

**University Students' Council of the University of Western Ontario**  
**CONSTITUTION OF THE ETHNOCULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICE**

**Effective:** February 24, 2010

**Supersedes:** None

**PREAMBLE**

The Ethnocultural Support Service is a USC Student Service created to facilitate student efforts to address issues related culture or ethnicity that affect the University community. This constitution serves as the Operating Document of The Ethnocultural Support Service.

Documents relevant to this constitution are:

- USC Student Services: Governance Policy;
- USC Student Services: Statement of Standards of Service;
- USC Student Services: Coordinator & Executive Selection Procedure.

These documents may further define terms in this Operating Document.

**1.00 MANDATE**

**1.01 Mission**

- (1) The Ethnocultural Support Service exists to address issues related to culture or ethnicity that limit the educational experience and quality of life of students at the University of Western Ontario, and to enhance multiculturalism on campus.

**1.02 Vision**

- (1) The Ethnocultural Support Service seeks to create a culturally inclusive University community, in which students' unique backgrounds are positively embraced and celebrated, and do not negatively impact their student experience.

**1.03 Strategy**

- (1) The Ethnocultural Support Service:
  - (i) provides an avenue for students to voice concerns, and actively furthers an advocacy agenda built upon the priorities voiced by students;
  - (ii) organizes awareness initiatives that promote knowledge and appreciation of different cultures;
  - (iii) organizes social events that promote the building of community amongst students of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds; and,
  - (iv) facilitates connections to groups and resources within the London community that are not otherwise easily accessible.

#### **1.04 Values**

- (1) The Ethnocultural Support Service supports the expression and celebration of all cultures and ethnicities, and has no affiliation or favoritism towards any one culture or ethnicity.
- (2) The Ethnocultural Support Service values involvement from students of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- (3) The Ethnocultural Support Service recognizes that students' culture or ethnicity may be integrally tied to certain religious or political viewpoints, and that such viewpoints may conflict with those of other students. The educational expression of these viewpoints as they relate to culture is encouraged and supported, but the Ethnocultural Support Service shall not seek to further any one religious or political advocacy agenda over another.
- (4) The Ethnocultural Support Service respects the ability of USC clubs to independently undertake activities aligned with mandate of the Service, and shall not interfere in such activities. The Ethnocultural Support Service shall focus its own attention on issues and initiatives distinct from those of other groups.

#### **2.00 GENERAL STRUCTURE**

The Ethnocultural Support Service consists of a Coordinator, an Executive, Committees, and Committee Members. The following describes the relationship between these elements of the service:

- (1) The Coordinator:
  - (i) leads the overall organization of the Service and provides oversight over the Executive;
  - (ii) is a member of the Executive; and,
  - (iii) acts as the interface between all elements of the Service and the VP Campus Issues;
- (2) The Executive:
  - (i) organizes the day-to-day operations of the Service;
  - (ii) meets at least once per month during the academic year to facilitate communication between different aspects of the Service;
  - (iii) is the highest decision making body of the Service; and,
  - (iv) facilitates Committees of the Service;

- (3) Committees:
- (i) are chaired by an Executive Member of the Service;
  - (ii) contain Committee Members, who are volunteers from within the University community;
  - (iii) facilitate involvement from the University community in the activities of the Service; and,
  - (iv) provide direction to the service Executive in identifying issues and establishing priorities.

