Mechanical Engineering Graduate Students’ Association

CONSTITUTION FOR THE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING GRADUATE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION (MEGSA) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Revision History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 26, 2014</td>
<td>SRL</td>
<td>Add VP Academic and Volunteer, Replacing vacant positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 26, 2016</td>
<td>RNR</td>
<td>Removing the requirement that MEGSA’s president must be at least a second year graduate student.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 NAME AND PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

1.1 Official Name

The organization to which this document pertains shall be known as the MECHANICAL ENGINEERING GRADUATE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION and hereinafter be known as MEGSA.

MEGSA exists under the student clubs section of the University of Alberta Students' Union Constitution and will also be recognized by the Graduate Students Association at the University of Alberta.

1.2 Mandate

The purpose of MEGSA is to promote an environment for the interaction between mechanical engineering graduate students and with other relevant parties. MEGSA shall engage in activities relating to social, academic, and professional interests. MEGSA will be the graduate student group for the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

The MEGSA has a responsibility to provide the following to its membership:
   i. To organize academic activities with the intention of improving the knowledge and experience of members in the diverse areas of the mechanical engineering.
   ii. To organize recreational and social activities amongst the membership in order to foster comradeship and allow the exchange of ideas in an informal atmosphere.
   iii. To represent the interest of the mechanical engineering graduate students before the Department and external organization such as the Graduate Students Association and the Students' Union.

1.3 Conduct

Unless otherwise stated all rules and regulations will follow Robert's Rules of Order.
1.4 Organization

MEGSA consists of an executive council and a student body. The executive council is made up of at least nine (9) member executive core and up to four (4) members at large. The student body consists of all full members of MEGSA as defined in section 5.5. Note that three executive members may be appointed for the post of VP Events as deemed necessary by executive committee.

1.5 Meetings

i. General Meeting

A general meeting may be called by ten percent (10%) full member of the Society (MEGSA) and shall be considered valid if and only if all of the following conditions are satisfied.

a) Ten percent of the non-executive voting membership must be in attendance.
b) At least five members of the executive must be in attendance.
c) If the Vice-President Administration is not present, a designate must be appointed to call the roll and take the minutes.
d) The general meeting must have been advertised at least one week prior to its occurrence.

ii. Annual General Meeting

The initial general meeting of the MEGSA in each academic year shall be held in November. This meeting shall be extensively advertised no less than one week prior to its occurrence.

iii. Election Meeting

During the month of October of the current academic year, a special general meeting shall be called for the sole purpose of electing the executive officers. At least ten percent (10%) of the total voting membership of the Society must attend this meeting in order for the results of the voting to be considered binding. For details on the election process see sections 6.1 through 6.6.

iv. Executive Meetings

In order for an executive meeting to be considered valid, a quorum of the executive must be present, that is, at least six (6) of the executive members must be present.

v. Minutes

a) Full minutes for every MEGSA meeting, both general and executive, must be taken and made available to the full members of MEGSA in either electronic or printed form no later than one week following the meeting.
b) These minutes must be approved by the next meeting of the body which produced them.
c) An electronic and printed copy of the minutes containing information regarding financial transactions will be made available for the Chair and Financial Officer of the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

vi. Chairmanship

a) Every general and executive meeting will be chaired by the president or, if he or she is absent, by any of other executive members as designated by the president.
b) If the Vice-President Administration is not present, a designate must be appointed to take the minutes.
2 MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Levels of Membership and Eligibility

2.1.i. Full Membership
a) Any mechanical engineering or engineering management graduate student, full or part time, are automatically full members of MEGSA during the academic year in which they are registered at the University of Alberta.
b) The terms “full member” and "voting member" are considered equivalent and may be used interchangeably.

2.1.ii. Associate Membership
a) Staff, academic or non-academic, may obtain associate membership upon their request.
b) Graduate students and staff of other departments of the University of Alberta may be awarded associate membership at the discretion of the executive.

2.2 Privileges

2.2.i. Full Members
a) Each full member of the MEGSA is entitled to the use of the graduate lounge.
b) Each full member of the MEGSA is entitled to attend all general meetings and Society events.
c) Each full member of the MEGSA may vote at a general meeting.
d) Each full member of the MEGSA is entitled to special discounts on certain events organized by the Society.

2.2.ii. Associate Members
a) Each associate member of the MEGSA is entitled to the use of the graduate lounge.
b) Each associate member of the MEGSA is entitled to attend all general meetings and Society events, albeit without voting privileges or other preferential status.

2.3 Membership Dues
MEGSA reserves the right to charge membership dues. Amount of membership fees will be decided by the executive committee at the beginning of each academic year.

Additional fees may be charged for services rendered by MEGSA.

