

**CONSTITUTION OF THE DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article Number	Title of Article	Page Number
01	Interpretation of the Constitution	1
02	Name	1
03	Definitions and Interpretations	2
04	Mission Statement	2
05	Affiliations	2
06	Composition of Executive Committee	2
07	The Executive Committee	3
08	Duties of the Officers of the Executive Committee	3 - 5
09	Financial Powers of the Executive Committee	5
10	Removal of Officers	6
11	Duties and Powers of the Executive Committee	7
12	Meetings of Executive Committee	7
13	Duties of General Members	7
14	Removal of General Members	7
15	Election Process for Executive Officers	7 - 8
16	Election Rules for Executive Officers during a Bi-Election	8 - 9
17	Amending the DEMSA Constitution	9
18	Ratification	9
19	Custodian of the Constitution	9

Article 1 – Interpretation of the Constitution

- 1.1 The President (subject to an appeal from the Executive Committee) is regarded as the primary source of interpretation of the Constitution

Article 2 – Name

- 2.1 The organization shall officially be called “Disaster and Emergency Management Students Association of York University”
- 2.2 The organization may commonly be called “Disaster and Emergency Management Students Association”
- 2.3 DEMSA shall be the commonly used acronym for the organization

Article 3 – Definitions and Interpretations

- 3.1 **Disaster and Emergency Management Student** – persons in the Master of Disaster and Emergency Management program at York University
- 3.2 **Association** – refers to DEMSA – containing all elected Executive Officers and general members, from here on referred to as DEMSA
- 3.3 **Membership** – open to all students the Master of Disaster and Emergency Management program at York University
- 3.4 **Executive Officers** – persons holding positions of the President, Vice-President, Finance Director, Logistics and Marketing Director, Academic Liaison, Events Director
- 3.5 **General Members** – students in the Master of Disaster and Emergency Management program who are active with DEMSA by demonstrating active participation
- 3.6 **Executory Quorum** – is defined as fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of all Executive Officers, excluding the President, for voting purposes

Article 4 – Mission Statement

- 4.1 The purpose of DEMSA is to facilitate a dynamic and ongoing relationship between DEM students and faculty members so as to ensure a pedagogical environment most conducive to academic success. DEMSA acts as a first line of reference for students to voice their opinions and concerns pertaining to the Master of Disaster and Emergency Management program at York University, and is the conduit for which those concerns are articulated and pronounced to the department. DEMSA helps to provide direction, social connections and support towards students and their academic careers.

Article 5 – Affiliations

- 5.1 DEMSA should work with the following organizations and consult them on a regular basis:
 - a) Department of Administrative Studies – MDEM specific
 - b) Faculty of Graduate Studies
 - c) Student Community & Leadership Development (SC&LD)
 - d) York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA)

Article 6 – Composition of Executive Committee

- 6.1 DEMSA shall consist of no more than six (6) Executive Officers
- 6.2 Where insufficient interests exist, executive members may take on more than one role
- 6.3 All Executive Officers are popularly elected by an executory quorum

Article 7 – The Executive Committee

- 7.1 The voting positions on the Executive Committee, in order of precedence, as follows:
- a. President
 - b. Finance Coordinator
 - c. Logistics Coordinator
 - d. Events Coordinator
 - e. Social Media/Marketing Coordinator
 - f. Alumni and Faculty Liaison
 - g. Chief Returning Officer (CRO) – Non-executive member
- 7.2 Officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected every year pursuant to Article 16 - Election Process for Executive Officers, by and from the body of DEMSA Executive Officers
- 7.3 The Executive Committee shall meet at the request of the President based on Article 12 – Meetings of Executive Committee and its Procedures