### **3.00 EXECUTIVE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- (1) The Coordinator shall:
- (i) focus on the long-term growth and strategic priorities of the Service, including exploring new initiatives and changes to the Ethnocultural Support Service that could better enable the Service to fulfill its mandate;
  - (ii) be responsible for building and maintaining relationships with relevant departments of the University, including Housing and Ancillary Services, the International Student Centre, and Equity and Human Rights Services, as well equivalent departments at the University's Affiliates;
  - (iii) be the official spokesperson for the Ethnocultural Support Service;
  - (iv) be chairperson of the Priorities and Long-Term Planning Committee;
  - (v) be chairperson of the Service Executive;
  - (vi) be chairperson of the Service's General Meetings;
  - (vii) be responsible for the budget management of the Service, while utilizing the Service Executive for consultation on spending priorities;
  - (viii) be responsible for ensuring that Executives fulfill their prescribed responsibilities;
  - (ix) assume all responsibilities of an individual Executive position in the absence of an individual Executive, including any circumstances in which an Executive position is vacant;
  - (x) fulfill all responsibilities associated with being a USC Coordinator;

- (xi) fulfill all responsibilities prescribed in the Service Coordinator provisions of the USC Student Services: Governance Policy;
- (2) The VP Events shall:
- (i) focus on ensuring that Service events held during the year effectively support the mandate of the Ethnocultural Support Service;
  - (ii) pursue opportunities for USC and Affiliate club Participation in social events of the Service;
  - (iii) be available as a resource to USC and Affiliate cultural clubs in the planning of their own events, including identifying opportunities for collaboration with other clubs;
  - (iv) be chairperson of the Event Planning Committee;
  - (v) utilize the Event Planning Committee to plan one major social event in each semester, of which the purpose shall be to celebrate culture, and promote the building of community amongst students of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
  - (vi) utilize the Events Planning Committee to support the VP Awareness in the organization of any events occurring during multicultural awareness week;
- (3) The VP Awareness shall:
- (i) focus on addressing issues relevant to the Service's mandate that are related to misconceptions, stereotypes, or a general lack of understanding, through campaigns, displays, and programming that increase knowledge and awareness within the University community.
  - (ii) be responsible for the organization of a multicultural awareness week, in collaboration with the rest of the Service Executive, the Communications Committee, and the Events Planning Committee;
  - (iii) be chairperson of the Communications Committee;
- (4) The VP Advocacy shall:
- (i) focus on identifying issues related to culture and ethnicity that affect the educational experience and quality of life of University students, and developing an advocacy agenda representative of student interests.
  - (ii) collect and consider input from cultural club executives, Council representatives, and students-at-large;
  - (iii) be a member of the Priorities and Long-Term Planning Committee;

- (5) The VP Community Relations shall:
- (i) focus on developing and maintaining relationships with culturally relevant groups and organizations in the London community;
  - (ii) be knowledgeable about resources and services offered by London community cultural groups and organizations, and be able to assist students looking to connect with community resources;
  - (iii) identify opportunities to make the resources and services offered by London community cultural groups and organizations more easily accessible to students;
  - (iv) be the Ethnocultural Support Service representative on any London community committees on which the Service has a seat;
  - (v) collaborate with staff in the USC's Student Life Department to develop institutional memory for long-term relationships with London Community groups; and,
  - (vi) help facilitate the partnering of USC Clubs with related community groups.
- (6) The First-Year Students Representative shall:
- (i) be a first-year student of the University who is enthusiastic about supporting the mandate of the Service;
  - (ii) contribute a first-year perspective to the decision making and planning of the Executive; and,
  - (iii) support other Executives in the execution of their responsibilities.
- (7) The Website Officer shall:
- (i) be responsible for maintaining an Ethnocultural Support Service website, which explains the purpose of the Service, includes all important Service documents, and supports the marketing of the Service to the University Community;
  - (ii) attend and record meeting minutes of all Executive meetings, and post them to the Service website in a timely fashion.

#### **4.00 EXECUTIVE SELECTION PROCEDURE**

- (1) The Coordinator shall be selected through the Coordinator Selection Procedure described in USC Student Services: Coordinator and Executive Selection Procedures.
- (2) All Executives other than the Coordinator shall be selected through the Interview Selection Procedure described in USC Student Services: Coordinator and Executive Selection Procedures.
  - (i) The slow and deliberate nature of this selection process enables the selection committee to carefully weigh the strengths of each individual seeking an Executive position, and to gauge whether or not the interests of such individuals are compatible with the interests of the Service.
- (3) Notwithstanding the above, the First-Year Students Representative shall not be opened for applications until after the first General Meeting of the academic year.

