

Constitution of the “MIDDLE EASTERN STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION” (MESA)
2024/2025

Article 1: Name & Objectives

Section A

- The official name of this association is: Middle Eastern Students’ Association or commonly referred to as “MESA”.

Section B

Middle Eastern Student’s Association exists to perform the following functions:

- To represent and promote the interests of the Middle Eastern student body and community at York University.
- To serve and assist as an umbrella association for the many clubs of Middle Eastern origin or who relate and represent the Middle East in any way.
- To service, mediate and offer a platform for all various Middle Easterners to express themselves, unite, and engage amongst each other freely.
- Offer a social platform for all student clubs related to the diverse region of the Middle East.
- To build a Middle Eastern Community that extends beyond campus borders and which engages the greater Canadian population.
- To empower, encourage and engage Middle Eastern students by providing them with social, political and economic opportunities at York University and within the larger community.
- To speak on behalf of the Middle Eastern student population, representing a distinctly diverse yet unified community, whenever required.
- To recognize an existent Single Palestinian Nation. Their cultural contributions will also be included within the representation objectives of MESA.
- To maintain the right to uphold its values and beliefs so long as these values and beliefs do not invoke any harm to any other member within the group or community. MESA maintains the right to express such beliefs or opinions regarding a range of subjects including politics, religion, foreign policy, national legitimacy, and domestic values. MESA reserves the right to always defend its belief defined by its board of directors or the majority consensus of the general body. If its beliefs, values, principles or ideals are the subject of negative criticism, MESA holds the right to respond through intellectual measures such as discussion forums, rallies, guest speakers, and various initiatives, which promote education and awareness. This is not merely a right but an obligation to defend itself, pending the obligations of this organization to its members and their united Middle Eastern values and principals.

Section C

- The countries that MESA represents are subject to change every year. This process is done via means of voting by the executive committee prior to the beginning of the new academic year. The current list of countries represented for the 2023/2024 year are as follows:
Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco,

Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Armenia.

Article 2. Membership and Volunteers

- Official Membership of MESA shall consist of a General Membership that is open to any member of the York community (student, staff, and faculty). The General Body shall consist of all York, Schulich, Seneca, and Glendon students, regardless of nationality and shall enjoy all services and privileges provided by the Middle Eastern Students Association unless otherwise voted on by the current executive team.
- No membership fee is required for general members.

Article 3. Meetings

- For MESA executives, a notice must be sent out to the team of the time, place and date of the meeting. They must be notified 24 hours prior to the meeting date.
- Meeting minutes must be taken at all meetings and shared with the executives within 48 hours of the meeting's close.
- All voting decisions held during a MESA meeting shall be passed/decided by majority vote.
- Failure to attend more than 3 meetings will be subject to a collective group vote on whether or not the individual can stay as an executive based on the individual's work ethic and commitment, unless they've had valid reasons for their absences.
- If a MESA executive commits an **extensive** act against the rules such as (caught with illegal substances in the office, or getting into a fight at an event or at the office etc.), a team meeting will immediately take place and will subject to a collective group vote on whether or not the individual can stay as an executive. Unless the situation caused too much damage, then the executive shall immediately get kicked off the team.

Article 4. Events

- It's recommended that MESA holds a minimum of five events per school year. One should be **social**, one should be **cultural**, and one should be **charitable**. It is also recommended that one should also be **educational**.

Article 5. Rules of conduct – MESA Executive Team roles and responsibilities

President:

- Act as the official representative of MESA at all occasions
- Minimum 1 year of MESA club experience
- Provide leadership and guidance to the executives and MESA general body
- Responsible for ensuring that the executive committee carries out their respective duties
- Chair each executive and general meeting
- Act on his/her own authority only if an Executive or General meeting cannot be called subject section. This may include making emergency decisions such as delegating duties and/or special powers to an Executive member when necessary.
- Has the authority to kick a Mesa executive from the team if deemed necessary

- Shall be responsible for all external affairs of the Middle Eastern Students' Association.
- Shall be the primary signing authority
- Act as a liaison between MESA and the community. This includes on-campus groups, as well as off-campus
- Organizing meetings to work with other student clubs

Vice President External:

- Works alongside and reports to the President respectively
- Minimum 1 year of MESA club experience
- Be one of the two signing officers for MESA bank transactions
- Be responsible for all financial affairs of MESA, including the maintenance and security of the financial records
- Maintain a maximum amount of \$20 in petty cash, reimbursing only when proof of purchase is provided
- Work with the president on financial reports following every major event
- Follows up and closely works with the Director of Marketing
- Follows up and closely works with the Director of Sponsorship & Fundraising
- In charge of reaching out to other clubs
 - Responsible for booking tables, rooms, etc. for events and meetings.

