



THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA'S ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION



University of Guyana Constitution for Its Guild of Graduates (Alumni Associations)¹

1. Name: The parent organization is to be known as The University of Guyana Alumni Association with the names of Chapters being added to the specific Chapter. This name shall be used in all future constitutions, correspondence or other material, or references thereto. The Association shall be referred to in this Constitution as the “Alumni Association” and its branches will be referred to a “Chapters” and The University of Guyana shall be referred to as “the University”.

2. Goal of The Association:

To connect graduates and past faculty and staff of The University in Guyana in a reciprocally beneficial relationship of investing, nurturing, fundraising, mentorship and development.

3. Definitions:

Member Shall mean any person registered with the Chapter.

The University of Guyana Alumni Association (Name of Chapter) unless otherwise stated shall mean the Executive and all members.

The University of Guyana Alumni Chapter (Name) shall mean a branch of the University of Guyana Alumni Association.

The Executive All members who are duly elected at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to serve as officers of the Association.

An Ordinary member shall be a graduate or former staff member of the University of Guyana

A member in good standing shall mean that a financial member of the Chapter who is not in breach of any of the provisions of this Constitution, or not facing any disciplinary action.

Financial Member Is a member who has paid his/her dues or fees in accordance with this Constitution and is not in arrears except as provided for by this Constitution.

¹ While several other documents have been consulted, this draft is heavily based on and influenced by The University of The West Indies Alumni Association Constitution and, The Trent University and The Harvard University Alumni Associations. We are grateful for their guidance and sharing.

Life Member Shall mean any person registered with the Chapter who shall have paid dues for lifetime membership with the Chapter at a rate to be determined from time to time by the Executive (or ten times that of an Ordinary Member).

Annual Member Shall mean any person registered with the Chapter who shall be required to pay dues on an annual basis at a rate to be determined from time to time by the Executive.

4. Objectives: The objectives of the Chapter shall be to:

- a) Support the developmental efforts of The University of Guyana
- b) Serve as supporters to fund raising, talent acquisition, research as well as recruitment of staff and faculty;
- c) Promote the University of Guyana as an intellectual and cultural center for excellence locally regionally and internationally;
- d) Engender the and propagate the values of The University and Guyana in the wider Guyanese society, regionally and internationally;
- e) Provide opportunities for continued intellectual engagement, educational, training and recreational opportunities;
- f) Provide mechanisms and opportunities for connecting, fellowship and sharing, networking, and professional growth;
- g) To stimulate and encourage philanthropy and investment in UG, its faculty and students amongst alumni, students as prospective alumni, businesses and organizations benefitting from UG's human resource as well as all others;
- h) Lend guidance on matters pertaining to the general the welfare of the University or which may be of interest to the Administration, Academic Board and Council.

5. Membership

Membership shall be of four types: Ordinary (Annual), Associate, Honorary and Life.

- a. **Ordinary (Annual) Membership:** Any person who has been awarded a degree, licentiate, diploma or certificate in any Faculty of The University of Guyana. This category is the only one eligible for nomination to Executive positions and has full voting rights. Ordinary members may have life or annual membership.
- b. **Associate Membership:**
 - i. Any person who has been admitted as a student of the University or of the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE), or any other legal University of Guyana Institute for a period of one academic year , even if they had not completed the programme to which they would have been admitted, provided that the Council may deny Associate Membership under this clause to a person, taking into all circumstances of the case.
 - iii. Associate members may have life or annual membership.
 - iv. Associate members shall not have the right to hold any executive office but may be granted voting rights at the discretion of the Chapter of which they are a member.
- c. **Honorary Membership:**
 - i. Any person who holds an Honorary Degree from the University provided that the Council may deny Honorary Membership to a person qualified under this clause as per the acts and statutes of The University.

- ii. Any friend or significant benefactor to The University who in the opinion of 50% of the financial members of the Chapter present at a general meeting has made or can make a significant contribution to the objectives of the Chapter;
- iii. Honorary Members shall not at any time exceed twenty percent of the Ordinary Membership of the Chapter.
- iv. Honorary Members shall neither pay entrance fees nor annual subscriptions and may attend meetings but may not vote.

d. Group Membership:

- i. Any Group or Association comprising members who qualify under 4 (a) – (c) above shall be entitled to membership in the Chapter on presentation of its certificate of registration or other evidence deemed satisfactory by the Chapter.
- ii. Alumni may form affiliated groups or organizations on the bases of graduating class, disciplines, geographic area or other common characteristics. Such groups may only be represented on the Central Executive Committee through their local chapters.

e. Conditions and Conduct of Membership:

- i. Membership shall not be granted to any person who has been convicted of a criminal offence either within or outside the jurisdiction of the Chapter.
- ii. Membership shall not be granted to any person who is or was at any time a member of or affiliated to any criminal gang, group or organization.
- iii. No person can be refused membership on the grounds of race, gender, socio-economic class, religion, or place of residence.

