The Mandate of RLAS shall be:

To represent, promote, and enhance the Faculty of Arts and all respective programs and to strive to protect the best interests of its members.

The following subsets of values are meant to compliment the mandate:

I. To encourage activities and events that will enhance the educational, professional, and co-curricular experience to its members and contribute to the educational values of the University;

II. To encourage all members to become active participants in RLAS and University affairs and to afford opportunity and a forum for the expression of opinions upon all questions bearing on or affecting their educational and co-curricular interests;

III. To encourage equity and fairness for all members within the Faculty of Arts, as well as within the University and to ensure all members' right are protected as individuals in their education and co-curricular activities.

## **ARTICLE 4: THE MANAGER, STUDENT RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 The Manager, Student Relations and Development, on behalf of the Board of Governors and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, shall advise RLAS, monitor its publications, supervise its Board of Directors' elections and ensure its financial accountability. The programs of RLAS shall be subject to the approval of the Manager, Student Relations and Development.

4.2 The Manager, Student Relations and Development may view and freeze RLAS funds and resources in situations of gross misconduct by any Director with signing authority over these assets.

## **ARTICLE 5: THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

5.1 Amendments to this Constitution, described in Article 13 are subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

5.2 The Board of Governors may dissolve RLAS following a favourable student referendum on dissolution as described in Article 14.



## **ARTICLE 6: MEMBERSHIP FEES**

6.1 The Board of Governors shall collect on behalf of RLAS the compulsory fee of \$47.49 dollars per academic year, starting from the 2019-2020 academic year, from all eligible members as indicated in Article 2.1. This fee shall then increase every year thereafter based on the Toronto Canadian Price Index (CPI), and change as the government indicates and/or Ryerson University indicates. The fee is not refundable.

### 6.2 Increase in fees

6.2.1 Any increase in fees must be sanctioned by a referendum of the RLAS membership conducted by the University's Election Procedures Committee;

6.2.2 The referendum question must be approved by the Board of Governors. The referendum question and the implications of a favourable referendum must be submitted to the Board of Governors after consultation with the President of the University, or his/her nominee, in order that the Board of Governors may be fully cognizant of the implications of the outcome prior to the referendum being held.

6.2.3 The referendum must be conducted in the fall by November 15 to be applicable for the following academic year commencing in September.

6.2.4 The cost of the referendum shall be borne by RLAS except for the salary and employee related costs of any employee who participates in holding the referendum.

6.2.5 A "favourable referendum" shall mean an affirmative vote by the majority of members voting.

## **ARTICLE 7: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

7.1 There shall be a total of nineteen (19) Directors.

7.1.1 Seven (7) Directors who shall be the Executive Officers of RLAS shall be elected at large by the members of RLAS:

President, Vice-President Corporate Relations, Vice-President Events, Vice-President Finance, Vice-President Marketing, Vice-President Operations, Vice-President Community Relations



7.1.2 Twelve (12) Directors representing each of the Faculty of Arts programs – Arts and Contemporary Studies, Criminology, English, Environmental and Urban Sustainability, Geographic Analysis, History, International Economics and Finance, Languages and Intercultural Relations, Philosophy, Politics and Governance, Psychology, and Sociology – shall be elected by the students in each of the individual programs. These Directors, at the time of the elections must not be in their last year of attendance at the University.

7.1.3 The Board of Directors will fill vacant positions on the Board by, at their discretion, either appointing a new Director from the RLAS membership or by holding an election.

7.1.4 The Manager, Student Relations and Development shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the Board of Directors.

## 7.2 Terms of Office:

7.2.1 The term of office of each elected or appointed Director shall be one (1) year, May 1 to April 30, or may continue until a successor is elected or appointed.

7.2.2 Directors can be elected for a maximum of three (3) subsequent terms.

7.2.3 The term limit for the Manager, Student Relations and Development shall be directly tied to their employment contract with the University.

7.2.4 The eligibility for the President position of RLAS is limited to candidates with at least one (1) year of prior experience on the Board of Directors. In the case that a former Director does not choose to propose candidacy for the position, the President may thereafter be elected from the general membership.

7.2.5 No Executive Officer of RLAS may simultaneously hold an executive position in a Ryerson University student group or course union, affiliated directly with the RLAS; including but not limited to RLAS student groups, course unions under RLAS, the Ryerson Students' Union (RSU) or the Ryerson Residence Council.

7.2.6 All elected Directors shall be students enrolled in a Faculty of Arts program and who have paid the RLAS levy. They are required to have either a clear academic standing, or a conditional academic standing with a cumulative Grade Point Average greater than or equal to 2.0. The academic standing of the Directors shall be reviewed by the Manager, Student Relations and Development, who will inform the Directors that he/she is removed from the position if that Director fails to meet these requirements.



## **ARTICLE 8: IMMUNITY OF THE DIRECTORS**

8.1 Directors shall not be held jointly or individually responsible for actions taken and decisions made in good faith within the scope of their authority. Directors can be held jointly or individually responsible for actions taken and decisions made regarding misappropriation of RLAS financial resources or assets.