Vice President Internal:

- Report to the president respectively
- Preferred to have minimum 1 year of MESA club experience
- Responsible for all internal affairs of Mesa
- Responsible for ensuring all the required paperwork of the organization is under order, and will keep all the records of the organization field in order and store them in place easily accessible by all executives
- Follows up with Director of communications
- Holds one on ones with executive team members
- In charge of creating tabling schedules for executive team members when required
 - Has control over Mesa email operations
 - Helps with content creation for MESA's social media and works with the director of marketing

Vice President of Events: 1 position

- Report to the President respectively
- Responsible for coming up with event ideas
- Prepare, organize and facilitate the execution of multicultural week
- Prepare, organize and facilitate the execution of the annual Gala
- Assist and oversee the Directors of Events, and the Directors of Sponsorships with their respective tasks
- Consistently maintain the MESA image through dress, song and scenery
- Plan, create, and implement themes and decor for events

- Responsible for creating detailed expense reports for pre-funding applications

Director of Communications:

- Report to the President respectively
- Responsible for recruitment and maintenance of general membership
- Has access to Mesa email and follows up with all the emails sent
- Responsible for club newsletters and mass emails
- Prepare an agenda for all meetings
- Provide executives with meeting minutes after every meeting

Director of Marketing:

- Report to the President respectively
- Handle all event promotions, including putting up posters, tabling setup, etc.
- Responsible for maintaining MESA YuConnect page
- Create event posters/promotions
- Must have computer and editing skills.
- Responsible for MESA social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and TikTok)
- Responsible for creating interactive posts when required and being extremely active on social media

Director of Sponsorship & Fundraising: 2 positions

- Report to the President respectively
- Responsible for finding potential MESA sponsors for events throughout the year (food &/or money)
- Responsible for contacting caterers for all events
- Reaching out to organizations for donations towards our club
- Coming up with fundraiser ideas and implementing them

Director of Events: 2 positions

- Report to the President respectively
- Responsible for coming up with event ideas
- Prepare, organize and facilitate the execution of multicultural week
- Consistently maintain the MESA image through dress, song and scenery
- Plan, create, and implement themes and decor for events
- Responsible for creating detailed expense reports for pre-funding applications

Dance Director:

- Report to the President respectively
- Must have dance background
- Dabke, belly dancing, hip hop (modern) are some essentials
- Will be responsible for dance choreographies and training when required
- Aids in recruiting dance volunteers

First year Rep (3):

- Reports to the President respectively
- Holds office hours
- Promotes the club through different means (social media, class, in person)
- Assist in other club operations
- Required to focus on MCW operations
- Will be responsible to host an event for the second semester

Second year Rep: 2 positions

- Reports to the President respectively
- Holds office hours
- Promotes the club through different means (social media, class, in person)
- Assist in other club operations
- Required to focus on MCW operations
- Will be responsible to host an event for the second semester

Chief Returning Officer:

- a. Obtaining a voters list from the York University Administration to verify a voter's identity and if they're a part of York U.
- b. Prepare and maintain the voter registration database.
- c. Organize and run the All Candidates Meeting(s).
- d. Prepare the CRO's report to be presented to the Board of Directors for ratification.
- e. Adjudicate and provide rulings on complaints filed by candidates during the electoral process.
- f. The Middle Eastern Students' Association will hold annual elections for all executive positions in May 2023. The election process will occur in May of 2023 and positions shall be held from September 2023 to April 2024.
- g. Notice of elections will be communicated via email.
- h. The CRO shall preside over the election and shall count all of the votes received.
- i. Anyone may vote who is a:
 - a. York University student

Mesa Alumni Advisor: 2 positions

- Report to the President respectively
- Minimum 1 year of MESA club experience
- Required to focus on MCW operations
- Will be responsible to overlook the events that the first and 2nd-year reps plan

Article 6. Executive Code of Conduct

i. To be available, committed, punctual, sincere, and determined on a daily basis to act as an official spokesperson/representative of MESA.