## **5.00 COMMITTEES**

### **5.01 Priorities and Long-Term Planning Committee**

- (1) The Priorities and Long-Term Planning Committee exists to identify the ideas, issues and interests of students, as they pertain to the mandate of the Ethnocultural Support Service, and to subsequently establish advocacy priorities and long-term planning objectives that are aligned with student interests.
- (2) The Committee shall meet at least once per semester, and at least three times per academic year.
- (3) The chairperson of the Committee shall submit a written report to the Service Executive, subsequent to each meeting, which summarizes the discussions and recommendations of the Committee.
- (4) The membership of the Priorities and Long-Term Planning Committee shall be as follows:
  - (i) the Coordinator, *ex-officio*, chairperson;
  - (ii) the VP Advocacy, *ex-officio*;
  - (iii) any number of Committee Members, who have volunteered to participate.

### **5.02 Event Planning Committee**

- (1) The Event Planning Committee (herein referred to as “EPC”) exists to support the Executive in the planning and execution of Ethnocultural Support Service events.
- (2) The Committee shall meet at least twice per semester.

- (3) The chairperson of the committee shall regularly report to the Executive on the progress of event planning.
- (4) The membership of EPC shall be as follows:
  - (i) the VP Events, *ex-officio*, chairperson;
  - (ii) the VP Awareness, *ex-officio*; and,
  - (iii) any number of Committee Members, who have volunteered to participate.

### **5.03 Communications Committee**

- (1) The Communications Committee exists to:
  - a. support the Executive in the planning of awareness campaigns,
  - b. assist in the promotion of Service events; and,
  - c. assist and offer feedback in the design of promotional materials.
- (2) The Committee shall meet at least twice per semester.
- (3) The chairperson of the Committee shall regularly report to the Executive on the activities of the Committee.
- (5) The membership of Communications Committee shall be as follows:
  - (i) the VP Awareness, *ex-officio*, chairperson;
  - (ii) the Website Officer, *ex-officio*; and,
  - (iii) any number of Committee Members, who have volunteered to participate.

### **6.00 GENERAL MEETINGS**

- (1) General Meetings (GMs) serve to introduce members of the University Community to the Service, invite involvement, and facilitate feedback.
- (2) All GMs will be advertised as an open invitation to all members of the University Community.
- (3) GMs shall be chaired by the Coordinator.
- (4) The following are the minimum GMs that will occur during the year:
  - (i) A GM subsequent to Clubs Week in September, for which the primary purpose is to introduce the Executive of the Service, encourage

involvement in Service Committees, and recruit applicants for the First-Year Representative Executive position.

- (ii) A GM in January, which, at minimum, shall provide an additional opportunity for members of the University Community to become familiar with the Service, as well as provide an opportunity for feedback on the progress of the Service to-date.
- (iii) A GM in late-March or early-April, which, at minimum, shall provide an opportunity for people applying for executive positions to introduce themselves to the membership, and an opportunity for members of the University Community to provide feedback on the progress and direction of the Service;

## **7.00 STANDARDS OF SERVICE**

The Ethnocultural Support Service is committed to maintaining a high level of service provision every year. The following are fundamental standards of service that will be upheld. These supplement the standards listed in USC Student Services: Governance Policy, which are applicable to all Services.

- (1) The Ethnocultural Support Service shall:
  - (i) host at least one major social event in each semester, the purpose of which shall be to celebrate culture, and promote the building of community amongst students of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
  - (ii) organize a multicultural awareness week during the academic year;
  - (iii) actively seek and support the involvement of cultural clubs in Ethnocultural Support Service events and programming; and,
  - (iv) actively seek to build and maintain relationships with prominent cultural groups in the London community.