8.2 Members of RLAS by virtue of their membership shall automatically waive the right to take legal action against the Board of Directors or any Director as a result of actions and decisions taken by Directors individually or jointly for the benefit and in the best interests of RLAS as defined in Article 3.

## **ARTICLE 9: GENERAL MEETINGS**

9.1 The RLAS Annual General Meeting, hereafter referred to as the “AGM”, shall normally be held during the winter term of the academic year. The Executive Officers of RLAS shall convene it.

9.2 The notice convening the AGM and the agenda of the meeting shall be publicized in the campus media at least two full weeks in advance of the meeting.

9.3 There shall be at least two general meetings each year – the AGM in the winter term and a fall term Semi Annual General Meeting (SAGM).

9.4 The President of RLAS may call other General Meetings as often as the Board of Directors may deem necessary.

9.5 Special general meetings shall be called by the Vice-President Operations on receipt of a written request signed by a minimum of fifty (50) members. The written request shall include a statement setting out the purpose of the special meeting.

## **ARTICLE 10: FINANCES**

10.1 The fiscal year of RLAS shall be from May 1 to April 30.

10.2 The Vice-President Finance with the President shall present an annual financial budget to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and the Board of Directors no later than June 30.



10.3 The Vice-President Finance must give final, written authorization for all financial matters concerning RLAS. All financial matters shall be approved and bear the signature of the Vice-President Finance as well as one of either the President or Manager, Student Relations and Development.

10.4 The Manager, Student Relations and Development must give final, written authorization for all contractual matters concerning RLAS.

10.5 The Manager, Student Relations and Development shall assist the Vice-President Finance to create and meet financial targets and oversee the financial statements of RLAS.

10.6 An annual financial audit must be conducted.

## **ARTICLE 11: ELECTIONS**

11.1 Elections to the Board of Directors shall take place by secret ballot.

11.2 A Chief Returning Officer shall be appointed from outside the membership by the Manager, Student Relations and Development to oversee the conduct of the election of the Board of Directors.

11.3 The election procedure shall coincide with the normal practices of the University as established by the Election Procedures Committee.

## **ARTICLE 12: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

12.1 Amendments which affect the basic constitutional structure of RLAS or change its mandate, membership or relation to the Board of Governors must first be approved by the Board of Governors.

12.2 Amendments to the Constitution or proposed amendments shall normally be approved by the Board of Directors and ratified at the AGM.

12.3 Amendments initiated by the membership must include a written notice of the proposed amendment signed by not less than ten (10) members from each Faculty of Arts program with names and student numbers printed next to their signature. The written notice shall be received by the Vice-President Operations not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the AGM.

12.4 Proposed amendments must be publicized and posted with the agenda of the AGM.



12.5 Amendments shall require an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting at the AGM.

## **ARTICLE 13: DISSOLUTION OF RLAS**

13.1 To dissolve RLAS the following steps shall be followed:

13.1.1 A petition requesting a referendum on the dissolution of RLAS shall be signed by 15% of all students in a Faculty of Arts program within RLAS membership and presented to the RLAS President.

13.1.2 The President shall communicate the request for a referendum on dissolution to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts within ten (10) working days after receiving the petition.

13.1.3 The Dean of the Faculty of Arts shall consult with the President of the University, or his/her nominee, who will communicate the request for a referendum to the Board of Governors.

13.1.4 The Elections Procedures Committee will conduct the referendum. The referendum will be held in the fall or winter semesters.

13.2 A “favourable referendum” shall mean an affirmative vote by two-thirds of the members voting.

13.3 The Dean of the Faculty of Arts shall communicate the results of the referendum to the Faculty of Arts student body and to the President of the University. If the request to dissolve RLAS is successful, the Dean will request that the Board of Governors dissolve RLAS.

## **ARTICLE 14: BY-LAWS**

14.1 RLAS may establish By-Laws for the conduct of its business and may specify how they shall be amended.

14.2 By-Laws are enacted by the Directors and approved by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

14.3 The By-Laws will be consistent with the RLAS Constitution. In the event of disagreement between the two documents the Constitution has primacy.



## **ARTICLE 15: VIOLATIONS**

15.1 Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by any Director against any other Director on any of the following grounds and may result in the impeachment of any Director by motion brought before all Directors:

15.1.1 Gross violation of the RLAS Constitution, By-Laws, platforms, policies, regulations, or Board of Directors decisions.

15.1.2 Behaviour unbecoming of a member; that which brings discredit to RLAS or the University.

15.1.3 Any and all malicious acts as defined by statute.

15.1.4 Repetitive and unexcused absences at scheduled Board meetings or non-performance of duties.

15.1.5 Misappropriation, falsifying or forgery of any monetary record or negligence of RLAS funds and resources.

15.1.6 Other serious actions not in conformance with the best ethical interests of the organization.

15.2 Any Director may be removed from office by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors.