6. The Executive:

- i. Chapter Executives shall be (1) a President (2) a Vice President (3) a Secretary (4) a Treasurer, (5) an Assistant Secretary/Treasurer and (6) a Communications Officer (7) a Chair of Fund Raising (8) a Chair of Alumni Relations. Ex Officio Members shall be the Vice Chancellor, DVC-Philanthropy, Alumni and Civic Engagement and any member designated by the University of Guyana Council.

Other officers may be added at the discretion of the membership of a chapter according to their needs.

- ii. The Executive shall be elected bi-annually at a Chapter's AGM.
- iii. No officer shall hold their respective offices for more than two consecutive terms.
- iv. Subject to any limitations specified in The University of Guyana's Acts and Statutes or this Constitution, the Executive shall have full power to act in all respects on behalf of the Chapter and shall organize and make such arrangements in connection with its activities, as it deems fit.
- iv. The quorum for meetings of the Executive shall be 2/3rd of the Executive;
- v. A member's place on the Executive may be declared vacant by the Executive if:
 - a. he/she is absent for more than three consecutive meetings without special leave of absence from the Executive;
 - b. the member issues, makes or concurs in the making of public statements or acts in a manner prejudicial to the objectives of the Chapter.

vii. In the absence of the President, the Vice President (or where this applies, the First Vice President and Second Vice President in that order) shall assume the chair, and in their absence a Chairman shall be appointed from among the financial members present.

viii. The Executive may fill any casual vacancy in the membership by nominating a financial member of the Chapter to be a member thereof.

ix. There shall be as far as possible staggered replacement of members of the Executive whereby the longest sitting three of good standing shall vacate the seat after two consecutive terms. They may however be re-elected to hold different positions.

x. There shall be a period of incumbency for 6 months after a new member joins the board in which the older serving officer hands over and orients the incumbent.

xi. The immediate past President of the Association remains for one year on the Executive;

7. Suspension of Executive Officers

x. The Executive shall have the power to suspend a member from office. This power shall be exercised by not less than two-thirds of the members of the Executive present and voting providing that:

a. the member who may be in danger of suspension shall be given notice seven (7) days prior of the day of the meeting where the matter will be discussed;

b. the member who may be in danger of suspension shall have the opportunity to be heard at the meeting where the matter will be discussed;

c. the decision to suspend the member must be made within twenty-eight (28) days by a two-thirds majority of members in good standing present and voting at a general meeting of the Chapter.

8. Powers:

i. Subject to the provisions laid down by the AGM, the Chapter Executive shall regulate its own proceedings by a simple majority decision and take all necessary steps to implement the objectives of the Chapter as outlined in this Constitution.

ii. In the event of a tie in votes, the President shall have the casting vote.

iii. Each chapter shall have a legal nexus to and reporting relationship with the University through the Council and its designated officers the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor Philanthropy, Alumni and Civic Engagement.

9. General Meetings:

a. Annual General Meeting:

i. The AGM of the Chapter shall be held at a specified time and consistently around that time thereafter, as the Executive shall appoint;

ii. Fourteen days' notice shall be given of the actual time, place, and business of the meeting;

iii. Such notice shall be exclusive of the day on which it is served or deemed to be served and of the day for which it is given. The unintentional failure to give notice to any person entitled under this Constitution to receive notice of any AGM or the non-receipt by any such person of such notice, shall not invalidate the proceedings at that meeting;

iv. The Chapter President (those legally under this constitution able to represent The President in their absence) shall preside at the AGM or other general meeting;