2.4 Membership Duration
MEGSA membership remains as long as the requirements are met. See section 2.1 for membership definition.

2.5 Membership Suspension
A membership may be suspended by the unanimous consent of the core executive. A suspended member cannot rejoin MEGSA until one (1) year has passed since suspension of that member or as determined by the executive.
Any full member who becomes ineligible for full membership at any time during the year will have their full membership status revoked immediately. Such persons will have the option of becoming associate members according to associate membership rules and can regain full membership when eligible.
3 AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

3.1 Presentation of Proposal
A proposal for amendment of the constitution must be formally presented in writing to the executive council. The proposal must be approved by a majority vote of the core executive before being presented to the full members for ratification.

3.2 Full Member Vote on Proposal
The executive council must provide the full members a minimum of seven (7) days public notice of intent to vote on the proposal. A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the full members must cast their vote regarding the proposed amendment of the constitution. Voting is to take place in an anonymous manner.

3.3 Ratification and Adoption
A proposed amendment to the constitution must be ratified by a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the votes plus one to become law. If passed, the amendment will be legally adopted twenty four (24) hours after the close of voting.

4 BYLAWS

4.1 Definition of Bylaws
Bylaws of MEGSA are defined as rulings which are passed by the core executive and which remain in effect until deleted. A bylaw may not contradict any article of the constitution of MEGSA.

4.2 Presentation of Proposal
Any core executive member can make a proposal for establishment or amendment of a bylaw. The proposal must be formally presented in writing at an executive meeting. General members can make a proposal by appealing to the core executive committee.

4.3 Ratification and Adoption

4.3.i. Ratification of the proposed establishment or amendment of a bylaw requires the majority vote of core executive members. If passed, the proposed bylaw must be formally presented in writing at an executive meeting and notification must be given to the student body seven (7) days prior to its adoption.

4.3.ii. An appeal can be made by the student body to the core executive committee for ratification of an existing bylaw or for establishment of a new bylaw. The proposed changes must pass through the vote of executive council core members to take effect. The procedure remains the same as discussed in section 4.3.i above.

4.4 Removal of a Bylaw
Removal or modification of a bylaw is to take place as set out by sections 4.1 to 4.3 for addition of a bylaw.
5 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

5.1 Titles and Jurisdictions

The core executive consists of elected positions with the following titles and jurisdictions:

5.1.i. President:
  - Chairing of general and tenable executive meetings
  - Direct the executive council
  - Oversee the MEGSA finance with the Vice-President Finance
  - Appoint the stand-in for Vice-President External at GSA Council Meetings
  - Attend executive meetings.
  - Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.

5.1.ii. Vice-President Academic Mechanical Engineering (MECE)
  - Affairs with the Department of Mechanical engineering through attendance of committees and meetings such as but not limited to the curriculum committee, department chair selection committee and department council meetings
  - Liaison with the faculty and graduate students
  - Advocate on behalf of the mechanical engineering graduate student body at department meetings
  - Inform the president and assist with the appointment of a stand-in when unable to attend a department meeting.
  - Contact person for mechanical engineering graduate students for any complaints and concerns
  - Works in conjunction with the Vice-President Events as the primary contact in organization of activities involving other persons or groups external to the University of Alberta
  - Attend executive meetings.
  - Report pertinent developments from department meetings to executive council.
  - Organize and chair town hall meeting(s) in order to both receive input from MECE students and to update the student body on important developments arising from department meetings.

5.1.iii. Vice-President Academic Engineering Management (ENGM)
  - Affairs with the Department of Mechanical engineering through attendance of committees and meetings such as but not limited to the curriculum committee, department chair selection committee and department council meetings
  - Liaison with the faculty and graduate students
  - Advocate on behalf of the mechanical engineering graduate student body at department meetings
  - Inform the president and assist with the appointment of a stand-in when unable to attend a department meeting.
• Contact person for engineering management graduate students for any complaints and concerns
• Works in conjunction with the Vice-President Events as the primary contact in organization of activities involving other persons or groups external to the University of Alberta
• Attend executive meetings.
• Report pertinent developments from department meetings to executive council.
• Organize and chair town hall meeting(s) in order to both receive input from ENG M students and to update the student body on important developments arising from department meetings.

5.1.iv. Vice-President External

• Liaison between the GSA and organization external to the department
• Affairs with other University of Alberta departments through attendance of committees and meetings such as but not limited to MEGSA meetings
• Available for attendance of meetings and committees with organizations external to the University of Alberta.
• Works in conjunction with the Vice-President Events as the primary contact in organization of activities involving other persons or groups external to the University of Alberta.
• Attend GSA Council Meetings
• Attend executive meetings.
• Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.
• Advocate on behalf of the student body at GSA meetings
• Inform the president and assist with the appointment of a stand-in when unable to attend a GSA council meeting.
• Report pertinent developments from GSA council meetings to executive council.