Article 8 – Duties of the Officers of the Executive Committee

- 8.1 All officers of the Executive Committee, as listed in Section 7.1 will be responsible to take part in a formal transition period between the time of election and the first executive meeting
- 8.2 Executive Officers are expected to attend all meetings
- a. Executive Officers who miss any combination of three (3) regular meetings without a reasonable and/or unavoidable cause are eligible for removal from the Executive Committee as outlined in Article 10
 - b. If an Executive Officer must miss a meeting, the President must be notified
- 8.3 All Executive Officers shall be responsible for having full comprehension of this Constitution and its articles
- a. All officers will assume to have such knowledge and will be treated as such
- 8.4 All Executive Officers are responsible for upholding the mission statement outlined in Article 4 and the integrity of DEMSA and to:
- a. Act within the confines of the Constitution and any legislation passed by the Executive Committee
 - b. Avoid bringing the DEMSA into disgrace and /or disrepute through their actions
 - c. Uphold the Constitution
- 8.5 Incoming correspondence is to be the sole responsibility of the Executive Committee and its members unless deemed otherwise by the committee
- 8.6 Officers of the Executive Committee, specifically the President, have the power to represent DEMSA, but should be mindful to consult the committee on matters that are deemed important and be prepared to accept input
- 8.7 Duties of the President
- a. Is one of the two (2) signing authorities and is one of the two (2) signing authorities for financial matters

- b. Is responsible for preparing and circulating the agenda for meetings of the Executive Committee
 - c. Presides over all meetings of the Executive Committee
 - d. Is the official spokesperson of the Executive Committee and of DEMSA
 - e. Is responsible for the effective operation of DEMSA and ensuring that all Officers of the Executive Committee fulfill their duties and abide by the Constitution
 - f. Supervise and ensure the smooth operation of DEMSA, which includes peacefully resolving any inter-Executive conflict and reviewing all DEMSA documentation
- 8.8 Duties of the Finance Coordinator
- a. Is one of two (2) signing authorities for financial matters
 - b. Is responsible for all the financial affairs of DEMSA, including the maintenance and security of the financial records.
 - c. Reimburse claims only when a proof of purchase is provided
 - d. Prepare annual budget of DEMSA
 - e. Present monthly bank statements to the Executive, including a financial report and bank statement following every major event (as requested)
 - f. Disburse DEMSA funds only as authorized by the Executive or the President
 - g. Prepare an annual report of the financial position of DEMSA for the final General Meeting of the year, including original net worth, revenue generated, expenditures incurred, amount payable, accounts receivable and final balance.
 - h. Transfer all assets and other financial records to the incoming Finance Coordinator.
- 8.9 Duties of the Logistics Coordinator
- a. Prepare and type an accurate account of each Executive and General meeting in the minutes to be distributed to the Executive and, if requested, to general members, prior to the next meeting.
 - b. Be responsible for engaging students in honest dialogue regarding what they expect to see from DEMSA and consider how to logistically incorporate this.
 - c. Support the Events Coordinator with room books, catering etc.
- 8.10 Duties of the Events Coordinator
- a. Coordinate all events that are geared towards educating the campus and local community, and attracting new members.
 - b. Work with the Logistics Coordinator to organization the logistics of the event, such as room bookings
 - c. Coordinate with the Marketing Director to ensure that accurate press release is written for each event to be posted on Facebook, Twitter, and the DEMSA website
- 8.11 Duties of the Social Media/Marketing Coordinator
- a. Act as a liaison between DEMSA and the community; this includes other on-campus groups, and other off campus organizations.

- b. Ensure that accurate press release is written for each event to be posted on Facebook, Twitter, and the DEMSA website
 - c. Monitor and maintain all social media accounts and enhance DEMSA's name through initiatives on social media.
- 8.12 Duties of the Alumni and Faculty Liaison
 - a. Act as a liaison between the DEMSA and the graduate students (both full-time and part-time) it represents and the Faculty/staff of the Administration Department and York University.
 - b. Be responsible for engaging students in honest dialogue regarding what they expect to see from DEMSA.
 - c. Be responsible for communicating students' interests to DEMSA, faculty and staff
 - d. Work with and maintain an ongoing relationship with interested undergraduate DEM students, such as UDEM, to determine where graduate and undergraduate DEM students can support each other academically and professionally.
- 8.13 Duties of the CRO
 - a. The CRO shall be appointed by DEMSA at the beginning of each academic year
 - b. Are a non-Executive member whose term of office is from before general elections and ends after results are announced. However, the CRO shall continue to support DEMSA during the appeal/dispute period (please see Section 17.15)
 - c. Is responsible for collection applications/nominations, distributing and counting ballots at the elections and ensuring that the election is conducted fairly
 - d. Shall have no other responsibilities
 - e. Shall not have any conflict of interest with DEMSA