- v. The AGM shall regulate its own procedure by simple majority decisions;
 - vi. The business of the meeting shall be:
 - a. To receive and consider the report of the Executive for the preceding year;
 - b. To receive and consider the audited accounts and balance sheet;
 - c. To elect members of the Executive (only financial members shall be eligible for election);
 - d. To appoint an auditor;
 - e. To consider any other matters.
- b. **Special General Meeting:**
Special General Meetings may be summoned:
- i. On the advice of the President;
 - ii. On the instruction of the Executive;
 - iii. By the Secretary upon the written request of at least 30% of financial members. The request shall stipulate the nature of the business to be discussed and members shall be given at least five (5) days notice of such meetings. The meeting shall be summoned no later than thirty (30) days of the receipt of such request. No other business, besides the stated business shall be discussed at that meeting.
- c. **Quorum**
- i. 2/3 of all financial members shall form a quorum at any General meeting.
 - ii. If a quorum is not present at the AGM within one hour of the time fixed for such a meeting, it will stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the time and place as is chosen by the President, and, if at such adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed, the financial members present shall be deemed to be a quorum and may do all the business which a full quorum might have done.
 - iii. If no quorum is present at a Special General meeting within half an hour of the time fixed for the meeting it shall be dissolved and no other meeting for the purpose of considering the same or substantially similar business shall be summoned without the leave of the Executive.
- d. **Voting**
- i. Voting at all General meetings shall be by show of hands except for the election of members of the Executive and this shall be done by ballot.
 - ii. Only financial members shall vote at a General meeting.

10. Financial Matters:

- i. **Subscriptions:**
 - a. Each Ordinary and Associate Member shall pay an annual subscription to be determined by the members at a General meeting from time to time. Such subscription is due and payable on the first day of April in each year.
 - b. A Life Member will be required to pay a lump sum subscription equivalent to ten (10) times that of an Ordinary (Annual) Member.
- ii. **Accounts:**
 - a. The Chapter shall keep banking accounts in its own name from which money shall be withdrawn on the signature of the Treasurer, Secretary and either the President or Vice President. The Executive may by resolution, also designate an employee (or employees) of the Chapter who is (are) to sign on the accounts.

- b. The financial year of the Chapter shall commence on the first day of May in each year.
- c. The books of the Chapter shall be audited at least once a year in time for the AGM.

11. Membership Obligations and Ethical Behaviour

- i. A member attends Chapter meetings and serves with professionalism, dedication, integrity and diligence;
- ii. A member is required to present the best interest of the Chapter and The University at all occasions, public or private.
- iii. No member shall indulge in any activity that may bring the Chapter or University into disrepute or shall cause the public to question the Chapter's integrity in any way.
- iv. A member is required to pay membership dues and other financial obligations as specified by the Treasurer. If dues or other financial obligations are not honoured, membership may be suspended.
- v. A member is required to undertake and accomplish in a professional manner, tasks and other activities, which may be necessary to attain the objectives of the Association.
- vi. The details of all meetings and discussion, including the names of attendees, and all material, property and information of the Chapter shall be deemed confidential unless expressly declared public by the Chapter Executive. No member shall disclose the to any person, group, organisation or other, without the express authority of the Chapter Executive.
- vii. No member or any other person or group of persons shall act on behalf of the Chapter or use any property of the Chapter for any purpose whatsoever, without the express written authority of the Chapter or an Executive Officer(s) acting on behalf of the Chapter.
- viii. No member shall receive pay for their services without the permission of the Chapter after consultation with the Chapter.
- ix. A member in good standing in the Chapter shall be entitled to attend the meeting of any other Chapter but shall not be entitled to receive notices of such other Chapter or to vote on any resolution of such Chapter.

12. Amendments to the Constitution:

- i. Notice of any proposed amendment shall be sent to members along with a copy of amended draft at least fourteen days before the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be discussed.
- ii. The amendment shall not be accepted unless approved by two-thirds of the financial members present and voting.
- iii. The Central Executive Committee must ratify all such amendments.

13. . Interpretation of the Constitution:

- i. Interpretation of the Constitution shall be vested in the Executive.

14. Matters not provided for by the Constitution and which are incidental to the functions of the Association shall be determined by a simple majority of members of the Executive.

NOTES:

Powers and Authorities:

- 1) Derived from the University of Guyana Act, 1963.
- 2) Devolved to the University of Guyana Council under its acts and statutes;
- 3) Requests for short term amendments from the name Guild of Graduates to The University of Guyana Alumni Association in 2018 and approval of draft Constitution pending major changes to the Acts and Statutes in 2018-19 under the Chancellor's Transformational Task Force Chaired by Prof. Lawrence Carrington.
- 4) Council approved Document on Alumni Association at meeting of April 26, 2018.
- 5) Responsible Office is Philanthropy, Alumni and Civic Engagement (PACE) in The University of Guyana