- No racial slurs, acts of aggression, intimidation, coercion, outburst of attitude and disrespect, non-compliance, and failure to adhere to the requests of the President respectively, will not be tolerated and the individual who has committed one or more of these acts is subject to a verbal/written warning. In the event of a second incident by the same individual, they are subject to removal from the MESA board of directors, and all rights and privileges enjoyed by an Executive are immediately terminated.
- If any form of sexual violence occurs (sexual assault/harassment) whether it is by a member or an executive they are immediately terminated and are not allowed to come to any of our events OR become an executive for up to 5+ years.
- Any executive who brings illegal substances or engages in illegal activities in any way while being a representative of MESA will be terminated effective immediately without a chance for appeal. That executive will be banned from all MESA events, meetings, and is forbidden from running for an executive position for a period of up to five years. The senior executive committee through majority voting decides upon the banishment period.
- No MESA executive shall discuss, relay, or release any information about MESA and its dealings to the general public, family, or friends without the express consent of MESA as a whole. Any executive who does so will be given a verbal/written warning and relative to the severity of the act can be terminated on the spot. The executive in this instance is granted an appeal to plead their case to the MESA executive team.
- To ensure all assigned tasks and duties listed in the applicable job description are thoroughly completed in a timely fashion, through means of delegations or personal assignment.
- As an executive it is a required obligation that one keeps the board consistently updated on everything pertaining to MESA.
- All MESA Executives have the right to kick any member/visitor from the office if they are not abiding by the rules.
- An executive **must** be present if a member/visitor is in the office. If the last executive leaves the office, no member/visitor must be present, and the door must be closed.
- All Executives must make an effort to attend every meeting, event, and assigned tabling session and office hours.
- It is to be understood that Executives that fail to attend meetings, events, office hours, tabling sessions and lack commitment and enthusiasm will be subject to a strike. If an executive reaches three strikes, they shall be removed from the team.
- It is the Executives responsibility that this constitution is consistently maintained, respected, and implemented in all MESA affairs and that it be made publicly available to any MESA member or affiliate club member who requests seeing it.
- An executive that has been kicked out of the team, cannot apply to become a MESA executive again.
 - All the previous executives must train the upcoming executives regarding their duties and what is expected of them

Article 6.1: Complaint process:

- If there is a complaint against the organization, the organization will adhere to

those complaints and if the problem isn't solved we will then bring up the issue to SCLD in order to find a solution.

- if there is a complaint against the organization's members, then the President and the VP's (so long as it is not them whom the complaint is about) will investigate the problem by speaking to both the individual who is making the complaint as well as the members (ask questions, get both sides of the story) and find a solution that is fair for both parties.
- Complaints can be emailed to the club email (mesayorku@gmail.com), and members will receive a response as quick as 24 hours. This response will acknowledge that we have received the complaint, and that a decision will be made no later than 14 days after the complaint has been received.
- The President and Vice Presidents (Internal and External) will set up a meeting as soon as the complaint is received, investigate the situation, and provide a decision.
- The Board (President, VP Internal, VP External) will look at all evidence presented, and will take the necessary actions towards resolving the complaint fairly and respectfully.
- Once the board has taken all necessary actions, the member that submitted the complaint will be notified about the decision by email.
- In the case that there is a complaint against the President or the Vice-Presidents, proof has to first be acquired in order for the executive team to present their case for impeachment. The president/Vice-President must also present their case before any final decision is to be taken.

Article 7. Elections

i. A C.R.O (Chief Returning Officer), is responsible for certifying nominees, distributing ballots, counting ballots, certifying results, setting annual election ground rules, advertising the election and doing whatever else is required to ensure a democratic and fair election.

- Nominations will be accepted at the final MESA meeting before the general election meeting.
- In order to be qualified to vote for a person/s running for a position, the voter **must** be a registered MESA member who can only vote using their York email address. The voting had to be done by York students ONLY and it was **mandatory** for the voters to use their York email addresses.
- All members are permitted to run for a position at MESA.