5.1.v. Vice-President Events

• Promotion, planning and organization of recreational and social activities
• Will work in conjunction with the Vice-President Student Affairs and the Vice-President External in the contacting of potential presenters and sponsors
• Create and maintain a social calendar to be made available to the student body
• If deemed necessary three VP Events may be elected
• One Vice-President Events will be key holder to the MEGSA storage space
• Attend executive meetings.
• Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.
5.1.vi. **Vice-President Finance / Treasurer**
- Collection and remuneration of monies
- Prepare and maintain a financial statement
- Prepare and present a budget summary at executive meetings on a monthly basis
- Preparation of grant applications
- Attend executive meetings.
- Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.

5.1.vii. **Vice-President Communications**
- Collaborate with Vice-President Administration regarding all MEGSA advertisements and communications with persons external to the executive.
- Coordinate all efforts to update and maintain the MEGSA website
- Integrating mechanical engineering and engineering management graduate students
- Assume the President’s responsibilities if he/she is not available
- Attend executive meetings.
- Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.

5.1.viii. **Vice-President Administration**
- Management of clerical operations
- Keep minutes of all executive meetings
- Maintain the MEGSA email account
- Key holder to the MEGSA storage space
- Collaborate with Vice-President Communications regarding all MEGSA advertisements and communications with persons external to the executive.
- Attend executive meetings.
- Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.

5.1.ix. **Vice-President Volunteers**
- Recruit and coordinate volunteers to assist VP Events in organization and advertisement of Events
- Recruit and coordinate volunteers to assist VP communications with website management
- Responsible for volunteer recognition
- Prepare reference letters for volunteers who have contributed more than 40 hours in service of MEGSA (at the request of the volunteer).
- Attend executive meetings.
- If necessary organize meetings with Volunteers and VP Events and to organize events.
The executive committee also consists of members at large nominated by the executive committee for the help of the organization. The primary duties of the Members at large are:

5.1.x. **Member at Large**
- Helping VP Events for organization and advertisement of Events
- Assisting VP communications with website management
- Attend executive meetings.
- Recruit volunteers to assist with MEGSA events.

The signing authority for MEGSA bank account or for any other authorization shall be given only to the President and Vice-President Finance. The other Vice presidents can be given the authority if deemed appropriate by the executive council.

The executive council consists of the eleven (11) core positions and up to four (4) members at large appointed by the executive as set out in section 5.4.

5.2 **Eligibility for Executive Positions**
The President must be a full member of MEGSA who has held either an elected or appointed position on the MEGSA executive council for at least one prior term as defined in section 5.3. The position is open to all full members if no candidates meeting these criterion are found.

The Vice President Finance must be a full member of MEGSA who has held either an elected or appointed position on the MEGSA executive for at least one prior term as defined in section 5.3. The position is open to all full members if no candidates meeting these criterion are found.

The Vice-President Academic (MECE) must be a full time student and must have completed their first year of a mechanical engineering graduate program in the department.

The Vice-President Academic (ENG) must be a full time student and must have completed their first year of an engineering management graduate program in the department.

The remaining core executive positions must be filled by full members of MEGSA.

Persons holding any of the positions outlined in section 5.1 must be full members throughout their term. Should any person holding such a position become ineligible for full membership at any time, they must resign from that position immediately, lose full membership status and have the option of becoming an associate member. Vacated positions shall be filled as per section 6.6.

5.3 **Terms of the Executive**
The term of the executive shall be one (1) year in duration and shall commence on the month of October of the current year.
5.4 Executive Powers
The executive council is free to manage the affairs of MEGSA as long as they do not violate the constitution or bylaws of MEGSA and the University of Alberta or the Municipal, Provincial, or Federal laws in effect.

The executive council may appoint and dismiss a maximum of four (4) students at large from the general body to provide support for the MEGSA executive and activities.

5.5 Executive Meetings
To ensure accountability, the executive council shall meet biweekly to discuss current and upcoming MEGSA events and issues. These meetings may also be used to suspend memberships, pass bylaws and appoint or dismiss advisors.

When necessary, tenable executive meetings shall be called by the President or by the request of a minimum of three (3) executive members.

Any six (6) core executive members constitute a quorum. A quorum of core executive members must be present to constitute a legitimate executive meeting.

All meetings shall be open to all members of MEGSA.

5.6 Dismissal of Executive Members

At the request of a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the student body, a general meeting may be called for the purpose of dismissing a member of the elected executive council. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the student body to present its complaint and to allow the member in question to defend him or herself. A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the student body must be in attendance as defined in section 6.4, to vote. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the vote plus one must vote in favor of dismissal in order to dismiss the member. The student body shall be given a minimum of seven (7) days public notice of the meeting and its agenda.