Article 9 – Financial Powers of the Executive Committee

- 9.1 Extraordinary expenditures, not covered by the budget, must at any time be approved by two thirds of the Executive.
- 9.2 All expenditures exceeding \$100.00 must be authorized in advance by two thirds of the Executive.
- 9.3 The Finance Director has the power to veto all financial matters including and exceeding the amount of two-hundred (\$200) dollars Canadian
 - a. In event of such a veto, an emergency meeting of the Executive Officers may be called to vote on the matter, meeting executory quorum
 - b. If certain members cannot attend but wish to vote, a generic and informative message can go to all in such position, and they may vote on the matter, only via email, and only to the President who is excluded from voting
- 9.4 All financial records should be made available to Executive Officers upon request

Article 10 – Removal of Officers

- 10.1 Officers of the Executive Committee may be removed from their executive positions for the following reasons:
- a. Misappropriation of funds
 - b. Mishandling of duties as prescribed by Articles 7 and 8
 - c. Acting against the Constitution
 - d. Lack of attendance to meetings (without a reasonable and/or unavoidable cause)
 - e. Slander against another Executive member(s) or general member(s)
 - f. Usage of profanities, derogatory or discriminatory language in conversation pertaining to DEMSA, its affairs, or its membership.
 - g. Conflict of interest – A conflict of interest exists when a member’s personal or financial interest conflicts with the duties and responsibilities of their position and the obligation they owe to the organization.
 1. Should a DEMSA member find themselves in a conflict of interest, they are obligated to notify all members of the executive as soon as possible
 2. If any member of the Executive believes that the member’s full disclosure is insufficient to negate the conflict of interest, the President shall call a special meeting wherein the facts surrounding the alleged conflict of interest are disclosed to the DEMSA members
 3. The individual with the alleged conflict of interest may also address their fellow members
 4. A referendum, managed by the CRO, will then be held on the issue of (a) whether there is a conflict of interest, and (b) if so, whether full disclosure is sufficient to deal therewith
 5. If there is a majority “No” vote on both questions, the President shall take any steps short of suspension of an DEMSA member to eliminate the conflict of interest
- 10.2 Any two officers may petition the Executive Committee to begin the procedure of impeachment against an Executive Officer for any of the reasons noted in Section 10.1
- 10.3 The petition, referred to in Section 10.3, shall be directed to all members of the Executive Committee
- a. The member regarding whom the petition is concerned shall be entitled to receive the copy of the original petitions signed by the President as confirmation that it has been seen, and that there are copies of the original
- 10.4 Upon receipt of said petition, the officer in question shall be given a minimum of two weeks, after which a meeting will be called and the officer will present their case in front of the council. The council shall make a democratic vote on whether the officer will be removed.
- 10.5 In the event of the registration of impeachment of an elected Officer, temporary appointments may be made by the Executive Committee for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days, at which time a by-election must be called

Article 11 – Duties and Powers of the Executive Committee

- 11.1 The Executive Committee is the ultimate deciding body of DEMSA and all its decisions are final and binding
- 11.2 The articles of this Constitution set out the Executive Committee's powers

Article 12 – Meetings of Executive Committee and its Procedures

- 12.1 All meetings of the Executive Committee will conform to Robert's Rules of Order
- 12.2 If sections of this Constitution are in conflict with Robert's Rules of Order, this Constitution shall take precedence
- 12.3 The President has the responsibility of preparing and circulating the agenda for the meetings
- 12.4 At least five full days' notice of said regular bi-weekly meetings of executive must be provided
 - a. This notice is to be widely distributed by any means necessary, including, but not limited to: email, telephone, notices on campus
- 12.5 A meeting of the Executive Committee should occur bi-weekly between the months of September and April
- 12.6 Between the months of May to August, Executive Committee meetings will be held per the request and plan of the President
- 12.7 The Executive Committee may call emergency or other meetings of Committee with less notice than explicated in Section 12.6

Article 13 – Duties of General Members

- 13.1 Students who wish to become general members may do so at any time throughout any term and may be part-time or full-time
- 13.3 General members have the voluntary option to participate and assist in the organization of events and activities

Article 14 – Removal of General Members

- 14.1 General members may be removed from DEMSA membership for the following reasons:
 - a. Mishandling of duties as prescribed by Article 13
 - b. Acting in conflict with the constitution
 - c. Defaming the character of DEMSA