ARTICLE 8. Conflict of Interest

1. No Member is entitled to vote upon or debate any question in which that Member has a conflict of interest, and the vote of any Member so interested shall be disallowed or annulled by the Speaker or Members present at a duly constituted meeting.

2. A conflict of interest is also created whenever a Member is voting on a matter affecting someone with whom the Member is related to by blood and/or if an executive is dating a member who's voting.

3. The Director of communications shall note in the minutes the circumstances of any alleged conflict of interest, as well as the decision and reasons, if any, given by the Speaker as to whether or not a conflict of interest exists.

4. A Member shall not use information that is gained in the execution of the Member's office, and which is not available to the general public, to further or seek to further the Member's private interest. [Adapted from Members' Conflict of Interest Act, 1988, s. 3] 5. A Member shall not use his/her office to seek to influence a decision made by another person to further the Member's private interest. [Adapted from Members' Conflict of Interest Act, 1988, s. 4]

6. Where a Member accepts a fee, gift, or personal benefit that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of the Member's duties of office, the Member shall, at the next meeting, disclose this information, and indicate the nature of the fee, gift or benefit, its source, and the circumstances under which it was given and accepted. [Adapted from the Members' Conflict of Interest Act, 1988, s. 15(1)]

7. A Member who has reasonable and probable grounds to believe another Member is in contravention of this Article may, by application in writing setting out the grounds for the belief and the nature of the contravention alleged, request that the Speaker give an opinion respecting the compliance of the other Member with the provisions of this Article. [Adapted from Members' Conflict of Interest Act, 1988, s. 15(1)]

ARTICLE 8. Procedure REGARDING ALLEGATIONS OF WRONGDOING and DISCIPLINARY ACTION

i. Any allegations of wrongdoing are only allegations until proof is acquired. The accuser must present their respective case to the executive committee substantiated by evidence. No decision will be taken on the matter until the defendant has had the opportunity to respond to the accusations being laid against them.

ii. If there were any allegations of wrongdoing against the president, proof has to first be acquired in order for the executive team to present their case for impeachment. The president must also present their case before any final decision is to be taken.

iii. Disciplinary Actions process:

a. The first step of this process is to give the accused executive member a verbal warning. The member will receive verbal warnings in private. The exact nature of what took place and why it is in violation of policy, or how it falls short of performance expectations, should be explained, along with corrective actions.

b. The second step of this process is to give the member a formal written warning. In this step, the president should use a write-up form to describe the incident and corrective actions. The member should read the form and sign that they received it.

- c. The third step is to have a formal disciplinary meeting. In this step the member, President and vice presidents meet to discuss the problem. The problem is investigated. The member is informed that after this point punitive action may take place, up to, and including termination.
- d. The fourth step is suspension. In this step, the member may receive penalties, such as a loss of certain privileges, suspension from some or all duties, a demotion, or other appropriate penalties.
- e. The final step is termination. In this step, the member is fired for continued violations.

ARTICLE 10. Ratification

- The Middle Eastern Student association is ratified by both the SCLD and the YFS at York University.

ARTICLE 11. Interpretation

- The Constitution and all subsidiary regulations shall be interpreted, in the first instance, by the President, subject to an appeal to Council.

ARTICLE 12. Quorum

- At least 50% of the Middle Eastern student association club executives need to be present for the meeting to be considered an official meeting.

ARTICLE 13. Club Folds

- In case the Middle Eastern club folds, any money in the clubs' bank account will be donated to a charity chosen by the executives of the club.

ARTICLE 14. Amendment Clause

A. By-laws

1. *By-laws must be created by the **President, VP of External Affairs, and VP of Internal Affairs***
2. *By-laws must be introduced within **one week** of its proposal.*
3. *By-laws must be sponsored by at least **80% of the signing officers***

4. By-laws shall be adopted by a **60%** vote of the voting body.

B. Amendments

1. Amendments must be created by the **President, VP of External Affairs, and VP of Internal Affairs**

2. Amendments must be introduced within **one week** of its proposal.

3. Amendments must be sponsored by at least **80% of the signing officers**

4. Amendments shall be adopted by a **60%** vote of the voting body.