At the discretion of the executive council, an executive meeting may be called for the purpose of dismissing a member of the elected executive council. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the executive council to present its complaint and to allow the member in question to defend him or herself. A minimum of five (5) executive council member (not including the member in question) must be in attendance as defined in section 6.4, to vote. A minimum of sixty percent (60%) of the executive must vote in favor of dismissal in order to dismiss the member. Should the executive vote in favor of dismissal the position shall be filled as per section 6.6.

5.7 Remuneration
No member of MEGSA shall receive any remuneration for their services.
6 ELECTIONS

6.1 Notice of Election

The election of core executive officers shall be called by the President. The election is to take place in October. A minimum of twenty-one (21) days public notice must be given to the student body prior to the election.

6.2 Nominations

Nominations for any of the executive positions must be received and kept confidential by the returning officer (an executive member or a full MEGSA member who is not standing for any position) one (1) week prior to the election. Nominations must be accepted either in person or by signed letter and must contain the executive position being sought. If a vacant position exists after the nomination period has closed, nominees will have 24 hours to change the executive position that they are running for. If no candidates meeting eligibility criteria in section 5.2 can be found for either the position of President or Vice President Finance the returning officer must notify the student body 48 hours prior to the end of the nomination period. Eligibility for the applicable position(s) will then open as per section 5.2.

In order for a nomination to be valid the nominee must be a full member of MEGSA. Nominations by either motion or volunteer shall be accepted. If running for the position of President, Vice-President Finance, Vice-President Academic (MECE) or Vice-President Academic (ENGM) the nominee must also meet the guidelines stipulated in section 5.2.

6.3 Voting

A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the student body must be in attendance for the election of executive officers. Voting shall be by secret ballot. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

Executive positions shall be voted for independently in order of precedence as per Article 5, Section 5.1. A returning officer who is not standing for any position shall be appointed by the meeting chairman and the final decision on all voting will be the right of the returning officer.

A scrutinizer for each candidate is allowed, provided the scrutinizer is not the candidate him or herself.

6.4 Attendance

Full members who vote by paper are considered "in attendance" for the election. Full members who vote electronically are considered "in attendance" for the election. Candidates have the right to allow a representative to be present during the counting of ballots. Votes received by email must be received on the day of the election no later than 1 hour prior to the start of the paper vote.
6.5 Result of the Vote

Each elected position on the MEGSA executive will be filled by the nominee who receives the most votes for that position. In the case of a position by acclamation, that position will be filled by the single nominee provided that nominee receives at least fifty percent (50%) of the vote plus 1.

If a position is vacant after an election the core executive can appoint a member of the student body or the responsibilities of the vacant position may be assumed by one or more of the remaining executives.

6.6 Special Circumstances

A tie will be resolved by a by-election between the two candidates. If the by-election is unable to resolve tie, new core executive members will vote on the winner provided the selection is approved by general members.

If any core executive position is vacated during the first half of the term, a by-election must be held within one (1) month; a minimum of fourteen (14) days notice must be given to the student body. Otherwise, the remaining executive have the authority to either appoint another full member of MEGSA (another executive committee member of MEGSA in case of President) to the position till the end of the term or temporarily until the by-election can be held.

On a ballot where there is a position by acclamation, the ballot must, for those positions only, have the choices yes, no, or abstain.

A spoiled ballot occurs if there is more than one candidate marked off for any one position.
7  FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

7.1  Disbursement of Funds

7.1.i. Any disbursement of funds greater than one thousand dollars ($1000) must be approved by motion in general meeting.
7.1.ii. Any disbursement of funds of one thousand dollars ($1000) or less shall be at the discretion of any executive member subject to subsequent approval by an executive meeting.

7.2  Record Keeping

A ledger of financial affairs shall be maintained by the treasurer and made available to the executive committee.

7.3  Audits

7.3.i. The executive shall audit the financial records of the MEGSA at intervals no less than every six months and once after the election meeting and before the beginning of the subsequent academic year.
7.3.ii. Any member may audit the financial records through meeting with the treasurer.

8  DISBANDMENT

i) MEGSA may be disbanded by a unanimous vote of the entire voting membership of the association at a General Meeting.
ii) In the event of disbandment of the MEGSA, all funds shall revert to the Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Alberta.

Amendments to the Constitution

September 26th, 2016
-  Section 5.2 – previously, the president and vice president must be at least second year students. This was changed to allow first year students to run if no second year students nominated themselves.
-  Section 6.2 – Updated to reflect changes in 5.2