

Critical Disability Studies Students Association
Constitution/Rules of Reference & Guidelines
(Based from a template provided by YUGSA)

The Purpose of this Constitution is:

1. To provide a general philosophy and rationale for the Graduate Student Association.
2. To provide a general orientation for the membership.
3. To lend stability and continuity to the Graduate Student Association.
4. To provide an understanding of the operations, practices and procedures carried on within the various parts of the Graduate Student Association.

ARTICLE 1: Name and Compliance

I.I Name: This organization shall be known as Critical Disability Studies Students Association, the name under which it is officially registered with York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA). It will hereinafter be referred to as CDSSA.

I.II Compliance: CDSSA operates at York University, subject to York University and York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA) policies and procedures.

Article 2: Mandate

The Critical Disability Studies Student Association (CDSSA) is an organization composed of students in the Critical Disability Studies (CDIS) program. Our aim is to create spaces where disability researchers, artists, and activists can connect, collaborate, and share their knowledge. The executive committee is composed entirely of MA and PHD students who volunteer their time to coordinate events for the student body, such as conferences, academic and social events; advocate on accessibility issues at York University; and encourage communication between the CDIS student body, CDIS faculty and the broader York community. We have representation in all political bodies affiliated with York Graduate communities, such as the Graduate Student Association, Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Critical Disability Studies department, and CUPE 3903.

Our executive mandate emphasizes:

- 1) Facilitating opportunities for students to share their work and connect with other students, activists, and educators within the wider disability and social justice community
- 2) Creating inclusive, anti-oppressive and accessible spaces to support and promote disability positive events
- 3) Representing and Advocating on behalf of CDIS students at York University and in the Greater Toronto Area.

Article 3: Membership

The members of the CDSSA are Critical Disability Studies graduate students. Current enrollment in the graduate program is sufficient for membership. No general membership dues will be collected from members, although members may be expected to pay nominal fees for specific events.

Article 4: Meetings

- A. CDSSA meetings will be moderated by the President co-Presidents and held a minimum of four times per semester during the academic year.
- B. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Normally, any voting will take place in the meeting, and members who are not in attendance at the meeting forfeit their right to vote, unless a proxy vote has been arranged in advance. The CDSSA does reserve the right to decide, by a majority vote or the decision of the President/ co-Presidents, to put any vote to the entire CDSSA. In these cases, the issue will be presented via written or electronic memo to all members, and members will be given a pre-specified period of time in which to cast their ballots. Before any official action is taken by the CDSSA, a majority vote must be obtained for those votes taken outside of meetings (as per the stipulations outlined above). In all cases, the votes of all members will be weighed equally.
- C. Meetings are to be called by the president.
- D. If a meeting needs to be called before then a member can contact the president to explain why.
- E. Sub committee meetings do not need to go through the president and are set by the members of the committee.
- F. In terms of an agenda, the internal coordinator sets the agenda. Any member can ask the president to add an item to the agenda.

Article 5: Elections and Eligibility

Elections for CDSSA offices will be held in the September of every year. All nominations for elected office will be either A) decided by those members present at the CDSSA meetings (or submitted by a member via advance proxy) or B) sent to the election officer/graduate program

assistant. Best practice is the current president to set up the election process each year by distributing positions available to all students.

Article 6: Elected Positions

CDSSA has elected members and positions to reflect the amount of volunteering availability they have. As such from year to year positions will change to reflect this. Current members of CDSSA reserve the right to organize the association as they see fit for each year.

Article 7: Replacing Officers and Representatives

If a member serving in an elected position other than the Internal Coordinator, resigns or is otherwise unable to fill his or her position, the CDSSA executive, will appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of the term. If the President resigns or is otherwise unable to fill her or his term, an election will be held following all the guidelines and stipulations for a regular election. Replacement members for any position, including those elected, will serve only until the end of the original term of that position.

Article 8: Finances

The CDSSA's money will be primarily acquired through funds allocated to the CDSSA by YUGSA and the department. Any expenditures of the CDSSA must be in accordance to the GSA's annual budget, approved by the membership. Only if the CDSSA exceeds its budget or needs money for a special event may dues be collected. This must be approved by a majority (50% +1) of the membership. All monies belonging to the CDSSA shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for the CDSSA. All funds must be deposited within one week of collection.

Article 9: Sub/Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be created at any time by the decision of the President or a majority vote at a CDSSA meeting. Appointments to the ad hoc committee will be the responsibility of the executive committee. Each ad hoc committee must select a contact person so that CDSSA members and others can communicate efficiently with that committee. All ad hoc committees are responsible for maintaining records of their activities and for reporting pertinent information to members at the CDSSA meetings.

Article 10: Amendments and Revisions

An amendment can be added to this constitution with a 2/3 vote of all members present at the meeting when the issue arises. The amended constitution must be presented to the YUGSA office in the beginning of every academic year.

Article 11: Processes

- A. Any concerns about any processes are to be stated clearly and succinctly. They must also be followed by a proposal for change. That proposal for change will be talked about at the next meeting unless it is time sensitive in which case the internal coordinator will be contacted, and they will coordinate how to make a change (any suggestions from the member with the concern will help do this).
- B. Members to be accountable to roles and positions they sign up for. If they need assistance with a task they are able to ask for assistance. The member still takes lead with the task no matter who assists with the task. This does not have to be through any formal announcements.
- C. Members are to respect that not everyone works the same way to complete a task. It is perfectly acceptable to offer other members support with their tasks, but it is not ok to tell other members how to do their tasks unless asked to. Any concerns see Article 11 A. Therefore, members are to make sure they aren't doing the job someone else is doing (within reason). For example, social media on behalf of CDSSA goes through Social Media Manager, all admin, record keeping, goes to the Secretary etc.