Article 15 – Election Process for Executive Officers

- 15.1 Annual elections of DEMSA shall start no less than six (6) weeks prior to December 30th of each year
- 15.2 Notice of the date of election and nomination period shall be posted in prominent places no less than two (2) weeks in advance of the election dates

- 15.3 No less than four (4) weeks in advance of the election date, the Executive shall select Chief Returning Officer (CRO) to preside over the elections. The CRO shall not be candidate in the elections and may not sign any nomination forms or vote in the elections
- 15.4 The CRO, shall be responsible for preparing a nomination form, receiving nominations, including setting up and supervising a nominations table in the Meeting Place, preparing and issuing election ballots, and declaring the results
- 15.5 The nomination procedure is as follows:
- a. Nomination period shall begin no less than (2) weeks and close one (1) week prior to the election date.
 - b. Any General Member may nominate a potential candidate.
 - c. Candidates shall not be permitted to campaign or lobby for support.
 - d. All candidates shall be notified (privately) of their status by the Executive no less than five (5) days prior to the elections, at which time they have the right to withdraw from the election.
 - e. The CRO shall oversee the counting of nomination ballots.
- 15.6 The voting procedure is as follows:
- a. A list of all candidates will be posted in the office over a period of one (1) week starting on and including election date.
 - b. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot.
 - c. All General Members have the right to vote; voting will be conducted over a period of two (2) days starting on and including the election date.
 - d. Positions for which there is only one candidate shall be acclaimed.
- 15.7 The procedure for counting ballots and declaring results is as follows:
- a. Following voting, the CRO shall collect the ballots and proceed to a private area to count the ballots.
 - b. The CRO shall oversee the counting process. One Trustee shall count aloud the number of valid ballots cast for each candidate, while two of the other Trustees record these results independently. The individual tallies of the Trustees must be equal or the process must be repeated.
 - c. Following the count, the CRO shall inform the outgoing Executive of the names of the new Executive.
- 15.8 The new Executive shall take office on December 1st for a period of one year.
- a. The term of office is in accordance with the Master of Disaster and Emergency (MDEM) program length, which is typically four consecutive semesters beginning in the fall semester. Most MDEM students will finish their studies in December of their fourth term, thus the terms follow this pattern
- 15.9 Any elected position on DEMSA which becomes vacant during the academic year for any reason can either be:
1. Filled through a by-election by the current Executive no later than three (3) weeks of the vacancy, and shall be held per **article 16**.
 2. Left vacant upon two-thirds Executive majority vote.

Article 16 – Election Rules for Executive Officers during a Bi-Election

- 16.1 Bi-elections shall be called by the Executive no less than three (3) weeks of a vacancy during the academic year, and shall be held per this article
- 16.2 Notice of the date of bi-elections and three nomination period shall be posted in prominent places no less than one (1) week in advance of said elections
- 16.3 Nomination period shall begin seven (7) days and close four (4) days prior to the by election date.
- 16.4 All candidates shall be notified (privately) of their status by the Executive no less than three (3) days prior to the elections, at which time they have the right to withdraw from the election.
- 16.5 All general members have the right to vote; voting will be conducted over a period of one day starting on the bi-election date
- 16.6 Candidates shall not be permitted to campaign or lobby for support
- 16.7 Within two (2) days of the said result the Executive shall announce the bi-election results to the general body

Article 17 – Amending the DEMSA Constitution

- 17.1 For amendments brought between the months of May and August, a copy of the original Constitution and the amendments must be sent out to all Executive Officers at least one (1) week prior to the amendment
- 17.2 Amendments to the constitution must be voted on pursuant to the mandate of the executory quorum
- 17.3 If any amendments are brought to the Constitution between months of September and April, Executive Officers must accept it unanimously
- 17.4 If an Executive Officer dissents to proposed amendment contrary to majority assent, they are permitted to resign

Article 18 – Ratification

- 18.1 This Constitution shall be enforced upon ratification by two-thirds of the voting body which consists of Executive Officers and upon approval of this Constitution by the Clubs Registration Committee and the Centre of Student Community & Leadership Development (SC&LD)

Article 19 – Custodian of the Constitution

- 19.1 It is the responsibility of the President to retain the most current copy of the Constitution to be presented at the request of the incoming executive and the Centre for Student Community and Leadership Development (SC&LD)
- 19.2 The Constitution should be widely distributed in a format that cannot be edited